Interim Report

Royal Commission
on Antisemitism
and Social Cohesion

APRIL 2026

April 2026

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the Elders, past and present, and thank them for their ongoing contributions to the culture and prosperity of the Australian nation.

Royal Commission
on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion

30 April 2026

Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
Government House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Your Excellency

In accordance with the Letters Patent issued on 9 January 2026, I have made inquiries and now submit to you the Interim Report of the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion.

The Interim Report contains much intelligence information and operationally sensitive information, that is classified in accordance with the Australian Government Protective Security Policy Framework. A non-confidential version of the Interim Report that can be made public has also been prepared omitting classified material and any material that might prejudice pending criminal proceedings.

I am also submitting Interim Reports that I consider appropriate to their Excellencies the Governors of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia.

Yours sincerely

The Honourable Virginia Bell AC SC
Commissioner

This report discusses some difficult themes, including details of the antisemitic attack at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025. Readers may find parts of the report distressing. Support services are available if you or someone you know needs help.

Urgent support

If you require urgent or immediate help, please call Triple zero (000) or present to your local emergency department.

24/7 Support

Lifeline Australia 13 11 14 | 0477 131 114 Online chat, 24/7 crisis support via phone, text, and chat.	**Beyond Blue** 1300 224 636 24/7 mental health support, advice, and referrals (phone, webchat, email).	**NSW Health Mental Health Line** 1800 011 511 Free 24/7 NSW service connecting people to local mental health care.

Youth Support

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 | Online chat 24/7 free support for ages 5–25.	**Headspace** 1800 650 850 | Online chat (3 pm–10 pm) Early intervention mental health support for ages 12–25.

Jewish Community Support

Jewish House 1300 544 357 (24/7) • Crisis accommodation and mental health support • Support navigating antisemitism • Counselling and referrals for adults and children	**JewishCare** 1300 133 660 (Mon–Thu: 9 am–5 pm, Fri: 9 am–4 pm AEST) Support for community members affected by trauma, including the Bondi attack, plus general wellbeing services.

Multicultural & Anti-Discrimination Support	Local Incident Support (Bondi)	Grief & Emotional Support
NSW Anti-Discrimination Board 1800 670 812 Information and support for people experiencing discrimination or harassment.	**Service NSW** 13 77 88 Support for victims, families, and businesses impacted by the Bondi attack (Dec 2025). Includes access to the Bondi Community Support Hub and call-back services.	**Griefline** 1300 845 745 (8 am–8 pm, daily) Free, confidential support for grief, loss, and loneliness.

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Introduction

On the evening of 14 December 2025 at Bondi Beach, Sydney, two gunmen opened fire on a crowd that had gathered in Archer Park to celebrate the beginning of the Jewish festival of Chanukah, also known as the festival of lights. Fifteen people were killed, another 40 were wounded and countless others were traumatised having witnessed the slaughter or later having come to learn of it. Sydney's Jewish community was the evident target of the attack.

Independent Commonwealth Review

One week after the Bondi attack, on 21 December 2025, the Prime Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, announced that a review of federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies would be conducted by Dennis Richardson AC. Mr Richardson, a distinguished former public servant and diplomat, has served as Director-General of Security, Secretary of the Department of Defence, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Ambassador to the United States of America. Mr Richardson's review was expressed to build on the findings of the 2024 Independent Intelligence Review and the 2019 Comprehensive Review of the Legal Framework of the National Intelligence Community.

By 24 December 2025, Mr Richardson had assembled the core members of the team that was to assist him in the conduct of the Review. By 2 January 2026, Mr Richardson had written to the heads of Commonwealth intelligence and law enforcement agencies and to the Departments of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Home Affairs, the Attorney-General and Foreign Affairs and Trade asking for the production of documents identified in schedules attached to each letter. The recipients were asked to produce the documents by 26 January 2026.

In the weeks following the Bondi attack there were calls from a diverse range of individuals and community organisations for an inquiry possessing the compulsory powers of a Royal Commission to investigate the rise of antisemitism generally in Australia as well as the circumstances of the attack.

Establishment of the Royal Commission

On 8 January 2026, the Prime Minister announced the establishment of this Royal Commission stating that it would address four key areas:

a. Tackling antisemitism by investigating the nature and prevalence of antisemitism in institutions and society, and its key drivers in Australia, including ideologically and religiously motivated extremism and radicalisation.

b. Making recommendations that will assist law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to tackle antisemitism, including through improvements to guidance and training within law enforcement, border control, immigration, and security agencies to respond to antisemitic conduct.

c. Examining the circumstances surrounding the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025.

d. Making any other recommendations arising out of the inquiry for strengthening social cohesion in Australia and countering the spread of ideologically and religiously motivated extremism in Australia.

The Prime Minister explained that the states would be asked to join the Commission to ensure that it is a 'truly national' body and he said that the independent Commonwealth Review into federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies would become part of the Commission.

On 9 January 2026, the Governor-General signed the Letters Patent establishing this Royal Commission. A copy of the Letters Patent is annexed to this Interim Report. The Terms of Reference reflect the four key areas that the Prime Minister identified. The Governors of each state have issued Letters Patent with Terms of Reference that are identical to those contained in the Commonwealth Letters Patent and in this way have succeeded in making it a 'national Royal Commission'.

Pursuant to each of the Letters Patent I am required to deliver an Interim Report that I consider appropriate not later than 30 April 2026, focusing on the matters in Term of Reference (c) and any other issues requiring urgent or immediate action. Term of Reference (c) requires me to examine the circumstances surrounding the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025 including the following nine matters:

i. security arrangements for the Chanukah event and Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025

ii. the attack

iii. emergency response to the attack

iv. whether relevant Commonwealth, state and territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness, including whether they had adequate powers and the right systems, processes and procedures, and whether there was an appropriate authorising environment for information sharing with other Commonwealth, state and territory agencies

v. whether relevant Commonwealth, state and territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies were prevented from taking prohibitive actions by the current legislative framework and authorising environment

vi. identifying any gaps in existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impede the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent and respond to attacks of this nature at both the state and federal levels

vii. identifying any lessons for security and law enforcement agencies to prevent and respond to similar attacks in the future

viii. identifying any gaps in existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impede the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent and respond to attacks of this nature at both the state and federal levels, and

ix. identifying any lessons for security and law enforcement agencies to prevent and respond to similar attacks in the future.

Sub-paragraphs (i), (iv) – (ix) of Term of Reference (c) largely reflect the terms of Mr Richardson's independent Commonwealth Review. Mr Richardson agreed to work as Special Advisor to the Royal Commission continuing inquiries into Commonwealth and state intelligence and law enforcement agencies that were already underway. The Commission promptly issued notices to each agency and government department requiring production of the documents that had been identified in the schedules that Mr Richardson prepared. As outlined at the opening sitting of the Royal Commission, the compulsion to produce documents,[1] or to give written information,[2] pursuant to the *Royal Commissions Act 1902* (Cth) occasioned delay that might not have attended the production of the same documents to an internal administrative inquiry. It became necessary for agencies and departments to consider questions of legal professional privilege, public interest immunity and statutory non-disclosure provisions before producing documents to an independent royal commission. The delay made it impossible for Counsel Assisting the Commission to be in a position to adduce evidence on aspects of matters that are the subject of Term of Reference (c) before the date for finalisation of the interim report. As explained below, this does not detract from the utility of this Interim Report.

[1] Section 2(3A).
[2] Section 2(3C).

The Interim Report

An evident purpose of the requirement to deliver this Interim Report is to enable Commonwealth, state and territory governments to ascertain if there are any matters (particularly those affecting public safety and national security) that require urgent or immediate action.

The views and material records of each relevant intelligence and law enforcement agency, and each relevant Commonwealth and NSW government department, respecting the interaction and information-sharing between agencies (and with the organisers of the Chanukah event) have been obtained. So, too, have views of these agencies on the adequacy of their powers, systems, procedures and the authorising environment for information-sharing as at 14 December 2025. And each relevant agency has been asked whether it was prevented from taking any prohibitive action on that day by the legislative and authorising framework.[3] This material has been reviewed by Mr Richardson and the team of specialist analysts that he assembled.

No material or advice from any agency identified any gap in the existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impeded the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent, or respond to, an attack of the kind that occurred at Bondi on 14 December 2025. No Commonwealth or state intelligence or law enforcement agency has suggested that it was prevented from taking prohibitive actions before or on 14 December 2025 by the then current legislative and authorising framework. In these respects, no issue requiring urgent or immediate action has been identified.

Nonetheless, the review of this considerable body of material by officers with relevant experience and expertise and by Counsel Assisting and me has revealed aspects in which counter-terrorism capability at Commonwealth and state levels could be improved. These are the subject of the recommendations collected below. A submission received just before the finalisation of this Interim Report proposing improvements to the National Criminal Intelligence System will be investigated in the course of hearings.

Mr Richardson resigned from his position with the Commission on 11 March 2026. I take this opportunity to express my thanks to him for the important contribution he made to the Commission's work which informs much of this Interim Report. The team that Mr Richardson assembled have remained with the Commission for which I am also most

[3] The Office of National Intelligence (ONI), the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD), the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC), the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC), the Australian Border Force (ABF), the Australian Federal Police (AFP), the NSW Police Force (NSW Police), the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs), the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Attorney-General's Department (AGD), the NSW Premier's Department, and the NSW Cabinet Office all provided documents and information in relation to this aspect of the Commission's inquiry.

grateful. This team was led by three senior current and former Commonwealth officers: Tony Sheehan, former Deputy Director-General of ASIO and former Co-Chair of the Australia New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC), Peter Baxter, former Deputy Secretary of the Department of Defence and former Director-General of AusAID and Tara Inverarity, First Assistant Secretary, Attorney-General's Department, who has lengthy expertise with respect to the Commonwealth intelligence, security and law enforcement legislative framework.

While systemic aspects of the effectiveness of Commonwealth and state intelligence and law enforcement (Term of Reference (c)(vi)) are addressed in this Interim Report, important issues arising from the Bondi attack, including whether there was any failure to identify and act upon intelligence in the lead up to it, or in the allocation of police resources to the Chanukah event, will be addressed in hearings. No conclusion in these respects can be reached on a review of the agencies' documents alone and in the absence of according procedural fairness to any person or agency at risk of an adverse finding. In light of the nature of the evidence that I anticipate will be led, some hearings will need to be closed to the public (closed hearings). To the extent that it is possible to adduce evidence touching on intelligence and security matters in public this will be done.

The complete version of the Interim Report will be provided on a confidential basis to the Australian Government and state governments (the confidential report). An edited version will be made available to the public. Parts of every chapter are contained only in the confidential report as they refer to information that cannot be disclosed publicly, for reasons that include national security and the need to avoid prejudice to current criminal proceedings.

Hearings addressing all of the Commission's Terms of Reference will be conducted over the next five months. In the event I identify any issue that raises a matter of urgency that warrants immediate action before the time fixed for delivery of the Commission's final report, I will take appropriate action to bring that matter to the attention of the Australian and state governments.

Criminal proceedings arising from the Bondi attack

A significant matter of context in the preparation and publication of this Interim Report is the existence of current criminal proceedings arising from the Bondi attack.

The Letters Patent refer to 'the necessity for the inquiry to be conducted in a manner that does not occasion prejudice to current or future criminal proceedings or national security or undermine social cohesion'.

The Letters Patent also provide that I am 'not required … to inquire, or to continue to inquire, into a particular matter to the extent that [I am] satisfied that the matter has been, is being, or will be, sufficiently and appropriately dealt with by another inquiry or investigation or a criminal or civil proceeding'.

There are current criminal proceedings arising from the Bondi attack. An accused person has been charged with committing a terrorist act (s 101.1, *Criminal Code* (Cth)), 15 counts of murder (s 18, *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW)), 40 counts of attempted murder (s 27, *Crimes Act 1900*), one count of discharging a firearm with intent (s 33A, *Crimes Act 1900*), one count of displaying a prohibited terrorist organisation symbol (s 80.2HA, *Criminal Code*) and one count of causing explosives to be placed in or near a building, conveyance or public place (s 48, *Crimes Act 1900*). The elements of the offence of committing a terrorist act require proof that the action was done 'with the intention of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause' and 'with the intention of: (i) coercing, or influencing by intimidation [a government]; or (ii) intimidating the public or a section of the public' (definition of 'terrorist act' in s 100.1(1), *Criminal Code*). The Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP) has carriage of the prosecution. At present, the accused has not entered a plea.

This Commission must do its work in a way that does not interfere with the administration of criminal justice in those proceedings. The currency of the prosecution and the nature of the charges brought against the accused are such that I have determined that a number of the elements of Term of Reference (c) will not be the subject of any public report. For example, the lead up and planning of the attack and the events of the attack itself, which are expressly referred to in paragraph (c)(i) and (c)(iv).

The following general principles are being applied to guide the conduct of the Royal Commission in light of the current criminal proceedings:

a. The accused will not be interviewed or called to give evidence.

b. Persons who are, or who are likely to be, witnesses in the criminal proceedings ought not be interviewed or called to give evidence about the Bondi attack.

c. The Royal Commission ought not, in its public hearings or publicly available report, make findings or comments about the intention and motivation of the shooters.

d. To the extent that it is possible, the Royal Commission should avoid causing or contributing to further publicity that may occasion prejudice to the accused among potential jurors.

e. The Royal Commission will not coordinate with the CDPP.

Developments since 14 December 2025

The sharp rise in antisemitic incidents in Australia over the past two and a half years corresponds with events in the Middle East following the terrorist attacks on Israel carried out by Hamas on 7 October 2023. The outbreak of hostilities between the United States and Israel and Iran in February 2026 is likely to have increased the risk of attacks directed at the Australian Jewish community. The Commission is investigating the improvement of protective security arrangements for Jewish places of worship, major sites, educational and cultural facilities, public events and community leaders (Term of Reference (b)(ii)). The currency of the Commission should not prevent the taking of appropriate action to address any perceived shortcoming in security arrangements for any Jewish establishment, event or leader.

It is acknowledged that the Australian and state governments already have taken a variety of measures to respond to the Bondi attack. Two should be mentioned in this context.

The Australian Government has allocated a further $102 million to the *Enhancing Security for Jewish Communities* program.[4] This program, administered by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, supports improvement to safety and security at Jewish community sites including schools and synagogues.

NSW Police's Operation SHELTER, established in the aftermath of a protest at which protesters chanted antisemitic slogans at the Sydney Opera House on 9 October 2023, has been upgraded to a 'permanent, round-the-clock rapid response unit with approximately 250 dedicated police officers, civilian staff, specially modified rapid response vehicles' and a '24/7 specialised Police Operations Centre'.[5]

Overview of Interim Report

The context in which to consider the adequacy of the security arrangements for the Chanukah event (Term of Reference (c)(iii)) includes an understanding of how ASIO had assessed the risk of a terror attack in the period leading up to 14 December 2025. ASIO's process for issuing the National Terrorism Threat Level and the circumstances leading to raising the Level to 'PROBABLE' in August 2024 are outlined in Chapter 1. So, too, are ASIO's, the Australian Federal Police's (AFP) and NSW Police's assessments of, and responses to, the particular risk posed to the Jewish community in light of the increase in antisemitic incidents discussed in Chapter 1. This background is also relevant to the adequacy of the priority given and resources allocated to counter-terrorism by Commonwealth and state intelligence and

[4] Australian Government, Home Affairs, media release 23 January 2026, *Strengthening social cohesion and community safety at East Melbourne Synagogue*.
[5] NSW Government, media release, 25 February 2026, the Premier, Minister for Multiculturalism, Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, *NSW Government launches permanent rapid response unit*.

law enforcement agencies (Term of Reference (c)(vi)), which is dealt with in subsequent chapters.

The security arrangements for the Chanukah event are set out in Chapter 2 (Term of Reference (c)(iii)). An assessment of the adequacy of these arrangements awaits further exploration in hearings.

Based on the review of documents produced to the Commission by NSW Police and other NSW agencies and community organisations, a timeline of the emergency response to the Bondi attack (Term of Reference (c)(v)) is set out in Chapter 3. It includes details of the significant emergency first aid provided by community organisations and civilians including lifeguards employed by Waverley Council, volunteer surf life savers and the Jewish community's Community Health Support (CHS) and Hatzolah Emergency Medical Response Unit. In light of the pending criminal proceedings, much of this chapter is in the confidential report. Once any criminal proceedings are finalised, the omitted section ought be released publicly.

The history and structure of Community Security Groups and their liaison with intelligence and law enforcement agencies is more fully addressed in Chapter 4 (Term of Reference (c)(ii) and (ix)). It includes an account of the coordination between CSG NSW and NSW Police for the annual 'Operation Jewish High Holy Days' which usually falls in September or October. It is recommended that the processes followed by NSW Police for High Holy Days, involving the Major Events Group, the Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command in consultation with CSG NSW and the Jewish Board of Deputies should apply for other major Jewish festivals and events. Sections of this chapter are contained in the confidential report.

The whole of Chapter 5, which is concerned with Commonwealth and state intelligence and law enforcement agency activities in relation to the Bondi attack is contained in the confidential report. It should remain confidential until the finalisation of any criminal proceedings arising out of the Bondi attack. Thereafter a public version of the chapter should be released. At that time there is a public interest in as much of the chapter being made public as is consistent with the requirements of national security.

Responsibility for counter-terrorism is shared between the Commonwealth and the states and territories. Chapter 6 details the history and development of Australia's counter-terrorism architecture including the role of the ANZCTC (Term of Reference (c)(ii), (vi) and (viii)). Parts of Chapter 6 are contained in the confidential report.

Information sharing between Commonwealth agencies, and between Commonwealth and state and territory agencies with responsibility for counter-terrorism (Term of Reference (c)(ii), (vi) and (viii)) is a critical issue, addressed in Chapter 7. While much of the chapter must remain confidential, it is noted that it contains a number of recommendations for improvement to systems and to existing information sharing arrangements. However, it

is not suggested that had any recommended change been in place on 14 December 2025 the Bondi attack might have been averted.

Chapter 8 is concerned with the legislative frameworks governing counter-terrorism and information sharing between agencies (Term of Reference (c)(vii) and (viii)). As earlier noted, there is no suggestion that any urgent legislative reform is required to prevent, detect or respond to an attack like the Bondi attack. The chapter focuses on the proposals for firearms reform including possession, licensing, the National Gun Buyback Scheme, and the National Firearms Agreement.

The priorities and the allocation of resources by the Australian Government and Commonwealth intelligence agencies with respect to counter-terrorism (Term of Reference (c)(vi), (viii) and (ix)) are discussed in Chapter 9. In particular, the focus is on priorities and resourcing following the Hamas attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023, and the increase in the National Terrorism Threat Level to 'PROBABLE' in August 2024. Of necessity, the bulk of this chapter is contained in the confidential report. Some issues arising from it will be further explored in hearings that, again, largely must be conducted in closed hearings.

The priorities and resourcing of the AFP and the NSW Police with respect to counter-terrorism in the period following the Hamas attacks on Israel and after the increase in the National Terrorism Threat Level to 'PROBABLE' are discussed in Chapter 10 (Term of Reference (c)(vi), (viii) and (ix)). Parts of this chapter are contained in the confidential report. Some issues arising from the analysis in this chapter will also be further explored in hearings.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1 53

The procedures adopted by NSW Police in respect of Operation Jewish High Holy Days should apply to other high risk Jewish festivals and events, particularly those that have a public facing element.

Recommendation 2 63

Having regard to the significance of the role of the Commonwealth Counter-Terrorism Coordinator in providing counter-terrorism leadership, the Commission recommends consideration be given to making the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator's role full-time.

Recommendation 3 65

If the ANZCTC is to be used again as a crisis committee, the ANZCTC should be included in the Australian Government Crisis Management Framework so its role is clear.

Recommendation 4 66

The Counter-Terrorism Handbook should be updated promptly and then at least every three years in coordination with updates to the Counter-Terrorism Plan and the ANZCTC triennial review.

Recommendation 5 66

The ANZCTC should provide direct advice in the form of a written and/or oral briefing, at least annually, to National Cabinet (including, as appropriate, advice on ANZCTC activities, the use of the ANZCTC Special Fund, and national counter-terrorism challenges and priorities).

Recommendation 6 70

The ANZCTC should commission a review of the Joint Counter-Terrorism Teams, with a report to be submitted to Police Commissioners and the Director-General of Security within three months of commencement. The review should include consideration of leadership structures, team integration, systems access and information sharing arrangements. The review should place particular focus on the Joint Counter-Terrorism Team-NSW, elements of which should be for reporting specifically to the NSW Police Commissioner, the AFP Commissioner and the Director-General of Security.

Recommendation 7 71

The Australian Government should consider whether National Security Committee ministers, including the Prime Minister, should participate in a counter-terrorism exercise, along with all National Cabinet members, within nine months of each federal election.

Recommendation 8 75

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Recommendation 9 80

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Recommendation 10 80

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Recommendation 11 80

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Recommendation 12 80

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Recommendation 13 90

The Commonwealth and states and territories should prioritise efforts to finalise and implement an updated and nationally consistent National Firearms Agreement.

Recommendation 14 94

The Commonwealth, states and territories should prioritise efforts to implement the proposed National Gun Buyback Scheme.

Chapter 1. Threat environment in lead up to 14 December 2025

1.1. Paragraph (c) of the Terms of Reference requires an examination of the circumstances surrounding the attack on 14 December 2025, including the security arrangements on the day (Term of Reference (c)(iii)). The security arrangements on 14 December 2025 are addressed in Chapter 2. An important part of the context for reviewing those arrangements is to understand how the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) had assessed the risk of a terror attack in the period leading up to 14 December 2025, as well as the threat posed specifically to the Jewish community in Australia.

1.2. This chapter outlines ASIO's process for issuing the National Terrorism Threat Level and threat assessments more generally; the threat assessments that were issued before and in 2024 and 2025; and the environment of heightened antisemitism in recent years.

National Terrorism Threat Level

1.3. The National Terrorism Threat Level is an assessment of the threat of domestic terrorism in Australia at any given point. After ASIO decides to change the National Terrorism Threat Level, and before this is announced, it typically consults with Commonwealth, state and territory partners.[6] The National Terrorism Threat Level is published on ASIO's website and is based on a scale of five levels:[7]

- Certain—a terrorist attack is certain and the government has concerns that a terrorist attack will occur or is underway.
- Expected—a terrorist attack is expected and the government has concerns of a specific threat.
- Probable—a terrorist attack is probable and the government has concerns of a plausible threat.
- Possible—a terrorist attack is possible and the government has concerns a threat may exist.
- Not expected—a terrorist attack is not expected and the government has no specific concerns.

[6] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security, (National Terrorism Threat Level, 5 August 2024) <https://www.asio.gov.au/national-terrorism-threat-level-2024>.
[7] Australian Government, 'National Terrorism Threat Advisory System' <https://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/national-threat-level/threat-advisory-system>.

1.4. As explained further below, on 5 August 2024, the Prime Minister and Director-General of Security jointly announced that ASIO was raising the National Terrorism Threat Level from POSSIBLE to PROBABLE. That level was maintained throughout 2025. ASIO has indicated publicly that a threat level of PROBABLE means that, in ASIO's assessment, there is a greater than 50 per cent chance of an onshore attack or planning in the next 12 months.[8]

Threat assessments

1.5. ASIO may issue other kinds of threat assessments concerning threats to 'security' as defined in the *Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979* (Cth) (ASIO Act). They can be narrow or broad in scope.

1.6. ASIO hosts a subscriber-based Outreach service which is used to disseminate advice to government, industry and academia on current and emerging security threats.[9]

Threat assessments and public statements 2022 – 2025

1.7. On 28 November 2022, the Director-General of Security, Mike Burgess AM, announced that 'ASIO is lowering Australia's national terrorism threat level to POSSIBLE'.[10] The Director-General gave reasons for the decision to lower the threat level. He said:[11]

- 'Perhaps most significantly, the threat from religiously motivated violent extremists has moderated.'
- 'The offshore networks, capabilities and allure of groups such as ISIL and al-Qa'ida have been degraded, with their support in Australia declining accordingly – but I stress: it's dissipated, not disappeared.'
- 'Ideologically motivated violent extremism – particularly nationalist and racist violent extremism – remains a threat and its adherents will continue to engage in offensive behaviours.'
- '…terrorism is both an enduring threat and an evolving threat…'.

[8] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (Press Conference, Parliament House, Canberra, 5 August 2024) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-parliament-house-canberra-27>.
[9] ASIO, 'Contact Outreach' <https//www.asio.gov.au/contact-outreach>.
[10] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security, 'National Terrorism Threat Level' (Speech, 28 November 2022) <https://www.asio.gov.au/resources/speeches-and-statements/national-terrorism-threat-level>.
[11] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security, 'National Terrorism Threat Level' (Speech, 28 November 2022) <https://www.asio.gov.au/resources/speeches-and-statements/national-terrorism-threat-level>.

1.8. On 7 October 2023, Hamas launched attacks across Israel, with over 1,200 lives lost and hostages taken, and which triggered an Israeli military offensive in Gaza. On 9 October 2023, hundreds of people in Sydney joined a pro-Palestinian march from Sydney Town Hall to the Opera House chanting slogans which included 'fuck the Jews'.

1.9. On 12 October 2023, the Director-General of Security released a statement that the National Terrorism Threat Level remained 'POSSIBLE'.[12] In this statement the Director-General said:

- '[T]he tragic events in the Middle East are resonating in the Australian community.'
- He was 'concerned about the potential for opportunistic violence with little or no warning' but distinguished such violence from 'planned violence of acts of terrorism'.
- '[W]ords matter. ASIO has seen direct connections between inflamed language and inflamed community tensions.'

1.10. On 28 February 2024, the Director-General of Security announced that the national terrorism threat level remained 'POSSIBLE'. The Director-General said:[13]

- 'While the terrorism threat level is POSSIBLE, if we had a threat level for espionage and foreign interference it would be at CERTAIN – the highest level on the scale.'
- 'All this means there is a realistic possibility of a terrorist attack or attack planning in the next twelve months. POSSIBLE does not mean negligible. ASIO is currently investigating multiple individuals who have discussed conducting terrorism in Australia.'

1.11. On 5 August 2024, the Director-General of Security announced that '[a]fter careful consideration and consultation, ASIO is raising Australia's national terrorism threat level from POSSIBLE to PROBABLE'. The Director-General also stated:[14]

- 'Australia's security environment is degrading. It is more volatile and more unpredictable. You have heard me say many times that espionage and foreign interference are our principal security concerns. ASIO's intelligence suggests that is no longer accurate. … Politically motivated violence now joins espionage and foreign interference as our principal security concerns.'
- 'Threats are becoming hard to predict and identify. The drivers of radicalisation, grievance and extremism are growing and interacting in ways we have not seen

[12] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security, 'Statement on the Middle East' (12 October 2023) <https://www.asio.gov.au/statement-middle-east>.
[13] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security, 'Director-General's Annual Threat Assessment (28 February 2024) <https://www.asio.gov.au/director-generals-annual-threat-assessments-2024>.
[14] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (Press Conference, Parliament House, Canberra, 5 August 2024) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-parliament-house-canberra-27>.

before, creating a security climate that's very different to the one that existed when we last raised the threat level. The challenge is exacerbated by the internet and social media, the primary platforms for radicalisation, and the use of encryption by every single one of our investigative subjects.'

1.12. In addition to the public announcement of the increase in threat level, the information presently available to the Commission indicates that in the period after 5 August 2024, ASIO officers engaged directly with state and territory law enforcement agencies in respect of the increased threat level, to brief them on the increase and explain the assessment.

1.13. On 30 January 2025, the Director-General of Security issued a statement on the National Terrorism Threat Level.[15] This included:

- 'ASIO is monitoring and, in conjunction with our law enforcement partners, investigating multiple anti-Semitic incidents in Australia.'
- 'We have seen a disturbing escalation in the targeting of Jewish interests, and a disturbing escalation in the severity and recklessness of the targeting, with general harassment and intimidation moving to the targeting of people and places.'
- 'These incidents are appalling, and particularly distressing for the Jewish community.'
- 'One of the key reasons we raised the threat level in August 2024 was because we anticipated spikes in politically motivated violence. Unfortunately, the security environment has evolved almost exactly as we expected.'
- 'The current terrorism threat level is the same as it was at the height of the Islamic State caliphate.'

1.14. On 19 February 2025, the Director-General of Security gave his sixth Annual Threat Assessment address. His comments on that occasion included:[16]

- 'Australia has entered a period of strategic surprise and security fragility.'
- 'Over the next five years, a complex, challenging and changing security environment will become more dynamic, more diverse and more degraded.'
- 'Anti-Semitism festered in Australia before the tragic events in the Middle East, but the drawn-out conflict gave it oxygen – and gave some anti-Semites an excuse.'
- 'Jewish Australians were also increasingly conflated with the state of Israel, leading to an increase in anti-Semitic incidents.'

[15] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security, 'Director-General of Security: Statement on the National Terrorism Threat Level' (30 January 2025) <https://www.asio.gov.au/director-general-security-statement-national-terrorism-threat-level>.
[16] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security, 'Director-General's Annual Threat Assessment 2025 (19 February 2025) <https://www.asio.gov.au/director-generals-annual-threat-assessement-2025>.

- ‘The normalisation of violent protest and intimidating behaviour lowered the threshold for provocative and potentially violent acts. Narratives originally centered on “freeing Palestine” expanded to include incitements to “kill the Jews”. Threats transitioned from harassment and intimidation to specific targeting of Jewish communities, places of worship and prominent figures.’
- ‘I am concerned these attacks have not yet plateaued.’

1.15. On 26 August 2025, the Director-General of Security joined the Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Home Affairs and the Australian Federal Police Commissioner at a press conference at Parliament House, and attributed a number of antisemitic attacks to Iran. This was a significant and widely publicised announcement, and was followed by the expulsion of Iran’s ambassador to Australia. At the press conference, the Director-General issued a short statement on antisemitic attacks. He stated that:[17]

> For the past 10 months, antisemitism has been one of ASIO’s most pressing priorities, involving the full use of our capabilities and powers. We have investigated dozens of incidents targeting Jewish communities, places of worship, businesses, and prominent individuals. ASIO now assesses the Iranian Government directed at least two and likely more attacks on Jewish interests in Australia.

1.16. ASIO prepared a ‘Holiday period 2025-26’ threat assessment in the following terms, for distribution to subscribers to the ASIO Outreach service:[18]

> The national terrorism threat level in Australia is at PROBABLE. The terrorism threat to crowded places and religious events over the 2025-26 holiday period reflects the national threat level. We have no credible information to indicate current attack planning or targeting of crowded places in Australia, including religious events, over this period. However, in the context of our current dynamic, diverse and degraded national security environment, attacks could emerge quickly with little to no warning, and would be difficult to detect.
>
> - Crowded places and events attracting large crowds are the most likely targets for a terrorist attack in Australia – with violent extremists using simple tactics and readily acquired weapons. Our greatest concern is the threat from lone actors or small cells on the edge of established groups – irrespective of motivation. We consider the concentration, or potential concentration, of people to be a key factor in determining the attractiveness of a crowded place to an attacker.
>
> - While the most likely tactic to target a crowded place remains the use of basic weapons, the use of more sophisticated tactics and emerging threats such as weaponised uncrewed aircraft systems or 3D-printed weapons is unlikely, but cannot be completely discounted.

[17] Mike Burgess, Director-General of Security (Press Conference, Parliament House, Canberra, 26 August 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-parliament-house-canberra-38>.
[18] ASIO, ‘Planned portal advice_FoWs for portal subscribers on the holiday season TA’ (5 December 2025, A28158555).

> We have no credible information to indicate planned violent protest targeting crowded-places events – including those associated with religious events – over the holiday period. However, the protest landscape in Australia is unpredictable and reactive to global events – particularly in relation to developments in the ongoing Middle East conflict, which remains a key driver of violent protest activity. Should the ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas conflict break down over the 2025-26 holiday period, protests are likely to be organised in response and could involve provocative, disruptive and violent tactics.

1.17. It can be seen from the course of the Director-General of Security's public statements from 5 August 2024 until late 2025 that ASIO publicly and repeatedly drew attention to the heightened risk of a terrorist attack and to an environment of 'disturbing escalation' of antisemitic incidents. It will be necessary to investigate whether and how ASIO and other Commonwealth and state intelligence and law enforcement agencies understood and acted on those assessments of a probable attack; and to consider the adequacy of what was said to be ASIO's 'full use of our capabilities and powers' in the context of ongoing antisemitic attacks. These are matters that will be explored in hearings. In some instances it may be necessary to take evidence in a closed hearing.

Responses to antisemitism in the lead up to 14 December 2025

1.18. As Chanukah approached in December 2025, the NSW Jewish community had experienced an unprecedented increase in antisemitic incidents.

1.19. The full scale of antisemitic incidents, both before and after 14 December 2025, will be the subject of further investigation by the Commission as part of paragraph (a) of the Terms of Reference. This section provides an outline of some of the law enforcement response to the rising incidents of antisemitism in the lead up to 14 December 2025.

1.20. Following the events on and after 7 October 2023, jurisdictions established police operations to ensure public safety in light of events in the Middle East. In NSW, Operation SHELTER was launched by the NSW Police in October 2023 after protestors set off flares and chanted antisemitic slogans at the Sydney Opera House on 9 October. The purpose of the operation was to protect public safety and community cohesion in light of the rise in antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents.[19] In Victoria, Victoria Police established Operation PARK to oversee operational

[19] The Hon Chris Minns MP, Premier of NSW, the Hon Yasmin Catley, Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, the Hon Steve Kamper MP, Minister for Multiculturalism, 'NSW Government Launches Permanent Rapid Response Unit (Media release, 25 February 2026) <https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/nsw-government-launches-permanent-rapid-response-unit>.

activities related to the Israel-Gaza conflict, including to police protests and demonstrations.[20]

1.21. The AFP established Operation LARIMAR in October 2023 to ensure public safety from politically-motivated violence connected to the conflict in the Middle East.[21]

1.22. The Australian Government responded to the increase in antisemitic incidents by banning the public display of or trade in Nazi symbols and terrorist organisation symbols, and giving the Nazi salute in December 2023.[22] Most state governments (NSW, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia) introduced or strengthened similar laws between 2022 and 2024.[23]

1.23. Throughout 2024 and 2025, antisemitic incidents including both harassment and intimidation, and the physical targeting of Jewish communities, businesses, places of worship and prominent Jewish Australians were reported. Significant acts of arson and vandalism occurred in NSW and Victoria.[24] The discovery in early 2025 of a caravan with explosives and antisemitic material in Dural, NSW, added to the concerns of the Jewish community. Police ultimately determined it was part of a fabricated terrorism plot.[25] Again, these incidents will be further explored by the Commission pursuant to paragraph (a) of the Terms of Reference.

1.24. The AFP and NSW Police responded to the heightened level of antisemitic incidents by establishing operations focused specifically on the safety and security of the Jewish community.

1.25. On 9 December 2024, the AFP launched Special Operation AVALITE to investigate threats, violence and hatred towards the Australian Jewish community and

[20] Victoria Police, *Victoria Police Annual Report 2023-2024* (October 2024) p 2 <http://www.police.vic.gov.au/victoria-police-annual-report-2023-24-accessible.pdf>.
[21] Commissioner Reece Kershaw APM, 'Senate Estimates Opening Statement' (23 October 2023) <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/speech/afp-commissioner-reece-kershaw-senate-estimates-opening-statement>.
[22] *Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Prohibited Hate Symbols and Other Measures) Act 2023* (Cth); The Hon Mark Dreyfus KC MP, Attorney-General, 'Nazi Salute and Hate Symbols Now Outlawed' (Media release, 8 January 2024) <https://markdreyfus.com/media/media-releases/nazi-salute-and-hate-symbols-now-outlawed-mark-dreyfus-kc-mp>.
[23] *Summary Offences Amendment (Nazi Symbol Prohibition) Act 2022* (Vic); *Crimes Amendment (Prohibition on Display of Nazi Symbols) Act 2022* (NSW); *Summary Offences (Nazi Salute and Symbols Prohibition) Amendment Act 2024* (SA); *Criminal Code Amendment (Prohibition on Display of Nazi Symbols or Gesture) Act 2024* (WA); *Criminal Code (Prohibited Symbols) Regulation 2024* (Qld).
[24] Executive Council of Australian Jewry, *ECAJ Report on Anti-Jewish Incidents in Australia 2025* (3 December 2025) [ECA.0001.0001.0010].
[25] Deputy Commissioner Krissy Barrett APM, 'Statement on Operation Kissinger' (Media release, 10 March 2025) <http://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-statement/afp-deputy-commissioner-national-security-krissy-barrett-statement>.

parliamentarians.[26] The first charges under AVALITE were laid in Sydney on 16 January 2025 for alleged death threats against members of a Jewish organisation.[27] By January 2025, the AFP had received 166 reports of crime and was investigating 15 serious allegations under AVALITE.[28]

1.26. In a media statement released by AFP Commissioner Reece Kershaw on 21 January 2025, he stated that:[29]

- 'There is no doubt there is an escalation of antisemitism in Australia.'
- 'Antisemitism is a disease in our community, and it needs to be aggressively attacked because history shows what happens when action is not taken against those who fuel fear and terrorise others.'
- 'The AFP has established Special Operation Avalite to target high-harm antisemitism. AFP-led Operation Ardvarna is targeting the display of prohibited symbols – both operations have made arrests and more are expected soon.'

1.27. In October 2025, the newly-appointed AFP Commissioner Krissy Barrett announced that she had established specialist AFP National Security Investigations (NSI) teams in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra to address extremism, political violence, organised crime and foreign interference, and commented in an interview with the ABC that the creation of NSI units was central to how the AFP would adapt to a changing threat landscape.[30]

1.28. By early 2025, NSW Police had established Strike Force PEARL to investigate antisemitic offences in Sydney, including vandalism and arson attacks.[31]

1.29. As noted above, the Director-General of Security later announced that ASIO had investigated dozens of incidents targeting Jewish communities, places of worship,

[26] AFP, 'AFP to lead Special Operation Avalite to investigate Anti-Semitism' (Media release, 9 December 2024) <http://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-release/afp-lead-special-operation-avalite-investigate-antisemitism>.
[27] AFP, 'First charges laid in Sydney under Special Operation Avalite' (Media release, 16 January 2025) <http://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-release/first-charges-laid-sydney-under-special-operation-avalite>.
[28] Commissioner Reece Kershaw APM, 'AFP Commissioner Reece Kershaw antisemitism statement', (Media release, 21 January 2025) <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-statement/afp-commissioner-reece-kershaw-antisemitism-statement>.
[29] Commissioner Reece Kershaw APM, 'AFP Commissioner Reece Kershaw antisemitism statement', (Media release, 21 January 2025) <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-statement/afp-commissioner-reece-kershaw-antisemitism-statement>.
[30] Commissioner Krissy Barrett APM, 'AFP launches National Security Investigations teams to target groups causing harm to social cohesion' (Media release, 8 October 2025) < https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-release/afp-launches-national-security-investigations-teams-target-groups-causing>.
[31] The Hon Christopher Minns MP, Premier of NSW ('Tougher laws against antisemitism and hatred in NSW, 6 February 2025) <https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/tougher-laws-against-antisemitism-and-hatred-nsw>.

businesses and prominent individuals in the 10 months to August 2025. At least two and likely more attacks on Jewish interests in Australia were assessed by ASIO to be Iranian government directed.[32]

1.30. In summary, in the lead up to 14 December 2025:

- the national terrorism threat level was 'PROBABLE'
- there had been a disturbing escalation in antisemitic incidents, such that antisemitism was said by ASIO to be one of ASIO's most pressing priorities, and
- government and law enforcement, recognising the threat to the Jewish community, had established a number of measures to address that threat.

1.31. This summary provides important context for assessing the effectiveness of relevant agencies in the lead up to 14 December 2025, and the decisions made regarding security arrangements for that day.

[32] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (Press Conference, Parliament House, Canberra, 26 August 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-parliament-house-canberra-38>.

Chapter 2. Security arrangements for Chanukah by the Sea

Introduction

2.1. In the context of the Bondi attack, subparagraph (c)(ii) of the Terms of Reference requires examination of the security arrangements for the Chanukah event and Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025.

2.2. This chapter outlines the Jewish holiday of Chanukah and how it is typically celebrated with community events in public spaces. It outlines the arrangements for the Chanukah by the Sea event held at Bondi on 14 December 2025, including responsibilities of stakeholders and security arrangements for the day. The adequacy of these arrangements, and in particular the NSW Police Force's (NSW Police) allocation of resources on the day, will be the subject of further exploration by the Commission.

2.3. As explained in Chapter 1, as Chanukah approached in December 2025, the NSW Jewish community was experiencing high levels of vilification. In October 2023, law enforcement agencies responded to events in Australia following the Hamas terrorist attacks and Israel's response by establishing operations focused on public safety.[33] By late December 2024, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and NSW Police had established dedicated operations to investigate antisemitic incidents – Operation SHELTER for NSW Police (commenced in October 2023 and made permanent in February 2026)[34] and Special Operation AVALITE for the AFP (commenced in December 2024).[35] The Director-General of Security, in August 2025, had issued a statement which said that antisemitism had been one of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation's more pressing priorities, having referred earlier in the year to a 'disturbing escalation' of antisemitic incidents.

[33] Australian Federal Police, *AFP Annual Report 2023-24* (October 2024) p 31 <https://www.afp.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-11/AFPAnnualReport2023-2024_1.pdf>; Media release, Premier of NSW, Minister for Multiculturalism and Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, 'NSW Government launches permanent rapid response unit' (25 February 2026) <https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-released-nsw-government-launches-permanent-rapid-response-unit>.
[34] Media release, Premier of NSW, Minister for Multiculturalism and Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, 'NSW Government launches permanent rapid response unit' (25 February 2026) <https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-released-nsw-government-launches-permanent-rapid-response-unit>.
[35] Media release, Australian Federal Police, 'AFP to lead Special Operation Avalite to investigate anti-Semitism' (9 December 2024) <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-release/afp-lead-special-operation-avalite-investigate-anti-semitism>.

2.4. The organisers of Chanukah by the Sea notified the Community Security Group NSW (CSG NSW) of the 14 December 2025 event and that up to 1,000 attendees were expected. CSG NSW notified the event organiser that it would dedicate a security team to the event. It assessed that there was a heightened likelihood of violent and/or antisemitic incidents over the Chanukah period and it asked NSW Police to provide assistance with security for the event.

2.5. The Eastern Suburbs Police Area Command (PAC) Operations Inspector asked the two Inspectors rostered on 14 December to attend the Chanukah by the Sea event, take a car crew or two and provide a high visibility policing presence, noting that there was no need to stay the entire duration.[36]

2.6. NSW Police stated that three general duties officers and one supervisor attended the event and that the Commander of the Eastern Suburbs PAC attended the event at various times.

Chanukah

Chanukah and how it is celebrated

2.7. Chanukah (also spelled Hanukkah) is a Jewish festival, also known as the 'Festival of Lights'. The eight-day festival celebrates liberation from oppression and freedom of worship and religion.

2.8. Chanukah commemorates the recapture of Jerusalem and the rededication of the Holy Temple by the Jewish Maccabees in 164 BCE. The traditional Chanukah story tells that, entering the Holy Temple to light the menorah after their victory, the Maccabees found enough pure oil to keep the temple menorah lit for one day. Despite this, the menorah burned for eight days, long enough to prepare new ritually pure oil.

2.9. A key feature of Chanukah celebrations is the lighting of a menorah (also called a chanukiah) over eight nights. 'Menorah' is the Hebrew word for lamp. The Chanukah menorah holds nine candles – one for each night, plus the 'shammash' or helper candle used to light the other eight. Traditionally, a menorah is lit in Jewish households and placed in a doorway or window. The menorah is also lit in synagogues and other public places. Special blessings are recited, often to a melody, as the menorah is lit.

[36] NSW Police, 'Emails' p 39 [NSW_PF.001.001.1381].

2.10. It is customary to celebrate the festival with Chanukah foods which are deep-fried in oil, such as donuts, to symbolise the oil from the menorah in the Holy Temple.

2.11. Chanukah is somewhat different from some other festivals in the Jewish holiday calendar, in that it is often celebrated in public rather than in the synagogue.

Chanukah celebrations in Australia

2.12. Chanukah usually falls in December, early summer in Australia. It is celebrated in major cities with public menorah lightings and outdoor community events, often in parks, organised by Jewish organisations including Chabad centres and synagogues.

2.13. Sydney and Melbourne host Australia's largest Chanukah events, attracting, across them, thousands of attendees. Chanukah at the Racecourse is Melbourne's largest public Chanukah celebration. The celebration attracted approximately 8,000 to 10,000 people in 2025.

2.14. Sydney typically hosts a series of smaller festivals in public parks throughout the 8-day festival period. The larger events may feature entertainment, such as fireworks and rides, food stalls and the lighting of a giant menorah.

2.15. Sydney was scheduled to host a range of family-friendly public cultural events over the 2025 Chanukah period of 14-21 December, at different times and places. Many of these were ticketed events, with local Jewish organisations making the arrangements to host the event in public spaces. Other events were to be held in synagogues or other buildings.

Security Arrangements at Chanukah by the Sea 2025

Background to Chanukah by the Sea

2.16. The event organiser for Chanukah by the Sea was Chabad of Bondi. Chabad of Bondi runs a synagogue in the Sydney suburb of Bondi Beach. Many of its members are Jewish families who emigrated to Australia from the former Soviet Union. Chabad of Bondi is part of the global Chabad-Lubavich organisation and philosophy, which teaches Judaism through Chabad centres and synagogues around the world.

2.17. The person responsible for initiating and overseeing the event was Rabbi Eli Schlanger OBM, who was killed in the Bondi attack. The person responsible for arranging the logistics of the event was Rabbi Yaakov Levitan OBM, the General Manager of Chabad of Bondi. He, too, was killed in the attack. Chabad of Bondi

provided the Commission with an event schedule and copies of emails arranging the event. These show the plans for the evening, which included a petting zoo for children, a rock-climbing wall, and food stalls. At 7:00pm there were to be speeches and the lighting of the menorah, followed by dancing.[37]

2.18. Chanukah by the Sea has been held at various locations along Bondi Beach over the years.[38] Approximately 10 years ago the event relocated to Archer Park, where it has been held ever since. In 2021, crowd control fencing was introduced for the event as a public health measure during the COVID-19 pandemic. On the advice of CSG NSW, fencing has been maintained for subsequent years' events as a security measure.[39]

2.19. Admission to the 14 December 2025 event was free. The event flier stated that bookings were essential. A booking link was provided on the flier through the Chabad of Bondi website.[40] Chabad of Bondi advertised the event, including through their Facebook and Instagram accounts.[41]

2.20. The advertisement included a start time of 5:00pm, and the venue: 'Bondi Beach Park, near the Children's Playground'.

Arrangements with Waverley Council

2.21. Chabad of Bondi was responsible for obtaining approval from Waverley Council to host a public event of this size in Archer Park.[42]

2.22. Chabad of Bondi submitted an event application to Waverley Council in May 2025. From November 2025, Chabad of Bondi liaised with Waverley Council about the setup for the event, including insurance cover, logistics for suppliers' arrival and fencing.[43] On 11 December, Waverley Council issued Chabad of Bondi the permit for the use of the event space.[44] Waverley Council was informed that CSG NSW would be supporting the security at the event.[45] Waverley Council provided at least one site

[37] Chabad of Bondi, Written Response to Notice C2026/0033 (16 March 2026) p 1 [CBD.8999.0001.0001].
[38] Chabad of Bondi, Written Response to Notice C2026/0033 (16 March 2026) p 1 [CBD.8999.0001.0001].
[39] Chabad of Bondi, Written Response to Notice C2026/0033 (16 March 2026) p 1 [CBD.8999.0001.0001].
[40] CSG NSW, '2025 Chanukah by the Sea – Protection Plan' (21 January 2026) p 2 [NCS.0001.0001.0020].
[41] Chabad of Bondi, Written Response to Notice C2026/0033 (16 March 2026) p 1 [CBD.8999.0001.0001].
[42] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C2026/0017 (26 February 2026) p 10 [NCS.8999.0001.0004].
[43] Waverley Council, 'Email chain re Chanukah at Bondi' [WAV.0001.0015.0001]; Waverley Council, 'Mud Map Chanukah 2025' [WAV.0001.0022.0003].
[44] Waverley Council, 'Email Chain re Chanukah by the Sea' (11 December 2025) [WAV.0001.0019.0001]; Waverley Council, 'Waverley Council Permit – Use of Open Space Outdoor Event' [WAV.0001.0001.0001].
[45] Waverley Council, 'Email chain regarding Chanukah at Bondi' (8 December 2025) [WAV.0001.0006.0001].

supervisor for the event.[46] It appears its site supervisor had a logistical role that did not involve providing security.

Security arrangements involving CSG NSW

Arrangements between CSG NSW and event organiser

2.23. CSG NSW is a Jewish community security organisation. CSG NSW's objects and relationship to intelligence and law enforcement agencies are discussed in Chapter 4. On 17 June 2025, CSG NSW notified local Jewish community groups by email of the need to submit an event notification form requesting event security in advance of scheduled events.[47]

2.24. On 30 October 2025, CSG NSW emailed Jewish community organisations requesting that event notification forms for Chanukah events be submitted as early as possible to ensure CSG NSW could provide the most effective protection.[48]

2.25. On 20 November 2025, Chabad of Bondi's General Manager, alerted CSG NSW's Security Operations Manager by phone to the planned Chanukah by the Sea event and was advised to submit the Event Notification Form to assist CSG NSW to plan security measures for the event.[49] CSG NSW's Security Operations Manager followed up the call with an email on 21 November. The Event Notification Form for Chanukah by the Sea was submitted to CSG NSW later that day.[50] It stated that up to 1,000 people were expected at the event.

2.26. On 21 November 2025, CSG NSW event security advised Chabad of Bondi by email that, in light of current security risks facing the community, CSG NSW would dedicate a security team to the event.[51] CSG NSW provided security advice to Chabad of Bondi based on the existing plan to hold the event at Archer Park.[52]

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[46] Waverley Council, 'Email chain regarding Chanukah at Bondi' (8 December 2025) [WAV.0001.0006.0001]; Waverley Council, 'Waverley Council Tax Invoice #309398' [WAV.0001.0003.0001].
[47] CSG NSW, 'Email sent to all orgs – June 2025' (16 June 2025) [NCS.0001.0001.0011].
[48] CSG NSW, 'Email sent to orgs for Chanukah events – October 2025' (30 October 2025) [NCS.0001.0001.0012].
[49] CSG NSW, 'Correspondence with Event Organiser – 21.11.25' (21 November 2025) [NCS.0001.0001.0004]; CSG NSW 'Call Log' [NCS.0001.0001.0002].
[50] CSG NSW, 'Correspondence with Event Organiser – 21.11.25' (21 November 2025) [NCS.0001.0001.0004]; see also 'CSG Internal Form – Event' [NCS.0001.0001.0008].
[51] CSG NSW, 'Correspondence with Event Organiser – 21.11.2025 (2)' (21 November 2025) [NCS.0001.0001.0005].
[52] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C2026/0017 (26 February 2026) p 10 [NCS.8999.0001.0004].

2.27. In its 21 November correspondence, CSG NSW informed Chabad of Bondi of its planned operating procedures.[53] CSG NSW also advised Chabad of Bondi that an experienced team leader responsible for organising the security of the event would be in contact to discuss arrangements and could provide security advice encompassing the entire event. CSG NSW advised it would contact and liaise with any police authorities and external contractors as necessary.[54]

2.28. On 4 December, CSG NSW's Event and Protection Coordinator emailed Chabad of Bondi to ask for further details of the event and to enquire about whether Chabad of Bondi had already organised temporary fencing.[55] Chabad of Bondi responded the same day with information about the fencing provider for the 2024 event, asking if CSG NSW could assist with the arrangements; fencing was subsequently booked by Chabad of Bondi.[56]

CSG NSW Protection Plan for Chanukah by the Sea 2025

2.29. CSG NSW prepared a protection plan for the 2025 Chanukah by the Sea event, which included its security arrangements for the event.[57] Similar plans had been prepared for the event in previous years, in each case responding to the then prevailing risk environment and event arrangements.

2.30. CSG NSW's Protection Plan for the 2025 event noted the National Terrorism Threat Level was 'probable'. CSG's own assessment of the threat level was stated as 'Heightened – Community on heightened alert'.[58] CSG NSW passed on its threat assessment to NSW Police on 8 December 2025, characterising its threat rating as 'high', and stating 'a terrorist attack against the NSW Jewish community is *likely* and there is a high level of antisemitic vilification'.[59]

2.31. The Protection Plan identified several key security weaknesses of the event, which included its location in a public place.

[53] CSG NSW, 'Letter to Event Organiser (and CSG Letter (Security) Template) – 21.11.25' (21 November 2025) p 1 [NCS.0001.0001.0018].
[54] CSG NSW, 'Letter to Event Organiser (and CSG Letter (Security) Template) – 21.11.25' (21 November 2025) p 1 [NCS.0001.0001.0018].
[55] CSG NSW, 'Correspondence with Event Organiser – 04.12.25' (4 December 2025) [NCS.0001.0001.0003].
[56] CSG NSW, 'Correspondence with Event Organiser – 04.12.25' (4 December 2025) [NCS.0001.0001.0003].
[57] CSG NSW, '2025 Chanukah by the Sea – Protection Plan' (21 January 2026) p 2 [NCS.0001.0001.0020].
[58] CSG NSW, '2025 Chanukah by the Sea – Protection Plan' (21 January 2026) p 8 [NCS.0001.0001.0020] NSW Police, 'Email to NSW Police – 08.12.25, [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0247].
[59] CSG NSW, 'Email to NSW Police – 08.12.25' (8 December 2025) [NCS.0001.0001.0013]; NSW Police, 'Email and attachment' (8 December 2025) [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0244; NSW_PF.0001.0003.0245].

2.32. CSG NSW identified, as the main strength of the venue, that the 'event will be fenced off to control access/egress'.[60] The temporary fencing arranged for the event encompassed the northernmost corner of Archer Park, between Campbell Parade and Queen Elizabeth Drive. This area was normally an unfenced, open space with a small number of mature trees and two covered seating areas.

2.33. The Protection Plan contained a scatter graph assessing the threat and risk of attacks on, or interferences with, the event. This plotted the magnitude of the assessed threat and the associated assessed risk. It identified threats of different kinds.[61]

2.34. The Protection Plan assigned a CSG NSW team to the event. The CSG NSW member overseeing access was to be stationed at the barrier with other CSG NSW members.[62]

2.35. The Protection Plan did not make provision for armed CSG personnel. That is because NSW law does not permit CSG NSW personnel to carry firearms at events in public places.[63]

CSG NSW protection at the Chanukah by the Sea event

2.36. CSG NSW provided information on the number of personnel present at the Chanukah by the Sea event.[64]

2.37. The team deployed to the event included trained and licensed CSG NSW security guards and CSG NSW volunteers.[65]

2.38. A briefing was provided to the CSG NSW security team in advance of the event, with an overview of the event, timeline, personnel deployment, uniform, threat intelligence, physical security measures and weaknesses, possible causes of attack and operational orders.[66]

Security arrangements involving NSW Police

2.39. CSG NSW produces threat assessments for major Jewish festivals throughout the calendar year.

[60] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C2026/0017 (26 February 2026) p 11 [NCS.8999.0001.0004].
[61] CSG NSW, '2025 Chanukah by the Sea – Protection Plan' (21 January 2026) p 16 [NCS.0001.0001.0020].
[62] CSG NSW, '2025 Chanukah by the Sea – Protection Plan' (21 January 2026) p 22 [NCS.0001.0001.0020].
[63] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C2026/0017 (26 February 2026) p 11 [NCS.8999.0001.0004].
[64] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C02026/0017 (26 March 2026) p 12 [NCS.8999.0001.0005].
[65] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C02026/0017 (26 March 2026) p 12 [NCS.8999.0001.0005].
[66] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C02026/0017 (26 March 2026) p 12 [NCS.8999.0001.0005].

2.40. On 28 November 2025, CSG NSW provided NSW Police with a 'Jewish Festival Calendar Notification – Chanukah, 2025', which contained its CSG Chanukah Threat Assessment and details of 14 events between 14 and 21 December across Sydney, including Chanukah by the Sea. The document was emailed to 13 NSW Police officers in various PACs, the Eastern Suburbs PAC Intelligence Unit, the Ku-Ring-Gai PAC Intelligence Unit, the Kings Cross PAC Intelligence Unit and the Inner West PAC Intelligence Unit.[67]

2.41. On the same day, a senior intelligence analyst in the Eastern Suburbs PAC Intelligence Unit forwarded the email from CSG NSW to the Eastern Suburbs PAC Operations Unit email address.[68]

2.42. The CSG NSW Chanukah threat assessment recorded under the heading 'heightened risk', that the likelihood of violent and/or antisemitic incidents was elevated due to the visibility of identifiably Jewish individuals in public spaces and the prominence of the festival. It stated that 'CSG continues to record unprecedented volumes of antisemitic incidents, reinforcing that the threat environment remains heightened'.[69]

2.43. In the part of the document listing the scheduled Chanukah events, CSG NSW sought 'assistance from NSW Police to ensure community safety', and referred to the 'volatile and dynamic threat environment'.[70]

2.44. In information provided to the Commission, NSW Police summarised how decisions were made about the allocation of police resources to Chanukah events scheduled to be held in Sydney on 14 December 2025. NSW Police said that decisions on event resource allocation were 'informed by a risk assessment process', taking into account a range of factors including relevant intelligence, the size of the event, dignitary attendance, the 'type' and 'subject matter' of the event, the likely attendees/participants at the event, the current crime/policing situation and the local physical environment.[71] Where warranted, a comprehensive written risk assessment would be produced. Otherwise, the risk assessment process would be

[67] CSG NSW, 'CSG Chanukah Threat Assessment 2025' (28 November 2025) [NCS.0001.0001.0006]; CSG NSW, '2025 Jewish Festival Calendar Notification' [NCS.0001.0001.0007]; NSW Police, 'CSG Chanukah Threat Assessment 2025' (28 November 2025) [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0245].
[68] NSW Police, 'Emails' [NSW_PF.001.001.1381].
[69] CSG NSW, 'CSG Chanukah Threat Assessment 2025' [NCS.0001.0001.0007]; CSG NSW, 'CSG Chanukah Threat Assessment 2025' [NCS.0001.0001.0006]; NSW Police, 'CSG Chanukah Threat Assessment 2025' (28 November 2025) [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0245].
[70] CSG NSW, 'CSG Chanukah Threat Assessment 2025' [NCS.0001.0001.0007]; NSW Police, 'CSG Chanukah Threat Assessment 2025' (28 November 2025) [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0245].
[71] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 19 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].

less formal.[72] No written risk assessment for Chanukah by the Sea 2025 has been provided by NSW Police.

2.45. On 8 December 2025, CSG NSW sent an email to NSW Police advising of 13 upcoming Jewish communal events in the Eastern Suburbs PAC. The email was sent to email addresses associated with intelligence in Operation SHELTER and the Eastern Suburbs PAC.[73]

2.46. The email commenced by requesting assistance with any policing measures that the Command may deem appropriate, and stated that the current Security Level Alert for the NSW Jewish community is 'HIGH. A terrorist attack against the NSW Jewish Community is *likely* and there is a *high* level of antisemitic vilification'.[74]

2.47. The email then listed the event details for the 13 events (including event name, location, anticipated attendees). It stated that the events were prioritised based on specific requirements.[75]

2.48. The email went on to state that CSG NSW was 'requesting deployment of resources for the entirety of the event', including for Chanukah by the Sea. The differing requests were said to be 'intended to support your operational planning and discretion'.[76]

2.49. As noted, CSG NSW's email of 8 December 2025 was sent to an email address associated with the Operation SHELTER Intelligence Unit.

2.50. The Commission has not received information that Operation SHELTER was involved in the security arrangements for Chanukah by the Sea on 14 December 2025. The role of Operation SHELTER in this regard will be the subject of further exploration by the Commission.

2.51. On the same day as the event notification email, CSG NSW's Chief Operating Officer emailed the Inspector in the Eastern Suburbs PAC to seek a meeting or phone call to discuss the Chanukah events.[77]

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[72] NSW PF, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0027 (18 February 2026) p 27 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].
[73] CSG NSW, 'Email to NSW Police – 08.12.25' [NCS.0001.0001.0013]; NSW Police, 'Email to NSW Police – 08.12.25' [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0247].
[74] CSG NSW, 'Email to NSW Police – 08.12.25' (8 December 2025) [NCS.0001.0001.0013]; NSW Police, 'Email to NSW Police – 08.12.25' [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0247]. Emphasis in the original.
[75] CSG NSW, 'Email to NSW Police – 08.12.25' [NCS.0001.0001.0013]; NSW Police, 'Email to NSW Police – 08.12.25' [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0247].
[76] CSG NSW, 'Email to NSW Police – 08.12.25 [NCS.0001.0001.0013]; NSW Police, 'Email to NSW Police – 08.12.25' [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0247].
[77] NSW Police, 'Coffee or Phone Call Catch Up' [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0246].

2.52. NSW Police stated that the Inspector spoke with CSG NSW's Chief Operating Officer by telephone on 8 and 11 December 2025.[78] NSW Police further stated that the Eastern Suburbs PAC 'received no specific request for dedicated police resources for' Chanukah by the Sea or Chanukah in the Park. However, NSW Police acknowledges that there was a request for police presence at these events.[79]

2.53. NSW Police stated that the event organiser was responsible for security for Chanukah by the Sea, and any police involvement was supplementary and focused on maintaining public order and community safety. Although it is possible for community event organisers to request an increased or visible policing presence at an event on a user-pays basis, there has been no evidence provided that this User Charges Policy was invoked for, or even applied to, Chanukah by the Sea.[80]

2.54. CSG NSW stated that it was advised in a telephone call on 10 or 11 December, by an officer of NSW Police that NSW Police 'could not provide static resources' for Chanukah by the Sea, but that 'Eastern Suburbs PAC would provide mobile patrols with taskings to check in and monitor the event'.[81]

2.55. Any differences between the information provided by CSG NSW and by NSW Police with respect to their communication about security arrangements for Chanukah by the Sea cannot be resolved on the information presently available to the Commission. This will need to be the subject of further inquiry and evidence.

2.56. Resourcing decisions for Chanukah by the Sea were made by the Operations Inspector at the Eastern Suburbs PAC, supported by the Commander who had overall responsibility for resource deployment within the Command.[82]

2.57. NSW Police advised that the Operations Inspector and Commander had access to the CSG NSW Jewish Festival Calendar Notification, the email of 8 December from CSG NSW requesting 'resources for the entirety' of the Chanukah by the Sea event and an events schedule from Waverley Council.[83] The Waverley Council Event Schedule

[78] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 20 [89] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[79] NSW Police Written Response Summons to Produce 2026/0027 (18 February 2026) pp 13 and 27 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].
[80] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0027 (18 February 2026) p 5 and 31 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].
[81] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C2026/0017, (26 February 2026) p 1 [NCS.8999.0001.0004].
[82] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 19 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[83] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009, (4 March 2026) p 19 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].

listed five events on 14 December 2025. The two largest events were Chanukah in the Park and Chanukah by the Sea.[84]

2.58. NSW Police stated that the Operations Inspector and Commander also drew on local knowledge, history of the event and broader context, including knowledge of local crime issues, recent incidents relating to antisemitic crime within the Command and State, and competing operational demands including other events or operations occurring within the Command.[85]

2.59. On 10 December 2025, the Eastern Suburbs PAC Commander flagged in a weekly report to the Region Commander that 'several Chanukah events across the Command…[are] all being managed by local taskings' between 14 and 20 December 2025.[86]

2.60. NSW Police stated that Chanukah by the Sea and Chanukah in the Park (Dover Heights) were the only pre-planned events in the Eastern Suburbs PAC that requested a police presence on 14 December.[87]

2.61. Also on 10 December 2025, the Commander tasked the Operations Inspector to produce a Briefing Note on the Chanukah events in both the Eastern Suburbs and Eastern Beaches PACs. The Briefing Note, titled 'Jewish Festival of Chanukah – Eastern Suburbs and Eastern Beaches PACs', listed 15 Jewish events over the eight-day period, and stated police attached to Eastern Suburbs and Eastern Beaches PACs would be 'tasked accordingly to these events'.[88] The Briefing Note also noted:[89]

> Key stakeholders including the Community Security Group (CSG), local councils and event organisers have been engaged by police, with both [Eastern Suburbs and Eastern Beaches] PACs providing support to ensure a safe and secure festival for the event and non-event community. CSG will deploy personnel to most events, with additional resources deployed to the major events as outlined.

2.62. The Briefing Note identified Chanukah by the Sea, Chanukah by the Bay and Chanukah in the Park as major events and said 'Eastern Suburbs PAC Commander, Command Inspector, and additional HVP [high visibility policing] teams will be in

[84] NSW Police, 'Emails' p 5 [NSW_PF.001.001.1381].
[85] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 19 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[86] NSW Police, 'RE: Weekly Report' [NSW_PF.0001.0003.0243].
[87] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0027 (18 February 2026) p 27 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].
[88] NSW Police, 'Chanukah ES/EB PACs' [NSW_PF.001.001.1381].
[89] NSW Police, 'ESPAC Response – 1. Briefing Note – Chanukah Events ESPAC EBPAC' p 1 [NSW_PF.001.001.0226].

attendance to provide oversight, maintain a strong visible presence, and ensure public safety'.[90]

2.63. On 11 December 2025, the Eastern Suburbs PAC Commander provided the Briefing Note to the Central Metropolitan Region by email, as an addition to her weekly report.[91]

2.64. Once the note was authorised by the Commander on 11 December, the Operations Inspector emailed the two Command Inspectors who would be on duty on 14 December to ask that they attend Chanukah by the Sea and Chanukah in the Park. The email said: 'please take a car crew or two with you and provide a HVP presence. No need to stay the entire duration, but your presence will ensure the community feel safe'.[92] One of the Command Inspectors responded 'Copy. Will do'.[93]

2.65. It is unclear whether NSW Police resourcing for Chanukah by the Sea outlined in the Briefing Note had been settled at the time CSG NSW's Chief Operating Officer spoke to the Eastern Suburbs Command Inspector on 11 December.

2.66. The Eastern Suburbs PAC's 'Command Inspector Shift Report' for 14 December, divided events requiring police attention into 'monitoring' or 'tasking'. 'Tasking' is understood to mean the event was specifically included in the work of mobile patrols. Chanukah by the Sea and Chanukah in the Park were listed as requiring police 'taskings', and a third event, donut making at another communal building in Bondi, was listed as requiring 'monitoring'.[94]

2.67. Information provided by NSW Police is that three general duties officers and one supervisor were allocated to the Chanukah by the Sea event and that the Eastern Suburbs PAC Commander attended the event at 'various times'.[95]

CSG NSW and NSW Police support to other public Chanukah events on the evening of 14 December 2025

2.68. There were two other significant Chanukah events in Sydney on the evening of 14 December 2025, respectively organised by Dover Heights Shule (Chanukah in the

[90] NSW Police, 'ESPAC Response – 1. Briefing Note – Chanukah Events ESPAC EBPAC' p 1 [NSW_PF.001.001.0226].
[91] NSW Police, 'Chanukah ES/EB PACs' [NSW_PF.001.001.1381]].
[92] NSW Police, 'Emails' p 39 [NSW_PF.001.001.1381].
[93] NSW Police, 'Inspector Emails' p 39 [NSW_PF.001.001.1381].
[94] NSW Police, 'Collated CI Handover – 11122025 to 14122025' p 29 [NSW_PF.001.001.1380].
[95] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0027 (18 February 2026) p 13 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].

Park) and Chabad North Shore (Chanukah on the Green). There was CSG NSW and NSW Police presence at these events.

Chanukah in the Park

2.69. Chanukah in the Park was held in the Eastern Suburbs PAC, scheduled from 5:30pm to 7:30pm, with 1,943 registered guests.

2.70. CSG NSW provided security for Chanukah in the Park. The event organiser, Dover Heights Shule, supplemented CSG NSW guards with unarmed private security guards to protect the event.[96]

2.71. Dover Heights Shule stated that NSW Police were present at its event but 'exact numbers and frequency of their visits are not known'.[97]

2.72. NSW Police stated that one Inspector and two General Duties officers were assigned to this event. The Eastern Suburbs PAC Commander also attended the event at some point.[98]

Chanukah on the Green

2.73. Chanukah on the Green, in the Ku-Ring-Gai PAC, was scheduled from 5.00pm to 8:30pm with 1,776 registered guests.

2.74. CSG NSW security was present on the day.[99]

2.75. According to Chabad North Shore, CSG NSW was responsible for liaising with NSW Police and the organisers had no visibility of police involvement or attendance.[100]

[96] Dover Heights Shule, Written Response to Notice to Produce C2026/0030 (27 February 2026) p 2 [DOV.8999.0001.0001].
[97] Dover Heights Shule, Written Response to Notice to Produce C2026/0030 (27 February 2026) p 1 [DOV.8999.0001.0001].
[98] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0027 (18 February 2026), pp 19-20 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].
[99] Chabad North Shore, Written Response to Notice to Produce C2026/0037 (13 March 2026) p 4 [CNS.0001.0001.0001].
[100] Chabad North Shore, Written Response to Notice to Produce C2026/0037, (13 March 2026) p 6 [CNS.0001.0001.0001].

2.76. NSW Police stated that four high visibility police officers were tasked to attend Chanukah on the Green in addition to General Duties officers who were tasked to patrol.[101]

[101] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0027 (18 February 2026), pp 19-20 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].

Chapter 3. Emergency response

3.1. Paragraph (c)(v) of the Royal Commission's Terms of Reference requires examination of the emergency response to the attack on 14 December 2025. An understanding of that emergency response is also relevant to whether intelligence and law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness and whether any lessons can be identified for security and law enforcement agencies when responding to similar attacks in the future, for the purposes of paragraphs (c)(vi) and (ix) respectively. In this connection, the Terms of Reference are directed towards systemic issues and potential improvements of policy, process or procedure. In the discussion that follows, no criticism is intended of individuals who attended the scene to assist and render aid as first responders. Their bravery in the face of the attack can only be commended.

3.2. This chapter first outlines the role of Commonwealth and state agencies and emergency services involved in responding to an attack and, secondly, describes the immediate actions of those agencies and services, and some community organisations, when responding to the attack at Bondi, so far as those actions can be discerned from the information provided to the Commission prior to finalisation of this Interim Report.

Framework for emergency response by Commonwealth and state agencies

National

3.3. The Australian Government Crisis Management Framework, which was revised in September 2025, governs national crisis management arrangements.[102] It recognises that states and territories are the 'first responders to incidents that occur within their jurisdictions'.[103] But, as the National Counter-Terrorism Plan developed by the Australia New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC) emphasises, the Framework involves a coordinated response between governments, the private sector and the community, in light of the '[c]ross-sectoral consequences' of terrorism.[104] In the event of a terrorist attack, the states and territories are

[102] Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Australian Government Crisis Management Framework* (September 2025) p 5.
[103] Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Australian Government Crisis Management Framework* (September 2025) p 6.
[104] ANZCTC, *National Counter-Terrorism Plan* (5th ed, 2024), p 7 at [8]-[9].

responsible for seeking assistance as required, and for consulting with the Australian Government on the need to declare a National Terrorist Situation.[105]

3.4. The ANZCTC has developed and released Australia's Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism and Active Armed Offender Guidelines for Crowded Places.[106] The Guidelines observe that the 'dynamic and unpredictable nature of active armed offender incidents' means that there is no single best practice for the owners and operators of crowded places to respond to an incident and that specialist police may be unable to respond to a scene immediately.[107] There are also guidelines for improvised explosive devices in crowded places.[108]

New South Wales

3.5. A terrorist act constitutes an emergency which requires a significant and co-ordinated response under the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (NSW) (*SERM Act*). The State Emergency Management Plan is issued by the Minister for Emergency Services under s 12 of the *SERM Act*. Section 14 of the *SERM Act* creates a State Emergency Management Committee, membership of which includes the Commissioner of Police and the heads of the emergency services. This Committee developed the NSW Counter Terrorism Plan, the latest version of which was released in July 2025. The Plan was approved by NSW Police and is consistent with the National Counter-Terrorism Plan.[109]

3.6. One of the goals of the NSW Counter Terrorism Plan is to 'provide clarity for agencies with emergency management responsibilities regarding command and control arrangements specific to incidents of terrorism'.[110] It emphasises that NSW Police has operational responsibility for responding to a terrorist attack and is the 'Combat Agency' for the purposes of the State Emergency Management Plan, although various other structures (such as an Emergency Operations Controller) can assist in coordinating other agencies. While the emergency management arrangements designate a lead agency as the Combat Agency responsible for responding to a particular threat, the arrangements are intended to reflect an all-agencies approach, recognising that 'no one agency can address all the impacts of a particular hazard'

[105] ANZCTC, *National Counter-Terrorism Plan* (5th ed, 2024), p 11.
[106] ANZCTC, *Australia's Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places From Terrorism* (2023); ANZCTC, *Active Armed Offender Guidelines for Crowded Places* (2023).
[107] ANZCTC, *Active Armed Offender Guidelines for Crowded Places* (2023) at pp 8-9.
[108] ANZCTC, *Improvised Explosive Device (IEC) Guidelines for Crowded Places* (2023).
[109] NSW State Emergency Management Committee, *NSW Counter Terrorism Plan* (July 2025) p 5 at [1.2].
[110] NSW State Emergency Management Committee, *NSW Counter Terrorism Plan* (July 2025) p 6 at [1.7].

and also acknowledging that volunteers play critical roles, both formally and spontaneously, in emergency management.[111]

3.7. The NSW Counter Terrorism Plan refers to both 'a protracted incident, such as the 2022 shootings in Wieambilla, Queensland' and to 'a rapidly evolving incident that is resolved in a short period, such as the 2024 incident at Christ The Good Shepherd, Wakeley'. The Plan addresses the arrangements that should be put in place for a protracted incident in some detail.[112] The appropriate arrangements for a rapidly evolving incident are necessarily less detailed.

3.8. NSW Police has its own Active Armed Offender Response Guidelines, which were most recently revised in February 2024. Those Guidelines acknowledge that:[113]

> First responders to an active armed offender incident will usually be required to act quickly and decisively. They may need to confront an active armed offender in a potentially high risk, uncontrolled and largely unpredictable environment to save lives. First responders to an active armed offender incident have a duty as a police officer to protect the public from injury or death and should be prepared to resolve the violence they encounter.
>
> First responders adopting this approach to an active armed offender incident cannot do so without regard for their safety or for that of those around them.

3.9. In relation to 'Response Strategy Considerations', the Active Armed Offender Response Guidelines identify that the number of casualties is likely to be affected by factors including the 'rapidity of response by appropriately equipped and trained police officers' and the offender's ability to move around freely.[114]

3.10. NSW Police also provided the Royal Commission with a number of policy documents developed by the Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics Command within NSW Police to guide the response to a terrorist attack. The policies set out a tailored command structure, with particular policy, strategic, operational and tactical responsibilities for officers within that structure.[115] They acknowledge that NSW Police may be required to perform many functions in the emergency response

[111] NSW Government, *State Emergency Management Plan* (December 2023) pp 8-9 at [120], [122] and [132]-[133].
[112] NSW State Emergency Management Committee, *NSW Counter Terrorism Plan* (July 2025) pp 20-21 at [5.2].
[113] NSW Police, *Active Armed Offender Response Guidelines* (February 2024) p 4 [NSW_PF.001.001.0624].
[114] NSW Police, *Active Armed Offender Response Guidelines* (February 2024) p 10 [NSW_PF.001.001.0624].
[115] NSW Police, *Commissioner's Executive Team Terrorism Handbook* (December 2020) [NSW_PF.001.001.0633]; NSW Police, *Police Commander's Terrorism Handbook* (March 2022) [NSW_PF.001.001.0635]; NSW Police, *Police Forward Commander's Terrorism Handbook* (March 2022) [NSW_PF.001.001.0636].

to a terrorist attack, including medical and welfare functions, family management and witness and information management.[116]

3.11. The extent to which these policies were able to be implemented at Bondi on 14 December 2025, their utility in guiding the emergency response and whether the policies are fit for purpose are matters of ongoing inquiry by the Commission.

3.12. Within the Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics, the Public Order & Riot Squad (PORS) and the Tactical Operations Group, including the Tactical Operations Unit (TOU) and the Rescue and Bomb Disposal Unit (RBDU), are particularly relevant to any response to a terrorist attack.[117] The PORS is staffed by full time officers who are trained to assist with large scale operations and high risk incidents, including to provide a rapid active armed offender response. The TOU and RBDU provide a specialist high risk response capability.

3.13. Speaking generally, in response to a terrorist attack, NSW Police officers may exercise:

- the general powers conferred by the *Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002* (NSW)
- the conditional powers in the *Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002* (NSW), such as additional stop and search powers, and
- powers under the *SERM Act*, such as to take safety measures under s 61 if there are reasonable grounds for doing so for the purpose of protecting persons from injury or death, including closing streets, thoroughfares or footpaths to traffic or people.

3.14. When responding to a terrorist attack, NSW Police is supported by other emergency services. In particular, NSW Ambulance is to provide a medical response by establishing a structured and coordinated command system, undertaking prioritised casualty management and providing out-of-hospital emergency care.[118] In relation to terrorist attacks, Fire and Rescue NSW operates under the command of NSW Police and its role is to support NSW Police and other agencies.[119] It is responsible for providing a staging area at an appropriate site, if required.[120]

[116] See NSW Police, *Incident Reception Centres Standard Operating Procedures* (February 2022) [NSW_PF.001.001.0632].
[117] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons NSW-STP 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) [6] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[118] NSW Government, *State Emergency Management Plan* (December 2023) at p 95.
[119] Fire and Rescue NSW, *Standard Operational Guideline check sheet 8.7 Terrorist incidents* (April 2018) [FIR.0001.0003.0014]; Fire and Rescue NSW, *Standard Operational Guideline 8.7 Terrorist incidents* (April 2018) [FIR.0001.0003.0015].
[120] NSW State Emergency Management Committee, *NSW Counter Terrorism Plan* (July 2025) p 30.

Emergency response to attack

3.15. It is difficult to compile a precise and accurate timeline of events that unfolded rapidly on the evening of 14 December 2025. Time stamps variously recorded for events or conduct (for example, the time a call was placed or footage was captured) offer reference points that may vary within a margin of error that is significant to a timeline of this nature. Acknowledging these limitations, the following narrative of the actions of first responders and aspects of the wider emergency response can be drawn from documents provided to the Royal Commission prior to finalisation of this Interim Report.

3.16. How the attack unfolded is the subject of ongoing investigation by JCTT-NSW. More information may yet come to light. In those circumstances, it is not possible to be definitive in any conclusion about those events.

Response of NSW Police

3.17. This section of the timeline sets out NSW Police's response and in light of the pending criminal proceedings is contained in the confidential report. Following finalisation of any criminal proceedings arising from the attack, this section should be released publicly.

Response of other emergency services and first responders

3.18. At 6:43pm – about one minute after the shooting began – a new Inter-CAD Electronic Message Systems (ICEMS) was created by NSW Police notifying NSW Ambulance of the attack for proactive tasking. Fire and Rescue NSW and the Transport Management Centre, part of Transport for NSW, were added to the joint incident at 6:49pm.[121] The ICEMS is a secure digital network that allows emergency services to share, request and transfer incident information between their separate CAD systems.[122]

3.19. Surf Life Saving NSW (SLS) was added to a joint incident with NSW Police at 7:19pm.[123] SLS is an emergency services organisation for the purposes of the *SERM Act*. However, SLS has told the Royal Commission that it was unable to

[121] NSW Police, 'Incident Log 733831-14122025 (Primary CAD)' pp 12, 42 [NSW_PF.0001.0006.0139]; Fire and Rescue NSW, 'Commissioner's Note Bondi Terrorist Incident' (9 February 2026) p 3 [FIR.0001.0002.0003].
[122] Written response of Steven Pearce, Chief Executive Officer of Surf Life Saving NSW (20 March 2026) p 7 [SLS.8999.0001.0001].
[123] NSW Police, 'Incident Log 734002-14122025 (Secondary CAD)' p 122 [NSW_PF.001.001.0168].

communicate with NSW Ambulance via ICEMS on 14 December 2025 because there is no agreement in place between them for that purpose.[124]

3.20. Ambulances began to be assigned to attend the scene from 6:49pm. The first NSW Ambulance arrived 4 minutes later at 6:53pm.[125] The CAD logs show that more vehicles continued to arrive every couple of minutes thereafter, with 23 vehicles having arrived by 7:15pm. The ICEMS log indicates that NSW Police sent various messages about where the assistance of NSW Ambulance was required.

3.21. Deputy Commissioner of NSW Ambulance, Wayne McKenna, provided a statement to the Commission outlining the response of NSW Ambulance to the attack. He said that a total of 53 vehicles were recorded as responding to the attack, along with three rescue helicopters.[126] Eleven vehicles attended the scene on more than one occasion.[127] The personnel from NSW Ambulance who were involved in responding to the attack included 74 paramedics of differing clinical scope (for example, frontline paramedics, intensive care paramedics, special operations paramedics and critical care paramedics), nine aeromedical doctors and 10 commanders.[128]

3.22. According to NSW Police records, a total of 55 patients were either transported or self-reported to a public hospital as a result of the attack.[129]

3.23. A significant volume of emergency first aid was provided by community organisations and civilians in the aftermath of the attack. Notably this included lifeguards employed by Waverley Council and volunteer surf life savers, and responders associated with Community Health Support. It also included an Emergency Medical Response unit from Hatzolah, a volunteer emergency medical service within the Jewish community, which was present at Chanukah by the Sea.[130] Hatzolah has informed the Royal Commission that two of its volunteers were present, and a further four volunteers attended to provide medical aid after the attack.[131]

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[124] Written Response of Steven Pearce, Chief Executive Officer of Surf Life Saving NSW (20 March 2026) pp 7-8 [SLS.8999.0001.0001].
[125] NSW Ambulance, 'Incident Detail Report' (14 December 2025) [AMB.0001.0001.0001]; NSW Ambulance, Statement of Deputy Commissioner Wayne McKenna (25 March 2026) [21] [STAT.0001.0001.0003].
[126] NSW Ambulance, Statement of Deputy Commissioner Wayne McKenna (25 March 2026) [15] [STAT.0001.0001.0003].
[127] NSW Ambulance, Statement of Deputy Commissioner Wayne McKenna (25 March 2026) [21] [STAT.0001.0001.0003].
[128] NSW Ambulance, Statement of Deputy Commissioner Wayne McKenna (25 March 2026) [19] [STAT.0001.0001.0003].
[129] See also NSW Police, 'Indigo Report Bondi Beach Shooting' p 9 [NSW_PF.0001.0006.0021].
[130] See Waverley Council, 'First Aid Plan for Chanukah by the Sea 2025' [WAV.0001.0002.0001].
[131] Written response of Rabbi Mendy Litzman OAM, Founder and President, Chevra Hatzolah Sydney Inc, [CHE.8999.0001.0001].

3.24. Fifteen lifeguards employed by Waverley Council provided first aid treatment. Only 11 of them were on duty at the time.[132] The lifeguards had various medical and first aid qualifications, including for resuscitation and pain management.[133] The medical equipment and supplies available to the lifeguards were drawn on in significant numbers. For example, five defibrillators (three of which were stored at Bondi Beach, one at Tamarama Beach and one at Bronte Beach) were used, as were 1000 gauze swabs; 300 bandages; six tourniquets; 60 inhalers of emergency pain relief; and 40 oxygen masks (30 for adults and 10 for children).[134]

3.25. Both North Bondi Surf Life Saving Club and Bondi Surf Bathers Life Saving Club were separately hosting end of year celebrations on 14 December 2025. In the event, there were 85 volunteer lifesavers present at Bondi. Without being tasked or requested, volunteer lifesavers assisted with evacuating, treating and triaging those caught in the attack. SLS has reported that they used seven defibrillators available across the two clubs; all available first aid supplies at both clubs; and 20 surf rescue boards as makeshift stretchers for the wounded.[135]

3.26. Community Health Support (CHS) is a charitable organisation within the Jewish community that provides first aid and urgent medical assistance. Seventeen CHS members attended Bondi on the evening of 14 December 2025 comprising four doctors, one paramedic, one nurse and 11 emergency medical responders. The latter all had completed advanced first aid and resuscitation training.[136] Another three persons in attendance at Chanukah by the Sea were associated with CHS, but not present in that capacity.[137] The CHS responders had operational medical kits including tourniquets; defibrillator equipment; haemostatic dressings; vital signs monitoring equipment; and oxygen masks.[138]

3.27. Beyond first aid, logistical support for the emergency response was provided by Fire and Rescue NSW and Transport for NSW. Following a request by NSW Ambulance, Fire and Rescue NSW were tasked to assist with lighting and to set up tents for the continued triage and medical aid being rendered at the scene, as well as for the collection of forensic evidence, and to establish a temporary morgue.[139] The records of Fire and Rescue NSW show that it deployed 16 resources,

[132] Written Response of Waverley Council (20 March 2026) [1.1] [WAV.8999.0001.0001].
[133] Written Response of Waverley Council (20 March 2026) [2.1] [WAV.8999.0001.0001].
[134] Written Response of Waverley Council (20 March 2026) [4.1] [WAV.8999.0001.0001].
[135] Written response of Steven Pearce, Chief Executive Officer of Surf Life Saving NSW (20 March 2026) pp 5-6 [SLS.8999.0001.0001].
[136] Written Response of Jesse Lenn, Executive Director CHS (17 March 2026) [3] [CHS.8999.0001.0001].
[137] Written Response of Jesse Lenn, Executive Director CHS (17 March 2026) [2] [CHS.8999.0001.0001].
[138] Written Response of Jesse Lenn, Executive Director CHS (17 March 2026) [5] [CHS.8999.0001.0001].
[139] NSW Police, 'Indigo Report Bondi Beach Shooting' p 2 [NSW_PF.0001.0006.0021]; Fire and Rescue NSW, 'Incident Report 252362-14122025' pp 6-7, 9 [FIR.0001.0002.0002]; Fire and Rescue NSW, 'Incident Report 252194-141122025' pp 9, 15 [FIR.0001.0002.0008].

including seven officers.[140] Transport for NSW supported the management of traffic, particularly buses, to assist the emergency response.[141] The potential significance of this is readily apparent as the messages between emergency services refer to traffic 'gridlock'.[142]

General crisis management

3.28. According to information provided to the Royal Commission by the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs), the Counter-Terrorism Coordination Centre Duty Officer received a telephone call from the National Situation Room within the National Emergency Management Agency about the attack at Bondi at 7:10pm on 14 December 2025. Following this, several national coordination and crisis responses were initiated.[143]

3.29. At 7:36pm on 14 December 2025, the members of the Crisis Communications Executive Committee, including officials across the NSW Government, were alerted to the incident by NSW Police. By 11:20pm, a webpage had been set up in relation to the attack to provide information to the public.[144]

3.30. At 8:20pm, a meeting of the NSW Community Resilience and Response Plan was convened. A further meeting was convened at 10:30pm.[145]

3.31. The National Security Committee of Cabinet met on the evening of 14 December 2025.[146]

3.32. Neither a National Terrorist Situation nor a National Emergency was declared.

3.33. National Cabinet also met on 15 December 2025, at which meeting the NSW Police Commissioner provided a briefing.[147]

3.34. The national counter-terrorism architecture is discussed further in Chapter 6.

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[140] See Fire and Rescue NSW, 'Incident Report 252194-14122025' [FIR.0001.0002.0012].
[141] Transport for NSW, 'Bondi Beach Police Operation' (15 December 2025) [TFN.0001.0001.0001]; Transport for NSW, 'CMCS 364 14Dec2025' (14 December 2025) p 3 [TFN.0001.0001.0002].
[142] See Fire and Rescue NSW, 'Incident Report 252194-14122025' p 6 [FIR.0001.0002.0012].
[143] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0013 (24 February 2026) p 1 [DHA.9999.0008.0033].
[144] NSW Police, 'FW: Initial reports of shooting at Bondi Beach' (14 December 2025) pp 2, 6 [NSW_PF.0001.0006.0838].
[145] NSW Police, 'COMPLAN update' (14 December 2025) p 3 [NSW_PF.0001.0006.0883].
[146] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, 'Press conference – Canberra' (14 December 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-canberra-29>.
[147] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, 'Meeting of National Cabinet' (15 December 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/meeting-national-cabinet-8>.

Chapter 4. Community Security Groups, intelligence and law enforcement agencies

4.1. This chapter examines the role of Jewish Community Security Groups (CSGs) in Australia, particularly CSG New South Wales (CSG NSW), and their relationship with intelligence and law enforcement agencies, in the context of a marked increase in antisemitism in Australia following the 7 October 2023 Hamas terrorist attacks on Israel. The CSG relationship with intelligence agencies remains confidential.

Jewish security organisations

4.2. Globally, non-government organisations which provide security and protection to the Jewish community (Jewish security organisations) exist in countries with significant Jewish populations. These Jewish security organisations vary in structure, funding models and remit. Some Jewish security organisations operate nationally (the Community Security Trust in the UK and Service de Protection de la Communauté in France) while other countries have Jewish security organisations which operate regionally (such as the Community Security Initiative in New York).[148] These organisations are staffed by trained volunteers or professionals, or a mixture of both.

4.3. Jewish security organisations undertake a range of activities to assist law enforcement to protect Jewish communities from antisemitic behaviour. This can include tracking threats to the community, sharing antisemitic incident data with the police, providing physical security at community events and Jewish institutions, producing physical security assessments, and community engagement and advocacy on antisemitism, extremism and security.[149] Jewish security organisations can also serve as a point of contact for police to engage with the Jewish community.[150]

[148] Community Security Trust, 'Police Partnership' <https://cst.org.uk/about-cst>; Service de Protection de la Communauté, 'What is the SPCJ?' <https://www.spcj.org>; The Community Security Initiative, 'The Community Security Initiative' <https://csiny.org>.
[149] The Community Security Initiative, 'The Community Security Initiative' <https://csiny.org>; Community Security Trust, 'Other Communities' <https://cst.org.uk/about-cst/other-communities>; Anti-defamation League, 'Who We Are' < https://www.adl.org/who-we-are >.
[150] Community Security Trust, 'Police Partnership' <https://cst.org.uk/about-cst>.

Community Security Groups—Australia's Jewish security organisations

4.4. Within Australia, CSGs are the primary Jewish security organisations that protect the Australian Jewish community.[151] CSGs have been operating informally in Australia since the 1950s, when they were founded with the assistance of Julius Nadel, a Holocaust survivor.[152]

4.5. There are four CSGs in Australia—CSG NSW and CSG Victoria (which are the largest CSGs in Australia), as well as CSG Western Australia and CSG Queensland. While these CSGs co-operate in some areas, such as security training, they operate as separate entities, with differences in their operation and management.

4.6. Each CSG operates under the aegis of their respective state Jewish peak representative body (for example, the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and the Jewish Community Council of Victoria). At the national level, CSGs operate through the National Council for Jewish Community Security, a committee of the Executive Council for Australian Jewry.

4.7. CSGs in Australia rely predominantly on volunteers, in addition to some paid staff, and provide security and support services to the Jewish community.[153]

4.8. CSGs can provide security advice, on-site security, threat monitoring for infrastructure, schools, aged care and community centres (such as CCTV), access control, community empowerment training, risk management, emergency response and antisemitic incident reporting.[154] CSGs hold regular meetings with law enforcement and intelligence agencies, sharing antisemitic incident reporting, as well as their threat and risk assessments. CSG NSW's engagement with law enforcement has focused on providing law enforcement with information about key events in the Jewish calendar and associated threats to security.[155]

[151] CSG NSW, 'About us' <https://www.csgnsw.org.au>.
[152] Gareth Narunsky, 'A personification of history', *The Australian Jewish Times* (online, 6 February 2020) <https://www.australianjewishnews.com/a-personification-of-history>.
[153] CSG NSW, 'Our People' <https://www.csgnsw.org.au>.
[154] CSG Victoria, 'Security Services' <https://www.csgvic.com.au/security>; CSG Victoria, 'Constitution' (24 February 2022) pp 8-9 [VCS.001.001.0008_0009].
[155] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (26 February 2026) pp 10-11 at [30] [NCS.8999.0001.0004].

CSG NSW's operational model

4.9. CSG NSW formally came into existence in around the late 1970s and early 1980s and was originally known as the Communal Security Group operating under the aegis of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies (NSW JBD). For an extended period, CSG NSW did not have any paid employees and was an entirely volunteer-run organisation, although it had a security licence under the then-security licensing regime and its personnel were, for the most part, fully licensed. The first CSG NSW employees were on the payroll of NSW JDB.[156]

4.10. Around 2000, CSG NSW was corporatised. The corporate entity is the master security licence holder under the *Security Industry Act 1997* (NSW). The corporate entity also employs all CSG NSW staff.[157]

4.11. CSG NSW's stated purpose is to protect Jewish life and the Jewish way of life. Principally, this involves the deployment of security personnel to Jewish sites across NSW. Deployments primarily involve trained volunteers, supported by CSG NSW professional staff. This physical overlay is supported by technical security, intelligence capability and security consulting services.[158]

4.12. CSG NSW currently employs several employees and is assisted by a number of volunteers. Various CSG NSW volunteers are licensed security guards.[159]

4.13. CSG NSW relies on physical and technical security measures to protect synagogues and other communal buildings.

4.14. Any Jewish communal organisation can request CSG NSW support when holding an event.[160] Many Jewish sites (such as Jewish schools) employ third party security guards to provide security.[161]

4.15. Since 7 October 2023, CSG NSW has encountered sustained demand for its services.

[156] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (16 March 2026) p 2 [NCS.8999.0001.0005].
[157] Community Security Group NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (16 March 2026) p 2 [NCS.8999.0001.0005].
[158] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (16 March 2026) pp 2-4 [NCS.8999.0001.0005].
[159] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (16 March 2026) pp 3-4 [NCS.8999.0001.0005].
[160] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (26 February 2026) p 3 at [14] [NCS.8999.0001.0004].
[161] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (18 March 2026) p 4 at [9] [NCS.8999.0001.0005].

CSGs engagement with intelligence agencies and law enforcement.

4.16. CSGs engage with intelligence agencies, law enforcement and policy makers in providing protective security for Jewish interests, particularly in the face of rising antisemitism in Australia. A key activity of the CSGs is to monitor threats to the Jewish community, and provide information on these threats to government authorities.[162]

Law enforcement engagement with CSG

New South Wales Police Force and CSG NSW

4.17. The NSW Police Force (NSW Police) has established formal and informal consultation and liaison arrangements with the Jewish community, including CSG NSW.[163]

4.18. Prior to 7 October 2023, engagement between the NSW Police Commissioner's Executive and CSG NSW was ad hoc and as needed. NSW Police from the Anti-Terrorism and Intelligence Group, including the Commander, met CSG NSW each quarter to discuss issues facing the Jewish community and any specific concerns. Engagement between NSW Police and CSG NSW occurred as necessary to share time sensitive information related to operational matters or investigations or to discuss specific incidents. NSW Police stated they encouraged CSG NSW to use email group addresses or to contact NSW Police members directly in relevant Commands, to ensure messages were received and actioned appropriately.[164]

4.19. Since 7 October 2023, the increase in the occurrence and reporting of antisemitic incidents has led to a significant increase in contact between relevant NSW Police Commands and CSG NSW. NSW Police's overall operational focus on Jewish safety and security has also significantly increased.[165] This has included providing personal protection to senior members of the Jewish community who have faced threats.[166]

[162] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (16 March 2026) p 5 [NCS.8999.0001.0005].
[163] NSW Police, Written Response to Notice NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 15 at [62] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[164] NSW Police, Written Response to Notice NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 15 at [62] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[165] NSW Police, Written Response to Notice NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 17 at [65] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[166] NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, Letter to the NSW Commissioner of Police (16 April 2025) [JBD.0001.0001.0010].

4.20. On 11 October 2023, NSW Police established Operation SHELTER to coordinate the policing response to increased tensions and public activity related to events occurring in the Middle East and to ensure public safety.[167] Under Operation SHELTER, NSW Police deliver high-visibility policing responses focused on community safety and the protection of locations and events involving the Jewish community.[168] CSG NSW information and risk assessments have informed police taskings.[169]

Eastern Suburbs Police Area Command

4.21. Engagement between NSW Police and CSG NSW occurs across multiple Police Area Commands (PACs) reflecting the geographic spread of the Sydney Jewish community. These include Eastern Beaches PAC, Eastern Suburbs PAC, Brisbane Waters PAC, North Shore PAC, Ku-ring-gai PAC and Parramatta PAC.[170]

4.22. As the NSW Police command with the highest proportion of Jewish community members in NSW, the Eastern Suburbs PAC regards its longstanding formal and informal consultation and liaison with CSG NSW as a high priority.[171]

4.23. CSG NSW briefs incoming Probationary Constables in the Eastern Suburbs PAC to educate new officers about the threats facing the NSW Jewish community and how to police in an area with a high Jewish population. CSG NSW offers similar briefings to other Commands with significant Jewish populations.[172]

4.24. The Eastern Suburbs PAC members, including the Command's Crime Manager, regularly engage CSG NSW to discuss local crime issues and antisemitic incidents. CSG NSW provides the Eastern Suburbs PAC with regular updates about upcoming Jewish community events and intelligence and crime reporting.[173]

[167] NSW Police, Written Response to Notice NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 5 at [19] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[168] NSW Police, Written Response to Notice NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 17 at [70a] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[169] Commissioner Mal Lanyon APM (produced by the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies), Letter to the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies (3 March 2026) [JBD.0001.0001.0013].
[170] NSW Police, Written Response to Notice NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 16 at [64] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[171] NSW Police, Written Response to Notice NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 16 at [63] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[172] Community Security Group NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (26 February 2026) p 8 at [20] [NSC.8999.0001.0001].
[173] NSW Police, Written Response to Notice NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 16 at [65] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].

Sharing of CSG risk and threat assessments and requests for policing

4.25. CSG NSW requirements for security support from PACs are informed by CSG's risk assessment matrices, produced for Jewish community events.[174] CSG NSW draws on a range of data to produce assessments, its own incident data, public statements by government agencies, commercial intelligence and open source reporting, and incident trends and analysis of threats to Jewish communities in overseas jurisdictions. CSG NSW produces assessments for all festivals including Purim, Passover, Shavuot, the High Holy Days (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret), Chanukah and days of cultural significance including Holocaust Remembrance Day, Israel's Independence Day and Israel's Memorial Day.[175] CSG NSW shares its risk and threat reporting with NSW Police.[176]

4.26. CSG NSW may include a specific request for assistance from police in assessments provided to NSW Police in advance of an event. CSG NSW assessments are often emailed to a wide distribution list in NSW Police, with CSG NSW ensuring that PACs receive assessments relevant to their Command areas. Discussions between CSG NSW and NSW Police about CSG NSW's assessments may occur depending on the nature of a particular event and severity of any identified risk.[177]

4.27. CSG NSW's assessments for the Jewish festivals of Passover, Shavuot and Chanukah in 2025 were structured along similar lines.[178] They contained details of the date, event description and any identified risks and threats. The assessments concluded with a written request for NSW Police assistance. The assessments for these festivals were emailed to relevant Commands ahead of the festival dates.

4.28. NSW Police stated that decision-making about resource allocation is informed by a risk assessment process. Factors taken into consideration include intelligence, the size of event, attendance of dignitaries, type and subject matter of the event, local physical environment and current crime and policing situation.[179] CSG NSW's assessments are taken into account as part of the process.[180]

[174] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (26 February 2026) p 9 at [21] [NSC.8999.0001.0001].
[175] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (26 February 2026) p 4 at [15] [NSC.8999.0001.0001].
[176] CSG NSW, [Confidential document] p 11 at [20] [NSC.0001.0003.0002_0011].
[177] CSG NSW, [Confidential document] p 7 at [18] [NSC.0001.0003.0002_0011].
[178] CSG NSW, 'Jewish Festival Calendar Notification: Passover' (April 2025) [NSC.0001.0001.0047]; CSG NSW, 'Jewish Festival Calendar Notification: Shavuot') (June 2025) [NSC.0001.0001.0048]; CSG NSW, 'Jewish Festival Calendar Notification: Chanukah' (28 November 2025) [NSC.0001.0001.0046].
[179] NSW Police, Written Response to Notice NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 19 at [85] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[180] Commissioner Mal Lanyon APM (produced by the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies), Letter to the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies (3 March 2026) [JBD.0001.0001.0013].

Jewish High Holy Days

4.29. The CSG NSW assessment for the High Holy Day period includes a priority rating for security support for a list of synagogues in NSW, and for other sites which are considered to be at risk, given the nature of the holidays.[181]

4.30. NSW Police conduct Operation Jewish High Holy Days for this 24-day period. The annual Operation is planned by the Major Events Group in consultation with CSG NSW and the Jewish Board of Deputies together with the involvement of the CTST command. The current Eastern Suburbs PAC Commander has been the Commander of the Operation for the past four years.[182]

4.31. In addition to producing an assessment ahead of the High Holy Days, CSG NSW attends a security briefing with NSW Police, typically including the Commander, an Assistant or Deputy Commissioner, a Forward Commander and a member of the Terrorism and Security Unit.[183]

Recommendation 1

The procedures adopted by NSW Police in respect of Operation Jewish High Holy Days should apply to other high risk Jewish festivals and events, particularly those that have a public facing element.

Other CSG NSW materials to support policing

4.32. CSG NSW also shares assessments with NSW Police for events which warrant NSW Police's awareness but do not require specific NSW Police support.

4.33. CSG NSW also produces analytical reports, which it provides to NSW Police. This includes its annual analysis of reported antisemitic incidents in Australia.[184]

The Australian Federal Police and the CSG

4.34. The Executive Council of Australian Jewry and National Council for Jewish Community Security are the main points of contact in the relationship between CSGs and the Australian Federal Police (AFP). The AFP Executive engaged with the

[181] CSG NSW (produced by NSW Police), 'Jewish High Holy Days 2025 for the NSW Police Operation' (2025) p 8 [NSW_PF.001.001.0171].
[182] NSW Police, Written Response to Notice NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 16 at [65] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[183] CSG NSW, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0017 (26 February 2026) p 8 at [20a] [NSC.8999.0001.0001].
[184] CSG NSW, *A CSG Analysis of Reported Antisemitic Incidents in Australia in 2023* (2024) p 7 [NCS.0001.0001.0051].

Executive Council and the National Council in 2024 and 2025 to discuss antisemitism, threats to senior Jewish figures, Special Operation AVALITE, and the January 2025 Dural caravan incident.[185]

4.35. The AFP received 110 reports from the Executive Council in relation to criminal conduct targeting Australia's Jewish community over the period 2023-25.[186]

4.36. Formal engagement between the AFP and the CSGs occurs mainly through AFP Protection Operations, such as Close Personal Protection and Security Protection Diplomatic Liaison, relating to events where Australian high office holders or foreign diplomats and consular officers will be in attendance.[187]

4.37. AFP Community Liaison Teams engage Jewish communities and community leaders to identify safety concerns and assess community sentiment.

Conclusion

4.38. It is evident that substantial engagement occurs between CSGs and law enforcement. There may be scope for exploring different modes of collaboration between all parties. For example, there may be benefit in NSW Police, and the AFP meeting together regularly with CSG NSW at the operational level, to discuss the threat environment faced by Jewish Australians, planning for upcoming events and receiving CSG assessments and threat information.

[185] Executive Council of Australian Jewry, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0018 (27 February 2026) p 4 [ECA.0001.0001.0029].
[186] AFP, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0012 (6 March 2026) p 3 at [13] [AFP.9999.0011.0001].
[187] AFP, Written Response to Notice C2026/0002 (9 February 2026) p 4 at [27] [AFP.9999.0002.0001].

Chapter 5. Confidential

5.1. This chapter is confidential.

Chapter 6. Commonwealth and national counter-terrorism architecture

Introduction

6.1. This chapter considers the architecture of governmental structures, agencies and groups responsible for counter-terrorism in Australia.

Changes to counter-terrorism architecture since 2014

6.2. This section addresses the changes made to Australia's counter-terrorism architecture since 2014.

6.3. In the four decades prior to 2014, Australia's counter-terrorism structures evolved and grew significantly following: the Royal Commissions on Intelligence and Security (the first Commission commencing in 1974, the second in 1984); the 11 September 2001 attacks in the United States; and the bombings in Bali in 2002 and 2005.[188]

6.4. In September 2014, for the first time, Australia's National Terrorism Public Alert Level was raised to 'High'. The global influence of terrorist groups, particularly the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), resulted in there being 'a higher risk of [terrorist] attacks by individuals or small groups than ever before'.[189]

6.5. On 15 December 2014, Man Monis, a religious activist who identified as an Islamic State operative, took hostages at gun point in the Lindt Café in Martin Place, Sydney.[190] Two hostages and Monis were killed in the course of this terrorist incident. It was one of the factors that led to the 2015 Review of Australia's Counter-Terrorism Machinery (2015 Review).

[188] For a full account of the historical development of Australia's counter-terrorism architecture, see Dennis Richardson, *Comprehensive Review of the Legal Framework of the National Intelligence Community. Volume 1 – Recommendations and Executive Summary; Foundations and Principles; Control, Coordination and Cooperation* (Report, December 2019).
[189] Council of Australian Governments, 'Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy – Strengthening Our Resilience', Commonwealth *of Australia*, (2015) <http://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/what-australia-is-doing-subsite/Files/australias-counter-terrorism-strategy-2015.pdf>.
[190] State Coroner of New South Wales, *Inquest into the deaths arising from the Lindt Café siege* (Coroner's Report, May 2017) p 3.

2015 Counter-Terrorism Machinery Review

6.6. The 2015 Review found that the threat of terrorism in Australia was rising and it was harder to combat.[191] It found the Commonwealth had strong, well-coordinated counter-terrorism arrangements but that more needed to be done to strengthen cross-agency coordination and leadership.[192] The 2015 Review also found:

- 'Existing coordination mechanisms should be strengthened to ensure that all agencies are working in the closest possible harmony at the strategic decision-making and operational levels'.
- The ANZCTC is the 'most appropriate' body to ensure national coordination.[193]
- Commonwealth arrangements must 'dovetail seamlessly with state and territory approaches' given states and territories are partly responsible for the exercise of national counter-terrorism capabilities.[194]

6.7. The 2015 Review recommended a 'national' Counter-Terrorism Coordinator be appointed to coordinate counter-terrorism efforts,[195] to lead a small and agile coordinating body and to be the 'single authoritative point of contact and accountability'.[196]

6.8. The Commonwealth Counter-Terrorism Coordinator (CT Coordinator) position was established within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) in 2015. The Centre for Counter Terrorism Coordination (CCTC) was established under the CT Coordinator with teams in PM&C and the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) for policy and operational coordination.[197]

6.9. Australia's new Counter-Terrorism Strategy was published in 2015. It focused on the threat of violent extremism perpetrated or inspired by terrorist groups such as ISIL and Al-Qa'ida and 'others that claim to act in the name of Islam'.[198]

6.10. In response to the 2015 Review, ASIO replaced the Public Alert Levels system with the National Terrorism Threat Level scale.[199]

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[191] PM&C, 'Review of Australia's Counter-Terrorism Machinery' (Report, January 2015) p 14.
[192] PM&C, 'Review of Australia's Counter-Terrorism Machinery' (Report, January 2015) at [iv-v].
[193] PM&C, 'Review of Australia's Counter-Terrorism Machinery' (Report, January 2015) p 22.
[194] PM&C, 'Review of Australia's Counter-Terrorism Machinery' (Report, January 2015) p 22.
[195] PM&C, 'Review of Australia's Counter-Terrorism Machinery' (Report, January 2015) p 26.
[196] PM&C, 'Review of Australia's Counter-Terrorism Machinery' (Report, January 2015) p 26.
[197] PM&C, *PM&C Annual Report 2016-17* pp 22-23; ASIO, *ASIO Annual Report 2014-15* p 30; PM&C, 'Review of Australia's Counter-Terrorism Machinery' (Report, January 2015) p 27.
[198] *Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Strengthening our Resilience* (Strategy, 2015) p iii.
[199] The Hon Tony Abbott, 'Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy' (Prime Minister media release, 23 July 2015).

2017 Independent Intelligence Review, the establishment of Home Affairs and ONI

6.11. In June 2017, the Independent Intelligence Review (2017 IIR) was published by PM&C. It concluded that the intelligence community was facing challenges that would intensify over the coming decade, including the threat posed by extremism with global reach, particularly 'Islamist terrorism'.[200]

6.12. The 2017 IIR recommended that a 'new frame of reference' be used for the intelligence community that links agencies with intelligence functions, namely: the six existing members of the former 'Australian Intelligence Community' (which were at that time the Office of National Assessments, the Australian Secret Intelligence Service, ASIO, the Australian Signals Directorate, the Defence Intelligence Organisation and the Australian Geospatial Intelligence Organisation), plus the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) and the intelligence functions of the Australian Federal Police (AFP), the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) and Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs).[201] The aim was to strengthen integration between the agencies and manage Australian intelligence as a national enterprise.[202]

6.13. The 2017 IIR recommended that the Office of National Assessments be replaced by an Office of National Intelligence (ONI) to oversee the integration of strategies between the agencies identified above, known as the 'National Intelligence Community'.[203] It recommended that a dedicated senior position in ONI be established 'to facilitate closer co-ordination, evaluation and integration across national counter-terrorism activities as a whole'.[204] In 2018, ONI was established within the Prime Minister's portfolio.[205]

6.14. Also in 2017, a range of functions was transferred from the Attorney-General's portfolio to the Minister for Home Affairs' portfolio, in respect of national security and law enforcement policy and operations. Portfolio responsibility for ASIO, the AFP, ACIC and AUSTRAC moved to Home Affairs.[206]

[200] Michael L'Estrange and Stephen Merchant, *Independent Intelligence Review* (Report, June 2017) p 5.
[201] Michael L'Estrange and Stephen Merchant, *Independent Intelligence Review* (Report, June 2017) [3.23] – [3.28] Recommendation 1.
[202] Michael L'Estrange and Stephen Merchant, *Independent Intelligence Review* (Report, June 2017) p 53.
[203] Michael L'Estrange and Stephen Merchant, *Independent Intelligence Review* (Report, June 2017) p 7.
[204] Michael L'Estrange and Stephen Merchant, *Independent Intelligence Review* (Report, June 2017) p 14.
[205] *Office of National Intelligence Act 2018* (Cth).
[206] AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 [AGD.9999.0003.0001].

6.15. Responsibility for counter-terrorism policy coordination, including the position of the CT Coordinator and the CCTC, was transferred from PM&C to Home Affairs.[207]

Further institutional developments from 2019

6.16. In 2019, Dennis Richardson comprehensively reviewed the legal framework of the NIC. He found, among other things, that '[c]ooperation in relation to counter-terrorism is particularly well developed across the NIC'.[208]

6.17. In March 2020, National Cabinet was established to coordinate Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, replacing the Council of Australian Governments.[209]

6.18. Over the next several years there were further relevant machinery of government changes:

- On 1 June 2022 law enforcement policy and operations was transferred from the Home Affairs portfolio back to the Attorney-General's portfolio,[210] including responsibility for the AFP, ACIC and AUSTRAC.[211] The CCTC and the CT Coordinator remained within Home Affairs.[212]
- On 29 July 2024 portfolio responsibility for ASIO was transferred from Home Affairs back to the Attorney-General's portfolio.[213] The Prime Minister advised this decision was taken to have ASIO and the AFP in the 'one place'.[214] Responsibility for national security policy and operations remained in the Home Affairs portfolio.[215]
- On 13 May 2025 responsibility for law enforcement policy and operations transferred from the Attorney-General's portfolio back to the Home Affairs portfolio,[216] including responsibility for the AFP, ACIC, AUSTRAC and ASIO.[217]

6.19. Home Affairs and the Attorney-General's Department acknowledged that these portfolio changes had resulted in some short-term disruption and administrative

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[207] AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 p 2 [AGD.9999.0003.0013]; AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 p 2 [AGD.9999.0003.0001].
[208] Dennis Richardson, *Comprehensive Review of the Legal Framework of the National Intelligence Community: Volume 1 – Recommendations and Executive Summary; Foundations and Principles; Control, Coordination and Cooperation* (Report, December 2019) p 336 at [15.63].
[209] Parliamentary Education Office 'National Cabinet' <https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/how-parliament-works/three-levels-of-government/national-cabinet>.
[210] AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 p 3 [AGD.9999.0003.0001].
[211] AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 p 3 [AGD.9999.0003.0001].
[212] AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 p 3 [AGD.9999.0003.0001].
[213] AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 pp 4-5 [AGD.9999.0003.0001].
[214] Prime Minister of Australia Anthony Albanese, 'Press Conference – Canberra' (Transcript, 29 July 2024) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-canberra-13>.
[215] AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 p 5 [AGD.9999.0003.0001].
[216] AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 p 5 [AGD.9999.0003.0001].
[217] AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 p 5 [AGD.9999.0003.0001].

inefficiencies. However, they reported that they had not adversely affected the performance of counter-terrorism related functions.[218] The Commission has not identified any evidence to the contrary. The changes did not affect the CCTC, which remained in Home Affairs from 2017 to date.

6.20. Meanwhile, the 2024 Independent Intelligence Review noted that terrorism remained a persistent threat and that terrorist groups like ISIL and Al-Qa'ida were using conflict in the Middle East to encourage attacks and to stoke community 'tensions'. It found the risk of radicalisation of Australian citizens and 'lone actor' attacks remained.[219]

Crisis management and counter-terrorism architecture

6.21. This section addresses Australia's current crisis management and counter-terrorism architecture. The architecture is multi-layered. It includes bodies and structures within the Australian Government, within state and territory governments, and that operate between governments at a national level.

Crisis management in Australia

6.22. The National Security Committee of Cabinet (NSC) is the peak committee of Cabinet for crisis situations. It can make time-critical ministerial decisions at short notice.[220]

6.23. The Australian Government Crisis Management Framework governs Australia's national crisis management arrangements.[221] The Framework is administered by PM&C.[222]

6.24. The Crisis Arrangements Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Australian Government crisis planning, preparedness and arrangements are fit-for-purpose.[223] It is not an operational committee and does not convene in a crisis.[224]

6.25. The National Coordination Mechanism (NCM) is the Commonwealth senior officials committee that may convene in a crisis.[225] It is the primary mechanism for national

[218] AGD, Written Response to Notice C2026/0015 p 1 [AGD.9999.0003.0001]; Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0013 p 1 [DHA.9999.0010.0001].
[219] Heather Smith PSM and Richard Maude, *Independent Intelligence Review* (Report, 2024) p 26 at [4.29]-[4.30].
[220] PM&C, 'Australian Government Crisis Management Framework' (September 2025) p 32.
[221] PM&C, 'Australian Government Crisis Management Framework' (September 2025).
[222] PM&C, 'Australian Government Crisis Management Framework '(September 2025).
[223] PM&C, 'Australian Government Crisis Management Framework' (September 2025) p 16.
[224] PM&C, 'Australian Government Crisis Management Framework' (September 2025) p 16.
[225] PM&C, 'Australian Government Crisis Management Framework' (September 2025) p 35.

leadership and coordination in crisis situations. It brings together Australian, state and territory government and non-government representatives during a crisis. An NCM can be chaired by the CT Coordinator if activated in response to a terrorist incident.[226]

6.26. In some circumstances, a specific Australian Government-only NCM may be convened, with participants drawn from across the Australian Government.[227]

6.27. The states and territories also play a role in crisis management, including with respect to preparedness, response, relief and recovery.[228]

6.28. State and territory Crisis Centres may support jurisdictional decision-makers and facilitate inter-jurisdictional cooperation.[229] A Crisis Centre may be activated to help manage the response to a terrorist incident or other crisis.[230] Overall response to an act of terrorism will ordinarily lie with the relevant state government, directed through a Crisis Centre and under the command of the State Police Operations Centre.[231]

Counter-terrorism specifically

Commonwealth

6.29. The Secretaries Committee on National Security (SCNS) directly supports the NSC on terrorism matters.[232] It can receive advice and submissions from the Joint Counter-Terrorism Board (JCTB) or the CT Coordinator.[233]

6.30. The JCTB, chaired by the CT Coordinator, is the Commonwealth's highest specialist counter-terrorism officials-level committee on counter-terrorism.[234] The JCTB

[226] PM&C, 'Australian Government Crisis Management Framework' (September 2025) p 32.
[227] PM&C, 'Australian Government Crisis Management Framework' (September 2025) p 35.
[228] PM&C, 'Australian Government Crisis Management Framework' (September 2025) p 6.
[229] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 15 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[230] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 15 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[231] ASIO, Written Response to Notice C2026/0001 (Questions 8, 9, 12, 23, 24, 30 and 40, A28123951) (17 February 2026) pp 20-22 at [94-102].
[232] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 15 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[233] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 14 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[234] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) pp 13-14 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].

supports the coordination of the Commonwealth's counter-terrorism policy and crisis response.[235]

6.31. As discussed above, the CT Coordinator has a coordinating role for the Australian Government in respect of counter-terrorism. The CT Coordinator is the lead senior official in response to a domestic terrorist act. If required, the CT Coordinator will enliven crisis management arrangements – for example, the NCM.[236]

6.32. The CCTC supports the role and functions of the CT Coordinator.[237]

6.33. It supports Commonwealth, state and territory agencies in preventing, responding to and recovering from terrorism incidents.[238] It works with intelligence, law enforcement, security and policy agencies to manage counter-terrorism risks, threats and issues.[239]

The role of the CT Coordinator

6.34. The CT Coordinator assumes a leadership role during terrorism crises. The CT Coordinator also has a number of other responsibilities, including co-chairing the ANZCTC and chairing the JCTB.[240]

6.35. The ANZCTC manages the Counter-Terrorism National Tiered Exercise program in partnership with states and territories, and 'administers funding to states and territories for jurisdictional drill style exercises'.[241]

6.36. The ANZCTC convenes these exercises to ensure that Australia's counter-terrorism capabilities are maintained and improved.[242]

6.37. Between 2015 and July 2019, in both PM&C and Home Affairs, the CT Coordinator was a full-time Deputy Secretary-level position.[243] However, since July 2019, the role

[235] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 14 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[236] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 39 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[237] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 206 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[238] Home Affairs, 'National Counter-Terrorism Handbook – September 2021' (18 February 2026) p 206 [DHA.0003.0015.0206].
[239] Home Affairs, 'National Counter-Terrorism Handbook – September 2021' (18 February 2026) p 206 [DHA.0003.0015.0206].
[240] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0003 (16 February 2026) pp 4-5 [DHA.9999.0006.0018].
[241] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0029 (2 March 2026) p 1 [DHA.9999.0011.0018].
[242] ANZCTC, *National Counter-Terrorism Handbook* (September 2021) p 23 [DHA.0003.0015.0206].
[243] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0013 (24 February 2026) p 4 [DHA.9999.0008.0039].

has generally been performed by a Deputy Secretary in Home Affairs with additional responsibilities for either citizenship and social cohesion or national security and resilience functions.[244]

6.38. Since 2022, the CT Coordinator has concurrently filled the role of the Counter Foreign Interference Coordinator (among other responsibilities).[245] The incumbent CT Coordinator in Home Affairs is currently also the Head of National Security in Home Affairs.[246] The CT Coordinator is supported by two Deputy Secretaries, one of whom has counter-terrorism responsibilities.[247] Home Affairs states that this structure reflects the 'response to [a] convergent and hybrid threat environment particularly as it relates to terrorism, sabotage and foreign interference'.[248]

6.39. It is clear that in recent years, the officer filling the role of CT Coordinator has also been responsible for other important areas of national security. This other work takes up significant time (even if, at times, that other work intersects with counter-terrorism work).

6.40. There may well be a logical reason for the CT Coordinator to have responsibilities in respect of countering foreign interference, noting that ASIO assessed as at August 2025 that the Iranian Government had directed at least two and likely more attacks on Jewish interests in Australia.[249]

6.41. However, in light of the terrorist attack in Bondi, and given the importance of the coordination work and convening role of the CT Coordinator, consideration should be given to the role being undertaken on a full-time basis. Government may also wish to consider whether the role should be relocated to PM&C for the convening power it brings.

Recommendation 2

Having regard to the significance of the role of the Commonwealth Counter-Terrorism Coordinator in providing counter-terrorism leadership, the Commission recommends consideration be given to making the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator's role full-time.

[244] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0013 (24 February 2026) p 4 [DHA.9999.0008.0039].
[245] Home Affairs, 'Organisational Chart 1 January 2022' [DHA.0003.0001.0016].
[246] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0003 (16 February 2026) p 5 [DHA.9999.0006.0018].
[247] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0013 (24 February 2026) p 4 [DHA.9999.0008.0039].
[248] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0013, (24 February 2026) p 4, [DHA.9999.0008.0039].
[249] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (Press Conference, Parliament House, Canberra, 26 August 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-parliament-house-canberra-38>.

National

ANZCTC

6.42. The primary national-level counter-terrorism committee is the ANZCTC.[250] It is co-chaired by the CT Coordinator and a state or territory representative on a rotational basis and consists of first ministers' department representatives (excluding the Australian Capital Territory which is represented by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate), police from each jurisdiction and senior representatives from relevant Australian and New Zealand government agencies.[251]

6.43. The ANZCTC has no operational role. It provides strategic guidance and policy coordination to and between agencies, and develops nationally consistent capabilities.[252]

6.44. The ANZCTC, rather than an NCM, was convened as part of the Australian Government's crisis response to the attack at Bondi. This is not the usual role of the ANZCTC. Because of its central role in the architecture more generally, other aspects of its functions, arising from material produced to the Commission, are addressed below.

6.45. In response to the Bondi attack on 14 December 2025, a NCM meeting was not convened.[253] Two ANZCTC meetings were held instead.[254] One of the First Assistant Secretaries assisting the CT Coordinator recommended that he convene a NCM 'to ensure we are facilitating situational awareness across the Australian Government' and to coordinate a whole-of-government crisis communication strategy.[255] However, Home Affairs advised that NSW Police raised concerns with the CT Coordinator about the 'operational sensitivity of information to be shared', noting the number of agencies involved at previous counter-terrorism NCMs, and advised that a more limited group would be preferable.[256]

6.46. The CT Coordinator decided to proceed with two ANZCTC meetings instead of an NCM, first an operational meeting[257] and second a meeting to discuss 'immediate policy responses to the attack and coordinate actions ahead of a National Cabinet

[250] ANZCTC, 'National Counter-Terrorism Plan' (5th Edition, 2024) p 50 [DHA.0003.0015.0039].
[251] ANZCTC, 'National Counter-Terrorism Plan' (5th Edition, 2024) p 14 [DHA.0003.0015.0039].
[252] ANZCTC, 'National Counter-Terrorism Plan' (5th Edition, 2024) pp 14, 31-32 [DHA.0003.0015.0039].
[253] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0013, (24 February 2026) p 4, [DHA.9999.0008.0033].
[254] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0013 (24 February 2026) p 4 [DHA.9999.0008.0033].
[255] Home Affairs, 'Recommendation for NCM – Bondi Incident' (15 December 2025) [DHA.0013.0015.0144].
[256] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0013 (24 February 2026) p 3 [DHA.9999.0008.0033].
[257] ONI, Written Response, to Notice C-2026/0016 (23 February 2026) p 1 [ONI.9999.0003.0001].

meeting held later that day'.[258] At a January 2026 extraordinary ANZCTC meeting, ANZCTC members 'acknowledged previous NCMs had not been the best vehicle for crisis response, noting difficulty controlling information flow'.[259]

6.47. The decision to convene the ANZCTC instead of the NCM in the role of a national crisis committee was not consistent with the Australian Government Crisis Management Framework. The Framework should reflect the considered views of Government about the appropriate body or bodies to take an operational role in the event of a terrorist incident or crisis.

Recommendation 3

If the ANZCTC is to be used again as a crisis committee, the ANZCTC should be included in the Australian Government Crisis Management Framework so its role is clear.

ANZCTC – Triennial Review and updating documents

6.48. Among other things, the ANZCTC is responsible for maintaining Australia's National Counter-Terrorism Plan (CT Plan),[260] and the non-public Counter Terrorism Handbook (CT Handbook) which provides important operational and governance guidance to agencies.[261]

6.49. The CT Handbook states that it will be reviewed every three years in sequential order with other national documents such as Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy and National Counter-Terrorism Plan.[262]

6.50. Updates to the Handbook may also be made on an ad hoc basis at the request of a stakeholder or in response to recommendations made by other bodies or reviews. The most recent ANZCTC Triennial Review was completed in 2020.[263]

6.51. The CT Handbook was last substantively updated in 2019 (minor non-substantive updates were made in 2021).[264]

[258] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0013 (24 February 2026) p 3 [DHA.9999.0008.0033].
[259] Home Affairs, 'Extraordinary ANZCTC meeting Wednesday 7 January 2026' pp 5-6 [DHA.0013.0016.0062].
[260] ANZCTC, 'National Counter-Terrorism Plan' (5th Edition, 2024) p 14 [DHA.0003.0015.0039].
[261] Home Affairs, 'National Counter-Terrorism Handbook – September 2021' (18 February 2026) p 8 at [6] [DHA.0003.0015.0206].
[262] Home Affairs, 'National Counter-Terrorism Handbook – September 2021' (18 February 2026) p 8 at [6] [DHA.0003.0015.0206].
[263] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0003 (16 February 2026) p 6 [DHA.9999.0006.0018].
[264] Home Affairs, 'National Counter-Terrorism Handbook – September 2021' (18 February 2026) [ii] [DHA.0003.0015.0206].

6.52. At the ANZCTC Extraordinary meeting on 7 January 2026, ANZCTC members agreed to undertake the ANZCTC Triennial Review.[265] Home Affairs expects the review to be completed by May 2026.[266]

Recommendation 4

The Counter-Terrorism Handbook should be updated promptly and then at least every three years in coordination with updates to the Counter-Terrorism Plan and the ANZCTC triennial review.

ANZCTC – advice to National Cabinet

6.53. The ANZCTC's Terms of Reference state that it has a role providing timely expert, strategic and policy advice to heads of government and other relevant ministers.[267] It reports to the First Secretaries Group (FSG) (which supports the Ministerial-level National Cabinet).[268] The FSG is chaired by the Secretary of PM&C and attended by Secretaries of all first ministers' departments.[269]

Recommendation 5

The ANZCTC should provide direct advice in the form of a written and/or oral briefing, at least annually, to National Cabinet (including, as appropriate, advice on ANZCTC activities, the use of the ANZCTC Special Fund, and national counter-terrorism challenges and priorities).

States and territories

6.54. In the event of a domestic terrorist attack, state and territory police and emergency response agencies have primary operational responsibility.[270]

6.55. The arrangements in NSW only are considered here, given that it is the State in which the Bondi attack occurred.

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[265] Home Affairs, 'Extraordinary ANZCTC meeting Wednesday 7 January 2026' p 4 [DHA.0013.0016.0062].
[266] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0003 (16 February 2026) p 6 [DHA.9999.0006.0018].
[267] 'Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee', *Australian National Security* (22 September 2024) <https://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/what-australia-is-doing/a-national-approach/anzctc>.
[268] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 13 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[269] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 14 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[270] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 38 at [183] [DHA.0013.0016.0003].

6.56. The NSW Counter Terrorism Strategy is a document setting out the governance framework for counter-terrorism in NSW.[271]

6.57. NSW Cabinet Office is responsible for engaging with National Cabinet and the ANZCTC about counter-terrorism (in close consultation with NSW Police).[272] In NSW, crisis arrangements are activated in accordance with the NSW Counter Terrorism Plan.[273] The Commissioner of Police is ultimately responsible for the response to a terrorist event in NSW.[274]

6.58. The Commonwealth supports the affected state or territory as appropriate in the event of a terrorist attack or other crisis.[275] In extreme circumstances the Governor-General may, on the advice of the Prime Minister, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Defence, order the ADF be called out under Part IIIAAA of the *Defence Act 1903* (Cth).[276]

6.59. The NSW Police Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics Command provides a 'comprehensive and coordinated response to acts of terrorism or politically motivated violence'. The Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics Command responds through 'intelligence collection, analysis, investigation, dignitary protection, security of national icons, business interests and critical infrastructure, and supporting policing through tactical response services'.[277]

6.60. The Anti-Terrorism and Intelligence Group, a specific part of the Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics Command, works 'to identify and disrupt potential terrorist plans by individuals or groups through initiatives in countering violent extremism, monitoring of High Risk Terrorism Offenders, detection of Fixated Persons and the sharing of information with law enforcement and intelligence partners with a focus on operational threat analysis'.[278]

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[271] NSW Premier's Department, Written Response to Questions in Schedule to letter dated 9 February 2026 pp 3-4 [NSW_TCO_PD.8999.0001.0001].
[272] NSW Premier's Department, Written Response to Questions in Schedule to letter dated 9 February 2026 pp 3-4 [NSW_TCO_PD.8999.0001.0001].
[273] NSW Premier's Department, Written Response to Questions in Schedule to letter dated 9 February 2026 pp 3-4 [NSW_TCO_PD.8999.0001.0001].
[274] NSW Premier's Department, Written Response to Questions in Schedule to letter dated 9 February 2026 pp 3-4 [NSW_TCO_PD.8999.0001.0001].
[275] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) pp 38-39 [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[276] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (16 February 2026) p 38 at [183] [DHA.0013.0016.0003].
[277] NSW Police, Written Response to NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) pp 1-3 at [5], [6] [NSW_PF.9999.0001.0002].
[278] NSW Police, Written Response to NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 2 at [6(b)], [NSW_PF.9999.0001.0002].

6.61. The Terrorism Investigation Squad (TIS), another part of the Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics Command, undertakes protracted major investigations in relation to terrorism and politically motivated violence. It also provides a coordination and liaison point for other law enforcement and intelligence agencies.[279]

6.62. The Fixated Threat Assessment Centre within NSW Police is responsible for the management of individuals in NSW who pose a threat to other persons or the community because they are fixated and/or because they are or may become involved in lone actor grievance-fuelled violence.[280] In this initiative, NSW Police and NSW Health collaborate to mitigate the risk of individuals that may not fall within the ambit of counter-terrorism laws and power but that nevertheless pose a serious risk of violence due to a fixation or preoccupation.[281]

6.63. The NSW Police Security Investigations Unit, which is part of the TIS, 'focuses on investigations involving fixated persons, grievance fuelled violence and more significant hate crime that does not meet' the threshold of terrorism. Such investigations are sometimes referred to as '[counter-terrorism] adjacent' investigations.[282]

6.64. NSW Police has not proposed that any changes be made to counter-terrorism architecture in NSW in response to the Bondi attack. It is awaiting the outcomes of the ANZCTC Triennial Review, this Commission, the NSW Police critical incident investigation, and the related coronial inquiry before forming a view on the operation of the current counter-terrorism architecture in NSW.[283]

6.65. Based on the information reviewed to date, there are no urgent reforms that need to be made to the state and territory counter-terrorism architecture. There is one recommendation made below in respect of Joint Counter-Terrorism Teams.

[279] NSW Police, Written Response to NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 2 at [6c] [NSW_PF.9999.0001.0002].
[280] NSW Police, Written Response to NSW-STP-2026/0027 (26 March 2026) p 37 at [91d] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].
[281] NSW Police, 'NSW Counter Terrorism Plan: A Sub Plan to the State Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN)' p 15 [NSW_PF.001.001.0595]; NSW Police, Written Response to NSW-STP-2026/0027 (26 March 2026) p 37 at [91d] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].
[282] NSW Police, Written Response to NSW-STP-2026/0027 (26 March 2026) p 37 at [91a] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].
[283] NSW Police, Written Response to NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 30 at [154] [NSW_PF.9999.0001.0002].

Joint Counter-Terrorism Teams

Introduction

6.66. Each state and territory has a separate Joint Counter-Terrorism Team (JCTT). Each includes the AFP, ASIO and state or territory police, and the NSW JCTT also includes the NSW Crime Commission.[284]

Functioning of JCTTs

6.67. The Commission has received material and responses in relation to the JCTTs and their functioning.

6.68. In the confidential Interim Report, the Commission considers the structure and functioning of relevant JCTTs, with a particular focus on JCTT NSW.

JCTT NSW

Information flows

6.69. In the confidential Interim Report, the Commission considers JCTT information flows with particular focus on JCTT NSW.

6.70. In early 2025, a member of the public alerted NSW Police to a caravan located at Dural, NSW which was found to contain explosives and antisemitic material.[285] The JCTT NSW investigated the Dural incident. On 10 March 2025, the AFP announced that 'the caravan was part of a fabricated terrorism plot – essentially a criminal con job'.[286]

[284] AFP, *AFP Annual Report 2018-19* (16 October 2019) p 56.
[285] NSW Police, Written Response to NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) pp 34-35 at [175-183] [NSW_PF.9999.0001.0002].
[286] AFP, 'Statement on Operation Kissinger' (Media Statement, 10 March 2025) <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-statement/afp-deputy-commissioner-national-security-krissy-barrett-statement>.

6.71. In announcing machinery of government changes that placed the AFP and ASIO back in the Home Affairs portfolio following the 2025 federal election, the Prime Minister stated that:[287]

> we want to make sure that people can have access to all of the information at the appropriate time. So, there were issues that arose out of information sharing during the, let's call it the caravan incident for shorthand, and we wanted to make sure we got it right and learned from that experience.

Structure

6.72. The JCTT NSW comprises representatives of the AFP, NSW Police, ASIO and the NSW Crime Commission.[288]

6.73. The confidential Interim Report further considers the structure of relevant JCTTs.

6.74. The Commission notes that neither the AFP nor NSW Police have given unqualified support for the present functioning of the JCTT NSW. It is clear that the agencies involved consider there may be room for improvement, in particular in respect of information management and sharing.

6.75. Australia's counter-terrorism architecture and arrangements, and specifically the JCTTs, have contributed centrally to at least 35 major disruptions since 2001. The work of JCTTs has undoubtedly saved Australian lives. It will therefore be important to ensure that the JCTT structure continues to operate effectively in light of the evolving threat environment.

6.76. A specialist comprehensive review of the functioning of the JCTTs should be conducted, which considers, among other things:

- the adequacy of information sharing between the agencies; and
- the strength or otherwise of the relationships between the agencies.

Recommendation 6

The ANZCTC should commission a review of the Joint Counter-Terrorism Teams, with a report to be submitted to Police Commissioners and the Director-General of Security within three months of commencement. The review should include consideration of leadership structures, team integration, systems access and information sharing arrangements. The review should place particular focus on the Joint Counter-Terrorism

[287] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister of Australia, 'Press conference – Canberra' (Transcript, 12 May 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-canberra-12may25>.
[288] AFP, *AFP Annual Report 2018-19* (16 October 2019) p 56.

Team-NSW, elements of which should be for reporting specifically to the NSW Police Commissioner, the AFP Commissioner and the Director-General of Security.

Counter-terrorism exercises

6.77. The material and submissions received by the Commission at the time this report was finalised do not suggest that the level of training and exercises at a national level, Ministerial level or state and territory level adversely affected the response of any Australian Government or state agency or Minister to the Bondi attack.

Exercises at the national level

6.78. Home Affairs leads and participates in a range of counter-terrorism exercises.[289]

6.79. The Commission acknowledges that the NSC meets regularly in response to a variety of crisis situations. However, 'match-fitness' for a major terrorist attack would be enhanced by more regular NSC engagement in counter-terrorism exercises.

Exercises at state and territory level

6.80. This section only considers exercises conducted in NSW.

6.81. The NSW Premier and other ministers last participated in a counter-terrorism exercise in 2024.[290]

6.82. Over the period February 2015 to December 2025, NSW Police information indicates NSW participation in 298 counter-terrorism exercises. NSW ministers are recorded as participating in eight of these exercises - three exercises in 2015, one exercise in 2016, two exercises in 2017, one exercise in 2019 and one exercise in 2024.[291]

Recommendation 7

The Australian Government should consider whether National Security Committee ministers, including the Prime Minister, should participate in a counter-terrorism

[289] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C2026/0029 (2 March 2026) p 1 [DHA.9999.0011.0018].
[290] NSW Police, 'Question 24 Attachment A Exercises 2015-2025' (18 February 2026) [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0012].
[291] NSW Police, 'Question 24 Attachment A Exercises 2015-2025' (18 February 2026) [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0012].

exercise, along with all National Cabinet members, within nine months of each federal election.

Chapter 7. Information flows and systems

Introduction

7.1. This chapter analyses aspects of the information sharing arrangements between Commonwealth agencies, and also between the agencies of the Commonwealth and states and territories that have responsibilities related to counter-terrorism. Term of Reference (c)(vi) requires the Commission to examine the circumstances of the attack in Bondi, including whether 'Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness, whether they had adequate powers and the right systems, processes and procedures, and whether there was an appropriate authorising environment for information sharing with other Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies'.

7.2. Counter-terrorism investigations depend on law enforcement and intelligence agencies sharing information effectively, including by integrating or being able to access each other's datasets and receiving relevant automatic alerts. Information sharing also requires regularly updating ageing software and systems.

7.3. In many counter-terrorism investigations no single law enforcement or intelligence agency, nor any one person within such an agency, is aware of each piece of information that may be relevant to the investigation or a line of enquiry. In order to maximise the likelihood that relevant information will be pieced to together to form a cohesive picture, agencies cooperate and share information. The sharing of such information quickly and conveniently makes it more likely that terrorist threats are detected and responded to effectively.

7.4. Information can be shared from one agency to another in response to a particular request, or under an ongoing arrangement whereby information is provided at regular intervals by a 'live feed'. Information can also be shared by one agency accessing another's systems, or by multiple agencies sharing a system. Improvement in the way information concerning counter-terrorism investigations and monitoring is shared may require national consultation and coordination.

7.5. There are existing arrangements which support the flow of information between agencies in relation to counter-terrorism, including embedding representatives from various agencies together. In particular, the Joint Counter-Terrorism Teams (JCTT), discussed in Chapter 6, enable officers drawn from a number of agencies including the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and state and territory police to work together to prevent and disrupt terrorist activity.

7.6. In the case of the Jewish community, Community Security Groups (CSGs) play an important role in sharing risk and threat information with law enforcement and intelligence agencies. The relationships between these agencies and CSGs, and the nature of their engagement, is addressed in Chapter 4. The operational engagement and information flow between CSG NSW and NSW Police in the lead up to the 14 December 2025 Bondi attack is explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

7.7. This chapter provides an overview of agencies' systems before considering ways to improve agency access to the information and systems of other agencies.

Overview of agencies' systems

7.8. Agencies manage information across multiple systems, depending on the type of information and how it was obtained. There may be relevant information held in one agency's system, which another agency has the tools to ingest and analyse far more efficiently and effectively.

7.9. Particularly in the counter-terrorism context, agencies manage information across multiple systems and classifications, both within and between agencies.

7.10. The capacity of agencies to share information is affected by law (for example, the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)) and by internal policy and authorising frameworks (such as agreements with other agencies).

7.11. This section of the confidential report outlines key systems and databases relevant to the terms of reference for the following agencies, as well as access arrangements for those systems and databases: ASIO, AFP, NSW Police, Home Affairs, AUSTRAC and ACIC.

Current initiatives to improve information sharing systems

7.12. In response to questions from the Royal Commission, agencies identified several current initiatives to improve information sharing and management respecting counter-terrorism.

7.13. Other issues of particular significance arising from agency responses are addressed below.

Firearms information

7.14. It is important that law enforcement and intelligence agencies have timely access to accurate firearms data, to improve the chances of detecting terrorist attacks before they occur. This is particularly so given that the states and territories have primary responsibility for maintaining information regarding the licensing, purchase and movement of firearms.

7.15. The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) administers the Australian Firearms Information Network (AFIN), which provides a point of central coordination and sharing of firearms information across Australia.

7.16. The AFIN provides a 'national life-cycle view of registered firearms in Australia, from legal importation through to legal exportation or destruction'.[292] The AFIN's purpose is to improve the sharing of information about firearms, licensing, permits and cross-border movements between jurisdictions. AFIN does not regulate ownership and use.[293]

7.17. State and territory firearms registries provide firearms information to AFIN.[294] The currency of data in the AFIN depends on those agencies contributing up-to-date data.

7.18. Each state and territory manages its own firearms licensing process, under different statutory and regulatory regimes, and may record firearms data differently.

7.19. ACIC allows approved agencies to see information via the AFIN user interface.[295] Full AFIN access is available to all state and territory police forces, and the AFP, via a desktop application. AFIN firearms data may be accessed by police on their mobiles in the field via the National Criminal Intelligence System (NCIS) (in some cases).[296]

7.20. This section of the confidential report outlines opportunities to enhance the access of specific agencies to AFIN data.

Recommendation 8

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

[292] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 3 at [22] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[293] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 6 at [41] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[294] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 5 at [37] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[295] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 5 at [38] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[296] ACIC, *Annual Report 2023-24* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2024) pp 47, 56.

The National Firearms Register

7.21. The National Firearms Register (NFR) is presently in development. It will provide police officers with access to near real-time information on firearms, their owners and licences. It will provide a lifecycle view of registered firearms in Australia.[297]

7.22. On 6 December 2023, after the shooting of two Queensland police officers and a civilian at a rural property in Wieambilla, the National Cabinet agreed to implement the NFR. The Prime Minister said the NFR:[298]

> … represents the most significant improvement in Australia's firearms management systems in almost 30 years and will keep Australia's first responders and community safer.
>
> … [it] will be a federated model – state data connects with a central hub allowing near real time [sic] information sharing across the country.

7.23. At the time, National Cabinet agreed to work together to ensure the NFR was 'fully operational within four years'.[299] At the National Cabinet meeting on 15 December 2025, the day after the Bondi attack, police ministers and attorneys-general were directed to develop options to accelerate 'work on standing up the NFR'.[300]

7.24. ACIC stated that the delivery of the Commonwealth's components of the NFR—including the components which make it ready for jurisdiction registries to connect to the NFR—will occur by the end of 2026.[301] States and territories must also take action to enable the NFR, including making necessary improvements to their data, registries, portals, legislation and business processes, and integrating their systems with the NFR.[302] The NFR will be fully established when all jurisdiction registries are connected.[303]

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[297] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 3 at [17] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[298] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, 'Meeting of National Cabinet – the Federation working for Australia' (Media release, 6 December 2023) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/meeting-national-cabinet-federation-working-australia>.
[299] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, 'Meeting of National Cabinet – the Federation working for Australia' (Media release, 6 December 2023) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/meeting-national-cabinet-federation-working-australia>.
[300] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, 'Meeting of National Cabinet' (Media Release, 15 December 2025); Prime Minister, 'Albanese Labor Government will establish a National Gun Buyback Scheme' (Web Page, 19 December 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/albanese-labor-government-will-establish-national-gun-buyback-scheme>; Police Ministers Council, *Communique* (17 December 2025) p 1.
[301] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 3 at [20] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[302] ACIC, *Key Brief: National Firearms Register* p 1 [ACI.0045.0002.0007].
[303] Home Affairs, National Firearms Register (25 March 2026), <www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/our-portfolios/criminal-justice/firearms/national-firearms-register>.

7.25. ACIC also informed the Commission that:[304]

> While AFIN has the capability to provide firearm information, it does not currently have the capability to provide new information instantly, due to time delays that can occur between when a firearm related transaction takes place in a jurisdiction and when it is digitally recorded and provided to AFIN by jurisdictions. One reason for time delays is that some state and territories have paper-based firearms registries. Uplift of jurisdictional registry systems is a critical component of the NFR.

7.26. Further, ACIC stated that the 'implementation of new and enhanced digital registries … is a matter for individual jurisdictions'.[305]

7.27. Jurisdictions have separate project schedules to upgrade their systems to facilitate connection to the NFR by June 2028.[306] There is an issue as to whether this timetable is unduly leisurely for a systemic improvement that the National Cabinet has required to be accelerated.

7.28. Since December 2023, the Australian Government has committed $161.2 million to the NFR's delivery over four years, and established Federation Funding Agreement schedules to provide funding to states and territories.[307]

7.29. Ongoing work to accelerate establishment of the NFR should continue. Near real-time access to firearms information will assist law enforcement agencies in investigating threats and responding to critical incidents.

7.30. There appears to be no reason why ASIO should not be given access to the NFR. The Commission will consider this issue further.

The National Criminal Intelligence System

What is the NCIS?

7.31. The NCIS provides Australian law enforcement agencies with secure access to a national database of criminal information and intelligence.[308] The purpose of the NCIS is to facilitate and support effective information sharing between law enforcement and intelligence agencies.[309]

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[304] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 6 at [43] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[305] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 7 at [49] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[306] Home Affairs, National Firearms Register (25 March 2026) <www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/our-portfolios/criminal-justice/firearms/national-firearms-register>.
[307] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) pp 10-11 at [62] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[308] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (23 March 2026) p 1 at [6] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[309] ACC, *Annual Report 2014-15* (22 October 2015) pp 119-122 [ACI.0007.0001.0251].

7.32. The NCIS was created with the initial goal of updating existing infrastructure of particular systems that had begun to age.[310] ACIC is responsible for administering the NCIS and its ongoing development.[311]

7.33. The NCIS contains many datasets provided by state and territory police, Home Affairs and other ACIC systems. In particular, the NCIS includes:[312]

- national firearms data from AFIN
- criminal intelligence from the Australian Criminal Intelligence Database
- criminal gang information
- international travel movements data from Home Affairs
- data from the National Police Reference System (NPRS), including AFP's NPRS data (identity information, offence history, and whether a person is likely to be dangerous or is wanted for other offences)[313]
- fact of death information
- operational policing data from Victoria Police, Western Australian Police Force (WA Police), Queensland Police Service, NSW Police, South Australia Police and Tasmania Police, and
- some AusCheck data.

7.34. As at July 2025, the NCIS was integrated with 21 local police systems nationally and was being actively used in over 52,000 frontline operations.[314] ACIC is currently undertaking work on the NCIS to allow operational policing information from the AFP (including ACT Policing) and NT Police to be ingested in the NCIS.[315]

7.35. Part of the function of the NCIS is to identify 'relationships' between otherwise disparate datasets—around 2 billion relationships are currently identified.[316] For example, the NCIS will identify relationships between known family members and other associates, who otherwise appear in the system as separate 'entities'. One can view all information about an 'entity' (a person or organisation) via their entity record.

[310] ACC, *Annual Report 2014-15* (22 October 2015) pp 119-122 [ACI.0007.0001.0251].
[311] ACIC, 'National Criminal Intelligence System' <https://www.acic.gov.au/services/national-criminal-intelligence-system>.
[312] ACIC, 'National Criminal Intelligence System: Royal Commission Presentation, 27 February 2026' [ACI.0045.0001.0001]; ACIC, Written response to Notice C-2026/0045 (23 March 2026) p 2 at [11] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[313] ACIC, 'Frontline services' <https://www.acic.gov.au/frontline-services>.
[314] ACIC, *Annual Report 2024-25* (3 October 2025) p 3.
[315] ACIC, Written response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 3 at [16] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[316] ACIC, 'National Criminal Intelligence System: Royal Commission Presentation' (27 February 2026) [ACI.0045.0001.0001].

7.36. Commonwealth, state and territory legal and policy frameworks affect what information may be uploaded to the NCIS, and for what purposes.[317]

7.37. The NCIS is underpinned by 'data sovereignty principles',[318] in that contributing agencies set access and use rules for data they provide to the NCIS.[319]

7.38. This section of the confidential report also outlines opportunities to expand access to the NCIS to additional agencies.

7.39. This is a matter that the Royal Commission will inquire into further.

Proposed improvements to the NCIS

7.40. As the Interim Report was being finalised, WA Police made a submission proposing further improvements to the NCIS. The submission was expressed to have in-principle support from the Police Commissioners' Forum, which includes all of Australia's Police Commissioners.

7.41. This will be a matter for further inquiry by the Commission.

Alerts to intelligence and law enforcement agencies about a traveller's movements

7.42. Home Affairs, specifically the Australian Border Force (ABF), administers multiple travel alert systems at the Commonwealth level, which can be used to inform law enforcement and intelligence agencies about international movements of persons of interest.

7.43. The reason for having multiple systems by which ABF may alert intelligence and law enforcement about traveller movements is that 'the legacy systems that deliver these alerts were predominantly put in place prior to the establishment of Home Affairs and [the] ABF'.[320]

7.44. This section of the confidential Interim Report outlines further details about travel alert systems and opportunities for consolidation. There appear to be sound reasons to consolidate the functions of the systems where appropriate.

[317] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 3 at [15] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[318] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 3 at [15] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[319] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (20 March 2026) p 3 at [15] [ACI.9999.0003.0001].
[320] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0048 (17 March 2026) p 2 [DHA.9999.0015.0002].

7.45. Further, the section discusses the Integrated Cargo System, and makes a recommendation in respect of access to cargo and consignment information by agencies.

Recommendation 9

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Recommendation 10

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Sharing information of varying classifications

7.46. The Royal Commission received advice about the complexities associated with working with and sharing classified material. The availability of systems which can share information at the required classification, and of persons holding appropriate security clearances, underpins the effective and secure sharing of information in support of counter-terrorism investigations. Without such systems in place, agencies holding relevant information may not be able to share it with others quickly and conveniently.

7.47. The Commission received suggestions on information sharing across classifications, and has considered these matters in the confidential Interim Report.

Recommendation 11

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Recommendation 12

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Chapter 8. Legislative frameworks

8.1. In the context of the Bondi attack, this chapter is concerned with whether Commonwealth, state and territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies were prevented from taking prohibitive actions by the current legislative framework (Term of Reference (c)(vii)); and with identifying any gaps in existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impede the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent and respond to attacks of a similar nature (Term of Reference (c)(viii)).

8.2. Although under Australia's federal system of government, primary responsibility for criminal law and law enforcement is with the states and territories, Australia's Federal counter-terrorism laws were substantially overhauled following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States of America. This included the enactment of comprehensive new Commonwealth terrorism offences,[321] as well as measures to address the funding of terrorism.[322] Following the bombings in Bali in 2002, further amendments to the *Criminal Code* (Cth) were made to criminalise overseas conduct that results in the death of, or serious harm to, Australians.[323] Subsequent amendments have introduced offences targeting foreign fighters travelling to declared areas.[324]

8.3. Specialised powers have been conferred on law enforcement and intelligence agencies to prevent, detect and respond to terrorism. These include the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation's (ASIO) compulsory questioning powers, counter-terrorism police powers, and powers to apply to courts for control orders and other post-sentence orders for high-risk terrorist offenders.[325]

[321] See, for example, the *Security Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2002* (Cth) and, following references of power from the states, the *Criminal Code Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2003* (Cth).
[322] See, for example, the *Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism Act 2002* (Cth) and the *Proceeds of Crime Act 2002* (Cth). Between 2003 and 2005, Australia further overhauled its financial crime framework to meet evolving international Financial Action Task Force standards, culminating in the passage of the *Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act 2006* (Cth).
[323] *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth), Schedule 1 (*Criminal Code*) Part 5.4, inserted by the *Criminal Code Amendment (Offences Against Australians) Act 2002* (Cth).
[324] See *Criminal Code*, Part 5.5, inserted by the *Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Act 2014* (Cth).
[325] See *Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979* (Cth) (*ASIO Act*) Division 3 (compulsory questioning powers); *Crimes Act 1914* (Cth) Pt IAA Division 3A (police powers); *Criminal Code* Pt 5.3 Division 104 (control orders), Division 105A (continuing detention orders).

8.4. Since 2023, legislative amendments have focused on responding to violent extremism, hate-motivated incidents and the spread of radical ideologies online. These reforms include:

- making it an offence to display publicly or trade in prohibited Nazi and terrorist symbols, to give the Nazi salute, and to use a carriage service for violent extremist material, which were introduced in 2023[326]
- doxxing offences, introduced in 2024, to protect individuals against the intentional publishing or distribution of personal or identifying information without their consent where the conduct would reasonably be regarded as menacing or harassing, together with the aggravated offence of doxxing targeted on the basis of (among other things) a person's religion, race or ethnic origin)[327]
- Commonwealth hate crime offences, expanded in 2025, to protect a wider range of groups and to criminalise threatening force or violence against groups, and advocating damage or destruction of property[328]
- Introduction in 2025 of a legislative regime for the listing of state sponsors of terrorism, and associated offences including criminalising certain dealings with state sponsors, as well as the subsequent prescription of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corp as a state sponsor of terrorism, and
- Amendments to further strengthen Commonwealth hate crime offences and introduce a framework for prohibiting hate groups, introduced in January 2026.

8.5. This chapter also identifies a number of recent reviews of various agencies that have addressed Australia's intelligence and law enforcement legislation, including outstanding and implemented recommendations from those reviews.

The agencies' views on the need for additional powers or legislation

8.6. Commonwealth and NSW agencies were invited to comment on whether in light of the Bondi attack they perceive the need for additional powers or other legislative reform. The responses received, together with consultation with senior agency officers, have formed the basis of consideration of these issues.[329]

[326] *Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Prohibited Hate Symbols and Other Measures) Act 2023* (Cth).
[327] *Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024* (Cth).
[328] *Criminal Code Amendment (Hate Crimes) Act 2025* (Cth).
[329] The agencies from which a response was sought were: the Attorney-General's Department, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, the Australian Federal Police, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre, the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the NSW Crime Commission, the NSW Cabinet Office, the NSW Police Force, the NSW Premier's Department, the Office of National Intelligence, the Victorian Department of the Premier and Cabinet, and Victoria Police.

8.7. No agency, either Commonwealth or state, advised that urgent legislative or regulatory reforms are required in order to prevent, detect or respond to an attack of a similar nature to the Bondi attack. No agency has suggested that the current legislative framework prevented intelligence or law enforcement agencies from taking action that may have prevented the Bondi attack.

8.8. The legislative and regulatory issues that were identified in the written responses received by the Commission fall into three broad categories:

- reflections on legislative amendments passed by both the NSW Parliament and Commonwealth Parliament in the immediate aftermath of the Bondi attack
- ongoing work to maintain and reform existing legislative frameworks, and
- suggestions for non-urgent legislative reforms dealing with terrorism-related issues, but not directly stemming from the Bondi attack.

8.9. In relation to ongoing work, agencies provided a number of examples including:

- NSW Police is considering proposals for changes to offences.[330]
- The Australian Federal Police (AFP) and Office of National Intelligence (ONI) noted ongoing work to implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review of the Legal Framework of the National Intelligence Community (the Comprehensive Review) regarding electronic surveillance legislation.[331]
- On 25 March 2026, the Minister for Home Affairs introduced the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission Bill 2026 into the Australian Parliament. The Bill would give effect to the government response to the *Independent Review of the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission and associated Commonwealth law enforcement arrangements*, to replace the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission's (ACIC) existing legislative framework with a new Act that reflects ACIC's role as Australia's national criminal intelligence agency.
- Commonwealth agencies noted that consideration is being given to amendment of provisions of the *Criminal Code* governing control orders, extended supervision orders and continuing detention orders.[332]
- ONI noted ongoing work with the Attorney-General's Department, Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs) and ASIO on recommendation 60 of the 2024 Independent Intelligence Review which recommended that the *Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979* (Cth) (*TIA Act*) and the *Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979* (Cth) (*ASIO Act*) be

[330] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 25 at [126] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[331] AFP, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0002 (28 January 2026) p 2 [AFP.9999.0001.0001]; ONI, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0005 (17 February 2026) [ONI.9999.0002.0004].
[332] AFP, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0002 (28 January 2026) p 2 [AFP.9999.0001.0001]; AGD, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0009 (28 January 2026) p 13 [AGD.9999.0001.0001].

amended to enable ASIO to share raw foreign intelligence information with ONI.[333]

- The AFP noted ongoing work in relation to law enforcement powers including:[334]
  - the ability to apply for a named person account takeover warrant, as recommended by the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor[335]
  - reforms to modernise general police powers, and
  - a notice to produce power that could be used for non-suspect third parties (e.g., financial institutions and other corporate entities).

8.10. Arising from the agencies' responses, this chapter deals with suggestions for legislative reforms on terrorism-related issues which might fairly be thought to be non-urgent. The Royal Commission received detailed suggestions for several additional, potential legislative reforms as the Interim Report was being finalised. Each of these reforms will be considered further.

Recent reviews, including outstanding recommendations

8.11. The Comprehensive Review in 2019 and the 2024 Independent Intelligence Review are the two most recent examinations of Australia's intelligence laws. The Comprehensive Review concluded that Australia's intelligence legislative framework was largely fit for purpose and rejected the need for sweeping structural reform such as a common legislative framework.[336] It reaffirmed long-standing principles and distinctions and recommended mostly targeted amendments. The clear exception was electronic surveillance, where the Comprehensive Review found the existing framework to be outdated, fragmented and opaque, and recommended a major, system-wide overhaul through a new consolidated electronic surveillance Act.[337]

8.12. The recommendations of the Comprehensive Review that relate to legislative change have largely been implemented, with the exception of electronic surveillance reform.

8.13. Home Affairs stated that it is progressing the electronic surveillance reforms, and has undertaken 'extensive work' on the project in collaboration with law enforcement, intelligence and oversight agencies.

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[333] ONI, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0005 (February 2026) p 1 [ONI.9999.0002.0004].
[334] AFP, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0002 (28 January 2026) p 2 [AFP.9999.0001.0001].
[335] See INSLM, *Data Disruption, Network Activity and Account Takeover Powers Review of Surveillance Legislation Amendment (Identify and Disrupt) Act 2021* (Report, 1 September 2025).
[336] Dennis Richardson AC, *Comprehensive Review of the Legal Framework of the National Intelligence Community* (2019) vol 1, chapter 17, recommendation 28.
[337] Dennis Richardson AC, *Comprehensive Review of the Legal Framework of the National Intelligence Community* (2019) vol 2, chapters 26-31, and specifically recommendation 75.

8.14. The 2024 Independent Intelligence Review also considered legislation issues, albeit briefly. It recommended that the Comprehensive Review's recommendations about electronic surveillance reforms be implemented as a matter of priority.[338] Other recommendations related to legislative arrangements for foreign intelligence, the Australian Signals Directorate's (ASD) ability to manage major cyber breaches and information sharing between ASIO and ONI.

Firearms regulation

8.15. It was publicly acknowledged by the NSW Police Commissioner in the aftermath of the attack at Bondi that it involved the use of firearms that were legally owned by the deceased gunman, who held a Category A/B firearms licence for recreational hunting.

8.16. It is appropriate to review the reforms to firearms regulation announced by National Cabinet in response to the Bondi attack. These reforms are in various stages of negotiation and implementation, discussed in greater detail below.

8.17. The National Cabinet met on the day after the Bondi attack, 15 December 2025 and agreed that firearms regulation reform, including a renegotiated National Firearms Agreement, was needed.[339]

8.18. On 19 December 2025, the NSW Government announced reforms to its firearms laws in response to 'lessons from the attack'.[340] Legislation containing those amendments, as well as other counter-terrorism related measures, was introduced into the Parliament on 22 December 2025, and passed on 24 December 2025.[341]

8.19. Also on 19 December 2025, the Australian Government announced that it would establish a National Gun Buyback Scheme 'to purchase surplus, newly banned and illegal firearms', including to support the delivery of the National Cabinet's agreement on gun law reform.[342]

8.20. On 20 January 2026, the Commonwealth Parliament passed legislation implementing a framework for Commonwealth background checks for state and territory firearms

[338] Heather Smith PSM and Richard Maude, *2024 Independent Intelligence Review* (2024) recommendation 55.
[339] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, 'Meeting of National Cabinet' (Media Release, 15 December 2025).
[340] The Hon Christopher Minns MP, Premier of New South Wales, and the Hon Yasmin Catley MP, Minister for Police and Counter-Terrorism for New South Wales, 'NSW Government to introduce toughest gun law reforms in a generation', (Media Release, 19 December 2025).
[341] *Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025* (NSW).
[342] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, 'Albanese Labor Government will establish a National Gun Buyback Scheme' (Media Release, 19 December 2025).

licensing decisions; changes to customs and import controls for firearms; new offences for using online services to access or distribute instructions related to the illicit manufacture or modification of firearms or explosives; and a framework for a National Gun Buyback Scheme.[343]

Background

8.21. Australia's firearms regulations reflect the structure of the federation. The regulation of firearms is primarily the responsibility of states and territories, whose legislation governs the licensing, possession and use of firearms, and whose registries administer those systems.

8.22. The Commonwealth has a more limited role. Its responsibilities include managing import and export controls and maintaining national information systems that support identification and tracking. Home Affairs regulates the importation of firearms and related items under customs laws, and the Australian Border Force enforces import and export controls at the border.[344] Permissions may be granted for specific items when they meet public safety criteria.[345] These import controls complement state and territory licensing and storage requirements. Together, they aim to ensure that prohibited or higher-risk items do not enter the domestic market.

8.23. Before 1996, firearms regulation was managed individually by each of the states and territories. After the Port Arthur massacre in 1996, where 35 people were killed and 23 wounded in an attack involving semi-automatic rifles and a shotgun, the Commonwealth and the states and territories adopted the National Firearms Agreement.

8.24. The National Firearms Agreement introduced a national framework that restricted access to certain firearm types, strengthened licensing and safety requirements, mandated uniform registration and secure storage, and required all firearms transactions to occur through licensed dealers.

8.25. The National Firearms Agreement also established a 12-month national amnesty period and compensation program, constituting the 1996 national gun buyback scheme accompanied by a public education campaign.[346] The scheme ran from 1 October 1996 to 30 September 1997 and resulted in the surrender of

[343] *Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism (Firearms and Customs Laws) Act 2026* (Cth); *Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism (Criminal and Migration Laws) Act 2026* (Cth).
[344] *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956* (Cth); *Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations 1956* (Cth).
[345] *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956* (Cth) r 4FA.
[346] Australasian Police Ministers' Council, 'Special Firearms Meeting: Resolutions' (10 May 1996) pp 14-15 <https://www.acic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-03/1996%20National%20Firearms%20Agreement.pdf>.

approximately 640,000 newly-prohibited firearms. At the time of the scheme, there were believed to be approximately 3.25 million firearms in Australia.

8.26. From 2002 onwards, the Commonwealth and the states and territories agreed to several major tranches of firearms regulation reforms.

8.27. To address the illegal firearms trade, the then Australasian Police Ministers' Council agreed to the National Firearms Trafficking Policy Agreement in July 2002, introducing additional controls on the manufacture of firearms and dealer reporting requirements.

8.28. In October 2002, and against the background of a fatal shooting at Monash University, police ministers developed 28 resolutions restricting handgun use and availability, which were subsequently endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and implemented by all states and territories. The Commonwealth also amended import regulations and introduced a handgun buyback program which resulted in approximately 70,000 firearms being surrendered.[347]

8.29. Further reforms occurred in 2012 which increased trafficking penalties, expanded intelligence and tracing systems, and coordinated national enforcement measures. Additional reforms introduced in 2014 sought to address ongoing vulnerabilities in relation to cross-border and international firearms trafficking by establishing new offences and mandatory minimum sentences.[348]

8.30. In 2017, the National Firearms Agreement was updated to reflect changes to how certain types of firearms should be classified, to consolidate the terms of the National Handgun Agreement made in 2002, and to reaffirm a commitment to the establishment of a National Firearms Register. The 2017 version of the National Firearms Agreement also committed COAG and its subordinate bodies to periodically considering emerging issues relating to the National Firearms Agreement, including improvements and advancements in firearms technologies.[349] Paragraph 1 of the 2017 National Firearms Agreement states:[350]

> The National Firearms Agreement constitutes a national approach to the regulation of firearms. The Agreement affirms that firearms possession and use is a privilege that is conditional on the overriding need to ensure public safety, and that public safety is improved by the safe and responsible possession, carriage, use, registration, storage and transfer of firearms.

[347] M Davies and J Mouzos, *Firearms Legislative Review* (ACIC Reports, Special Report, June 2007) pp 8-11.
[348] AGD, *Annual Report 2005-06* (2006) p 108; M Davies and J Mouzos, *Firearms Legislative Review* (ACIC Reports, Special Report, June 2007) p 9.
[349] COAG, *National Firearms Agreement* (February 2017) p 2.
[350] COAG, *National Firearms Agreement* (February 2017) p 2.

Firearms reforms agreed by National Cabinet on 15 December 2025

8.31. As outlined above, National Cabinet met on 15 December 2025 and agreed to strengthen firearms regulation. Police ministers and attorneys-general were asked to develop options, including to:[351]

- accelerate work on the National Firearms Register
- allow for additional use of criminal intelligence to underpin firearms licensing decisions that can be used in administrative licensing regimes
- limit the number of firearms that may be held by any one individual
- limit open-ended firearms licensing and the types of legal firearms, including modifications, and
- to make Australian citizenship a condition of possessing a firearms licence.

8.32. In a joint meeting on 9 January 2026, police ministers and attorneys-general:[352]

> (a) discussed proposals to strengthen the National Firearms Agreement
>
> (b) agreed to progress options for consideration at National Cabinet, noting Police Ministers have not endorsed the proposals as final as there remains consultation and cabinet approvals required, and subject to further consideration by the Senior Officials Group, noting the Northern Territory did not agree to progress all proposals, and
>
> (c) agreed options to accelerate the National Firearms Register for consideration at National Cabinet.

8.33. Ministers also agreed that senior officials would 'do further work on a Commonwealth background checking framework, to allow the additional use of intelligence held by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation and the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission to underpin firearms licensing decisions, to provide to National Cabinet for consideration'.[353]

8.34. The Royal Commission sought the views of agencies on whether the matters covered by the National Cabinet agreement, if implemented, would be sufficient to manage the risks of persons connected with, or who have been investigated in relation to, terrorism or serious and organised crime having access to licensed firearms.

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[351] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, 'Albanese Labor Government will establish a National Gun Buyback Scheme' (19 December 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/albanese-labor-government-will-establish-national-gun-buyback-scheme>; Police Ministers Council, *Communique* (17 December 2025) p 1.
[352] Police Ministers Council and Standing Council of Attorneys-General, *Communique: Joint Meeting of Police Ministers Council & Standing Council of Attorneys-General* (9 January 2026) p 1.
[353] Police Ministers Council and Standing Council of Attorneys-General, *Communique: Joint Meeting of Police Ministers Council & Standing Council of Attorneys-General* (9 January 2026) 2. This relates to a measure contained in the *Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism (Firearms and Customs Laws) Act 2026* (Cth).

8.35. Home Affairs, ASIO and ACIC each stated that the reforms, if implemented, would assist to manage the risk of individuals with violent extremist ideologies or involved in serious and organised crime obtaining lawful access to firearms. The department and agencies noted that state and territory agreement and action, including legislative amendments, would be necessary to give effect to the National Cabinet agreement.[354]

8.36. Many of the matters considered by National Cabinet respond directly to circumstances relevant to the Bondi attack. These include that the deceased gunman was licensed to own six firearms and was not an Australian citizen. Other options represent broader reforms. All options are directed to reducing the risk that persons seeking to commit acts of terrorism or violent extremism, or seeking to facilitate serious and organised crime, may access firearms lawfully.

8.37. There may be concerns that these reforms will increase the regulatory burden on legitimate firearms owners and users, including those who require the use of firearms for their livelihood, such as primary producers. However, the use of licensed firearms in the attack at Bondi, as with many previous attacks and mass-casualty shootings, highlights the risks inherent in the availability of firearms.

8.38. There has also been media reporting that the NSW Police held concerns that high-risk groups may seek to use 'cleanskin' associates to obtain access to licensed firearms to facilitate criminal activity without alerting law enforcement.[355] Such possibilities highlight the importance of a regulatory framework for firearms licensing which is informed by intelligence, and is appropriately resourced to support compliance and enforcement action where required. How adjudicators of firearms licence applications obtain and consider intelligence will be the subject of further examination.

8.39. There is a public interest in national consistency in firearms regulation in Australia, where extensive and largely unmonitored state and territory borders make it possible for people and firearms to move between jurisdictions with relative ease. Differences in arrangements between jurisdictions can undermine arrangements in other jurisdictions and the overall integrity of the national system.

[354] Home Affairs Written Response to Notice C-2026/0048 (17 March 2026) p 2 [DHA.9999.0014.0030]; ASIO Written Response to Notice C-2026/0039 (17 March 2026) pp 2-3; ACIC Written Response to Notice C-2026/0045 (23 March 2026) p 9 [ACI.9999.0003.0001].

[355] Percy Duffin, Mostafa Rachwani and Michael McGowan, 'Police feared Bondi gunman's Islamic State associates were seeking weapons', *Sydney Morning Herald* (Online, 18 December 2025) <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/police-feared-bondi-gunwamn-s-islamic-state-associates-were-seeking-weapons-20251217-p5nohh.html>.

Recommendation 13

The Commonwealth and states and territories should prioritise efforts to finalise and implement an updated and nationally consistent National Firearms Agreement.

New South Wales firearms reforms

8.40. In NSW, the *Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2025* (NSW):

- restricted firearms licences to Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens who are permanent residents of Australia and who require a firearms licence for a limited range of occupational reasons, and classes of persons prescribed in regulations
- reduced the standard term for firearm licences from five years to two years
- capped the number of firearms an individual may possess at four, with a higher limit for primary producers
- restricted access to pump-action, button or lever-release, or straight-pull firearms—such as those used in the Bondi attack—to primary producers
- reduced magazine capacity limits for Category A and B firearms, and prohibited the use of belt-fed magazines
- mandated gun club membership for all licence holders, and
- removed the option to appeal certain firearms licensing decisions through the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

8.41. Many of the firearms-related amendments made by the Act are yet to commence.[356]

Commonwealth firearms reforms

8.42. At the Commonwealth level, the *Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism (Firearms and Customs Laws) Act 2026* (Cth):

- established a framework for Commonwealth background checks for state and territory firearms licensing decisions, under the *AusCheck Act 2007* (Cth), drawing on intelligence held by ASIO and ACIC
- introduced changes to customs and import controls for firearms, including restricting imports to Australian citizens, prohibiting the importation of specified accessories (such as belt-fed magazines, silencers, speed loaders, and magazines exceeding 30 rounds), and replacing open-ended import permits with a requirement for importers to obtain permission for each transaction

[356] NSW Police, 'Firearms Registry' <https://police.nsw.gov.au/online_services/firearms>.

- introduced new offences for using online services to access or distribute instructions related to the illicit manufacture or modification of firearms or explosives, and
- established a framework for a national gun buyback scheme, with implementation arrangements including compensation and timeframes, to be settled by the Minister for Home Affairs in agreement with state and territory governments.

Commonwealth background checking framework

8.43. The establishment of a Commonwealth background checking framework for state and territory firearms licensing decisions flows from the National Cabinet's agreement on 15 December 2025 to allow the additional use of intelligence to underpin firearms licence decision-making. The framework represents a significant increase in the Commonwealth's involvement in, and contribution to, firearms regulation in Australia. If implemented in the manner contemplated by the Commonwealth, the framework would involve AusCheck, ASIO and ACIC:

- considering every application for a new or renewed gun licence in Australia
- providing advice on whether each such application raises a risk to security (including, for example, that a firearm may be used for politically motivated violence including terrorism) or to the advancement of serious and organised crime, and
- providing advice, outside of the context of a pending application, should ASIO or ACIC identify a change in the risk-profile of an existing firearms licence holder.

8.44. On 17 March 2026, Home Affairs indicated that progress on a national approach is well underway:[357]

> While states and territories continue to consider their positions on the AusCheck reforms, the Commonwealth is progressing the implementation of the model. Commonwealth legislation has now passed, and Exposure Draft AusCheck Regulations are being prepared for circulation to jurisdictions. Engagement with background checking partners including ASIO and ACIC is ongoing to identify, document and implement system changes to enable firearms background checks. In parallel, ICT integration planning is underway, with system readiness targeted for July 2026 [so far as its systems are concerned].

8.45. Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the *Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism (Firearms and Customs Laws) Act 2026* (Cth) amended the *Crimes Act*, relevantly, to authorise ASIO to use and disclose information in its possession about a person's spent, pardoned or quashed convictions in the performance of its functions and powers. However, the Act did not override state and territory laws to authorise state and

[357] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0048 (17 March 2026) p 4 [DHA.9999.0014.0030].

territory agencies to disclose spent, pardoned or quashed conviction information to ASIO.

8.46. The Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill explained the value of access to information about pardoned and quashed convictions in the following terms:[358]

> Depending on the reasons for the pardoning or quashing of a conviction, information about that conviction may remain relevant from a security or criminal intelligence… perspective. For example:
>
> - in a circumstance where a conviction for terrorism… was quashed because of a legal or procedural error, rather than fresh evidence indicating innocence, the nature of the person's conduct may remain relevant for intelligence purposes, including for the purpose of considering whether the person should be granted or hold a firearms licence…

8.47. Similar reasoning could apply to spent convictions, where the fact that a person had previously been convicted of an offence may remain relevant to the question of whether they should receive a firearms licence at a future point in time, even if only to prompt agencies to consider the nature and circumstances of the relevant conduct.

8.48. ACIC expressed support for the recent legislative reform measures to implement firearms licensing changes, including amendments to the *TIA Act* and *Surveillance Devices Act 2004* (Cth) to use information obtained under a warrant under one of these Acts in a criminal intelligence assessment. ACIC said:[359]

> Previously where the ACIC obtained information under one of these warrants in the performance of our functions, the information could not be used to inform criminal intelligence assessments due to the limitations on the use of information contained in these Acts.

8.49. The introduction of a Commonwealth background checking framework has the potential to assist firearms licensing decisions and protect public safety. The success of such a framework will depend on effective information flows between state and territory licensing authorities and agencies, AusCheck, ASIO and ACIC. The detailed design of such a framework (including access to spent, pardoned and quashed convictions information), should be settled through the Senior Officials Groups established to support the Police Ministers Council and Standing Council of Attorneys-General, to ensure that it achieves the objective of enabling greater and effective use of security intelligence, and criminal intelligence concerning serious and organised crime, in firearms licensing decisions.

[358] Explanatory Memorandum, Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism (Firearms and Customs Laws) Bill 2026 (Cth), p 9.
[359] ACIC, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0031 (18 March 2026) p 3 at [14] [ACI.9999.0002.0001].

National gun buyback scheme

8.50. On 19 December 2025, the Prime Minister announced that the Commonwealth would establish a National Gun Buyback Scheme to purchase surplus, newly banned, and illegal firearms, with legislation to be introduced to support funding for the Scheme, and costs to be met on a 50:50 basis with the states and territories.[360] The Scheme was intended to support the proposals agreed by National Cabinet, in particular to:[361]

- limit the types of guns that are legal, including modifications, and
- limit the number of firearms able to be held by any one individual.

8.51. As noted above, national gun buyback schemes operated in 1996 and in 2003, resulting in the surrender and destruction of approximately 650,000[362] and 70,000 firearms respectively.[363] The Western Australian Government recently ran firearms buyback schemes between February 2024 and January 2026, resulting in the surrender of almost 84,000 firearms.[364] The Commonwealth, states and territories have also had firearms amnesties permitting individuals to surrender unregistered firearms without liability, including firearms that were restricted at an earlier date but not surrendered. In 2021, all Australian Governments agreed to a Permanent National Firearms Amnesty.[365]

8.52. The practical implementation of the National Gun Buyback Scheme announced by the Prime Minister on 19 December is subject to negotiation between the Commonwealth and the states and territories. The extraordinary joint meeting of the Police Ministers Council and the Standing Council of Attorneys-General did not reach agreement on the design of these proposals, or even that they should be progressed. Rather, ministers:[366]

- agreed to the Senior Officials Group doing further work on a Commonwealth background checking framework, and

[360] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, 'Albanese Labor Government will establish a National Gun Buyback Scheme' (Media Release, 19 December 2025) <www.pm.gov.au/media/albanese-labor-government-will-establish-national-gun-buyback-scheme>.
[361] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister, 'Meeting of National Cabinet' (Media Release, 15 December 2025) <www.pm.gov.au/media/meeting-national-cabinet-8>.
[362] Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, *Illicit Firearms in Australia* (2016) p 25.
[363] AGD, *Annual Report 2005-06* (2006) p 108.
[364] The Hon Roger Cook MLA, Premier of Western Australia, and the Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Police, Road Safety, Tourism and Great Southern for Western Australia, 'Buyback ends with more than 83,000 firearms surrendered' (Media Release, 20 January 2026) <www.wa.gov.au/government/media-statements/Cook%20Labor%20Government/Buyback-ends-with-more-than-83%2C000-firearms-surrendered-20260120>.
[365] Home Affairs, 'Permanent national firearms amnesty', <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/our-portfolios/criminal-justice/firearms/permanent-national-firearms-amnesty>.
[366] Police Ministers Council and Standing Council of Attorneys-General, *Communique: Joint Meeting of Police Ministers Council & Standing Council of Attorneys-General* (9 January 2026) pp 1-2.

- discussed options to implement a National Gun Buyback Scheme.

8.53. These two schemes cannot be unilaterally implemented by the Commonwealth as they are dependent on corresponding state and territory legislative amendments, including to:

- enable state and territory firearms registries to request a Commonwealth background check, and to rely on the result of the check, as part of the firearms licensing decision-making processes, and
- implement the National Gun Buyback Scheme in each jurisdiction.

8.54. The establishment of a gun buyback scheme could reasonably be expected to reduce the number of firearms available in the community.

Recommendation 14

The Commonwealth, states and territories should prioritise efforts to implement the proposed National Gun Buyback Scheme.

Online extremism and radicalisation

8.55. The online environment is rapidly changing the nature of the threat of terrorism and religious or ideologically motivated extremism in Australia. In April 2024, in his address to the National Press Club, the Director-General of Security, Mike Burgess AM, described the internet as 'the most potent incubator of extremism'. When ASIO increased the National Terrorism Threat Level to PROBABLE in August 2024, the Director-General stated 'extremist ideologies, conspiracies, misinformation, are flourishing in the online ecosystem and young Australians are particularly vulnerable'.[367] In the 2025 Annual Threat Assessment, he said that 'grievance narratives, conspiracies and online echo chambers … have festered and evolved into a diverse threat environment susceptible to sudden shifts in response to events.'

8.56. Research by the Australian Institute of Criminology in 2023 highlighted that a significant number of violent extremist offenders (perhaps up to 60 per cent) 'either radicalise primarily online or have significant online influences in their radicalisation'.[368] Artificial intelligence, social media and online gaming are increasing the scale and volume of violent extremist narratives.[369] The environment now

[367] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (Press Conference, Parliament House, Canberra, 5 August 2024) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-parliament-house-canberra-27>.
[368] Heather Wolbers et al, 'Understanding and preventing internet-facilitated radicalisation' (2023) 673 *Australian Institute of Criminology: Trends & issues in crime and justice* p 3.
[369] Australian Government, *A Safer Australia: Australia's Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism Strategy 2025* (January 2025) p 15.

confronting agencies involves radicalisation over a period of 'days and weeks rather than months or years'.[370] In this environment, evolving technology and the 'near ubiquity of encrypted messaging' can challenge agencies' ability to detect, investigate and prevent radicalisation pathways.[371]

8.57. ASIO and the AFP, as well as other Commonwealth, state and territory agencies, undertake covert online investigations to detect, obtain intelligence about and investigate, and disrupt threats to security and serious criminal activity.[372]

8.58. The AFP said:[373]

> Over the past 10 or so years the AFP, and law enforcement agencies globally, have identified an increasing tendency for people to become radicalised online. This may occur in a variety of online spaces, including chat groups and social media. The time from engagement to radicalisation and then action can be extremely short making the timely investigation of suspicious for a key priority. The investigative techniques used necessarily include covert engagement.

8.59. Controlled operations are tools which enable the AFP to collect evidence about serious crimes in circumstances that would otherwise expose individuals involved in the operations to criminal and civil liability.[374] Special intelligence operations enable ASIO to collect intelligence relevant to security in similar circumstances.[375] Rather than requiring agencies to disrupt the criminal activity or security matter when it is identified, the frameworks allow the activity to continue under controlled conditions, and authorise individuals to engage with the activity or matter undercover.

8.60. Both schemes provide immunity from legal liability for conduct undertaken by participants in the course of an authorised operation. The Commission received information from agencies related to the effectiveness of the legal frameworks that support engagement in covert online operations, including those which allow them to engage in criminal conduct in the course of those investigations.[376]

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[370] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security, 'Director-General's Annual Threat Assessment 2025' (Speech, 19 February 2025) <https://www.asio.gov.au/director-generals-annual-threat-assessment-2025>.
[371] Australian Government, *A Safer Australia: Australia's Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism Strategy 2025* (January 2025) p 15.
[372] See Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security, 'Director-General's Annual Threat Assessment 2025' (Speech, 19 February 2025) <https://www.asio.gov.au/director-generals-annual-threat-assessment-2025>; Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation, 'About the ACCCE' <https://www.accce.gov.au/what-we-do/about-us>; Australian Federal Police,'26 men charged with 1000+ offences after major covert operation targets offenders sharing violent child abuse material' (8 March 2026) <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-release/26-men-charged-1000-offences-after-major-covert-operation-targets>.
[373] AFP, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0036 (25 March 2026) p 5 [AFP.9999.0017.0004].
[374] *Crimes Act*, Part IAB.
[375] *ASIO Act*, Part III Division 4.
[376] See, for example, AFP, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0002 (19 February 2026) p 2 at [6] [AFP.9999.0005.0001].

8.61. Online extremism and radicalisation are issues that will be the subject of consideration at the Commission's hearings.

Chapter 9. ASIO intelligence priorities and resourcing for counter-terrorism

Introduction

9.1. Term of Reference (c)(vi) requires an examination of whether intelligence agencies performed to maximum effectiveness, as part of the circumstances surrounding the attack at Bondi on 14 December 2025. That inquiry includes an understanding of how the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) had assessed the threat of terrorism in the years leading up to 2025, how counter-terrorism featured in its overall priorities during that time, and how this was reflected in its resource allocation. Many of the details of this inquiry are confidential and are examined in the confidential Interim Report.

9.2. The process by which threat levels and threat assessments are made has been set out in Chapter 1. This chapter explains how intelligence priorities were set, and resources were allocated, to counter-terrorism in that threat environment.

Counter-terrorism priorities

9.3. The National Intelligence Community (NIC) comprises 10 agencies that work together to pursue common missions and help government to achieve its objectives. It is led by the Office of National Intelligence and includes ASIO, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Department of Home Affairs.

9.4. In this section of the confidential Interim Report there is an explanation of how the NIC sets its priorities and how it evaluates whether they are being achieved. It also discusses how ASIO sets its priorities and allocates resources.

The Australian Intelligence Missions and annual advice to Cabinet

9.5. This section is confidential.

How ASIO sets its priorities

9.6. This section is confidential.

Priorities and resource allocation 2020-25

Changes in intelligence priorities and resourcing commencing in 2020-21

9.7. ASIO's 2020-21 Annual Report notes that Australia's threat environment is complex, challenging and changing and that ASIO was anticipating that 'espionage and foreign interference will supplant terrorism as Australia's principal security concern over the next five years'.[377]

9.8. Further details are confidential.

2022

9.9. In his Annual Threat Assessment, presented in February 2022, the Director-General of Security stated that espionage and foreign interference had supplanted terrorism as his principal security concern.[378] This was reiterated in ASIO's 2021-22 Annual Report, which stated that ASIO's Counter-Terrorism Division had three Branches within it, whereas its Counter-Espionage and Interference Division had five.[379]

9.10. As noted in Chapter 1, in November 2022, the National Terrorism Threat Level was reduced to POSSIBLE, based on the assessment that there were fewer extremists with the intention to conduct an attack onshore than there were when the level was raised in 2014.[380] The Director-General of Security stated that although the threat from religiously motivated violent extremists had moderated, 'threat to life will remain a priority for me and my Organisation, and we will need to remain vigilant'.[381]

9.11. Further details in this section are confidential.

[377] ASIO, *ASIO Annual Report 2020-21* (24 October 2022) p 4.
[378] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (Annual Threat Assessment, 9 February 2022) <www.asio.gov.au/resources/speeches-and-statements/director-generals-annual-threat-assessment-2022>.
[379] Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, *ASIO Annual Report 2021-22* (24 October 2022) p 14.
[380] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (National Terrorism Threat Level, 28 November 2022) <www.asio.gov.au/resources/speeches-and-statements/national-terrorism-threat-level>.
[381] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (National Terrorism Threat Level, 28 November 2022) <www.asio.gov.au/resources/speeches-and-statements/national-terrorism-threat-level>.

2023

9.12. In his 2023 Annual Threat Assessment, the Director-General of Security stated that 'ASIO assesses that Australia remains a potential terrorist target, but there are fewer extremists with the intention to conduct an attack onshore than there were when we raised the threat level in 2014'. He also stated that 'while threat to life will always be a priority for ASIO, espionage and foreign interference is now our principal security concern. Countering threats to our way of life is soaking up more and more of our resources'.[382]

9.13. The 2022-23 ASIO Annual Report discusses the lowering of the National Terrorism Threat Level in 2022 and it notes that the violent extremist threat had moderated. This Annual Report reiterated the Director-General of Security's statement that espionage and foreign interference was ASIO's principal security concern. At this time, the Counter-Terrorism Division had two Branches within it, whereas the Counter-Espionage and Interference Division had five.[383]

9.14. In December 2023, ASIO issued a Holiday Season threat assessment. Such assessments are issued annually and cover threats to multiple celebrations in the December-January period. This threat assessment specifically mentions Chanukah: '[w]e have no information to indicate a specific terrorist threat within Australia during the 2023 Christmas/New Year period, or during Hanukkah (7-15 December 2023)'. It refers to the 'increasing interest in attacking Jewish and Israeli interests' in the 'lead up to the holiday season, including Chanukah'.[384]

9.15. Further details in this section are confidential.

2024

9.16. In his 2024 Annual Threat Assessment, the Director-General of Security noted that the conflict in the Middle East was 'resonating' in Australia and that ASIO was monitoring the implications for domestic security. He also stated that:[385]

> Hateful rhetoric has targeted Israel and the Jewish community, as well as Muslim and Palestinian communities. Sunni violent extremism poses the greatest religiously motivated violent extremist threat in Australia. But we are not seeing Australians travelling to join the terrorists in the Middle

[382] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (Annual Threat Assessment, 21 February 2023) <www.asio.gov.au/director-generals-annual-threat-assessment-2023>.
[383] Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, *ASIO Annual Report 2022-23*, pp 4, 14 and 37.
[384] ASIO, 'Australia: crowded places threat assessment for the 2023 Christmas/New Year period' (ATA 071/2023, 11 December 2023) [A28120114].
[385] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (Annual Threat Assessment 2024, 28 February 2024) <www.asio.gov.au/director-generals-annual-threat-assessment-2024>.

> East as we did for the ISIL Caliphate. And thankfully have not seen the lone actor attacks that have occurred elsewhere and were inspired by that conflict. ASIO remains concerned about lone actors, though – the potential for an individual or small group under the radar of authorities to use readily available weapons to carry out an act of terrorism.

9.17. As noted in Chapter 1, this was followed by the 5 August 2024 increase in the National Terrorism Threat Level to PROBABLE.[386] At the Prime Minister's press conference, the Director-General of Security stated '[y]ou've heard me say many times that espionage and foreign interference are our principal security concerns. ASIO's intelligence suggests that is no longer accurate. While threats to our way of life remain elevated, we are seeing an increase in extremism'.[387]

9.18. The 2023-24 ASIO Annual Report stated that '[politically motivated violence] is now one of ASIO's principal security concerns, along with espionage and foreign interference'. Religiously motivated violent extremism represented 'the majority of ASIO's counter-terrorism caseload in the reporting period'. The report also noted the level of espionage and foreign interference did not diminish in 2023-24.[388]

9.19. ASIO states that, by October 2024, it had increased its focus on antisemitism 'consistent with and responsive to, the risk of anti-Semitic incidents in Sydney and Melbourne. This focus was driven by a rapid increase of antisemitic arsons and vandalism in Sydney'.[389]

9.20. In December 2024, ASIO issued its Holiday Season threat assessment. It stated that '[g]lobal terrorism propaganda continues to feature Christian and Jewish religious holidays as potential targets, although there have been no credible references to holiday events in Australia'. It also stated that '[i]n addition to the size of an event, the type of event itself – such as those with an overt religious element, government affiliation or promotion of multiculturalism – may also be a consideration for targeting by violent extremists'. It referred specifically to the violent protest threat to Jewish interests: '[t]here is a realistic possibility Israeli and Jewish interests may be targeted for violent protest and provocative activities over the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah (25 December 2024 – 2 January 2025)'.[390]

9.21. Further details in this section are confidential.

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[386] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister (Press Conference, Parliament House, Canberra, 5 August 2024) <www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-parliament-house-canberra-27>.
[387] Mike Burgess AM, Director-General of Security (Press Conference, Parliament House, Canberra, 5 August 2024) <www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-parliament-house-canberra-27>.
[388] Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, *ASIO Annual Report 2023-24*, pp 4-5.
[389] ASIO, Written Response to Notice C 2026/0001 (Questions 8,9, 12, 23, 24, 30 and 40, A28123951) pp 3-4 at [17].
[390] ASIO, 'Threat wrap-up: crowded places threat assessment for the 2024-25 holiday period' (ATA 054/2024, 5 December 2024) [A28120131].

2025

9.22. In his 2025 Annual Threat Assessment made on 19 February 2025, the Director-General of Security described Australia's security environment as 'more dynamic, diverse and degraded'. He noted that 'the war in the Middle East has not yet directly inspired terrorism in Australia, but it is prompting protest, exacerbating division, undermining social cohesion and elevating intolerance. This, in turn, is making acts of politically motivated violence more likely'.

9.23. On 26 August 2025, the Prime Minister, Minister for Home Affairs, Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Director-General of Security publicly announced ASIO's assessment that since late 2024, the Iranian government had directed at least two, and likely more, attacks on Jewish interests in Australia. The Director-General stated that not all acts of antisemitism were conducted by Iran.[391]

9.24. On 3 October 2025, ASIO issued an intelligence report on the 2 October attack on a synagogue in Manchester, United Kingdom, on the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur. It stated that the attack 'highlights the enduring threat to Jewish interests in Europe and across the globe – including in Australia'. It noted an enduring threat to Jewish interests and that low sophistication attacks in crowded places remained the most likely scenario for a terrorist attack. The report concluded that Jewish holy days and significant dates represent an attractive target for extremists and that Yom Kippur was one of a number of significant dates 'leading up to Hanukkah in December 2025'.[392]

9.25. On 2 December 2025, ASIO issued its Holiday Season Threat Assessment on violent protest and terrorism. The assessment stated that events 'such as those of an overtly religious nature, government affiliation or promotion of multiculturalism – may also be considered for targeting by violent extremists'. It gave the example of the Yom Kippur Manchester Synagogue attack. The Threat Assessment notes that '[e]scalations in the Middle East conflict may resonate with individuals in Australia; however we assess it is more likely that responses to those escalations will be in the form of protest activity – including violent protest – rather than acts of terrorism'.[393]

9.26. Further details in this section are confidential.

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[391] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP (Prime Minister) and Mike Burgess AM (Director-General of Security) (Press conference – Parliament House, Canberra, 26 August 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-parliament-house-canberra-38>.

[392] ASIO, 'Manchester synagogue terrorist attack highlights enduring threat to Jewish interests' (AI_216_2025, 3 October 2025).

[393] ASIO, 'Holiday period 2025-26: violent protest and terrorism threat assessment', (ATA 208/2025, 2 December 2025) [A28120101].

Issues for consideration

9.27. This section outlines the percentage of NIC resourcing allocated to counter-terrorism each year and the NIC's own assessment of whether it was meeting its counter-terrorism mission. These issues will be explored further by the Commission.

9.28. This section is confidential.

Resourcing for National Intelligence Community Agencies

9.29. This section outlines the available data on budgets, staff and warrants for the purposes of considering whether they enable an assessment of whether resources allocated to counter-terrorism kept pace with counter-terrorism priorities.

Funding and budgets

9.30. The figures below show total resourcing for the NIC for the period 2020-21 to 2024-25, based on estimated actual resourcing as set out in the Federal Budget each year.

Table 1: Total estimated actual agency resourcing for NIC agencies 2020-21 to 2024-25

Agency	2020-21[394] ($,000s)	2021-22[395] ($,000s)	2022-23[396] ($,000s)	2023-24[397] ($,000s)	2024-25[398] ($,000s)
ONI	98,287	101,703	147,466	155,801	145,388
AUSTRAC	112,787	112,549	117,627	122,286	176,444
ACIC	231,291	281,622	297,750	308,268	348,917
ASIS	468,841	409,317	434,769	473,322	539,773
ASIO	561,907	587,069	653,836	691,744	770,271
ASD	1,012,891	1,060,707	1,705,288	2,859,509	2,743,386
AFP	1,595,921	1,701,994	1,833,914	2,077,454	2,194,256

[394] Australian Government, *Budget Paper No. 4, Agency Resourcing*, Budget 2021-22 (ONI p102, AUSTRAC p81, ACIC p79, ASIS p68, ASIO p80, ASD p59, AFP p79, Home Affairs p78, Defence p56) <https://archive.budget.gov.au/2021-22/bp4/download/bp4_2021-22.pdf>.
[395] Australian Government, *Budget Paper No. 4, Agency Resourcing*, Budget 2022-23 (March) (ONI p105, AUSTRAC p84, ACIC p82, ASIS p71, ASIO p83, ASD p61, AFP p82, Home Affairs p81, Defence p58) <https//archive.budget.gov.au/2022-23/bp4/download/bp4_2022-23.pdf>.
[396] Australian Government, *Budget Paper No.4, Agency Resourcing*, Budget 2023-24 (ONI p,99 AUSTRAC p38, ACIC p36, ASIS p67, ASIO p78, ASD p53, AFP p36, Home Affairs p77, Defence p50) <https://archive.budget.gov.au/2023-24/bp4/download/bp4_2023-24.pdf>.
[397] Australian Government, *Budget Paper No. 4, Agency Resourcing*, Budget 2024-25 (ONI p110, AUSTRAC p44, ACIC p41, ASIS p75, ASIO p88, ASD p60, AFP p42, Home Affairs p87, Defence p 56) <https://archive.budget.gov.au/2024-25/bp4/download/bp4_2024_2025-consolidated.pdf>.
[398] Australian Government, *Budget Paper No. 4, Agency Resourcing*, Budget 2025-26 (ONI p97, AUSTRAC p38, ACIC p35, ASIS p66, ASIO p37, ASD p51, AFP p36, Home Affairs p76, Defence p48) <https://budget.gov.au/content/bp4/download/bp4_2025-26-consolidated.pdf>.

Home Affairs	6,843,845	6,348,513	6,007,715	6,813,370	7,429,640
TOTAL (minus Defence)	**10,925,770**	**10,603,474**	**11,198,365**	**13,501,754**	**14,348,075**
Defence[399]	45,212,990	47,473,559	52,058,591	55,592,427	59,154,178
TOTAL	**56,138,760**	**58,077,033**	**63,256,956**	**69,094,181**	**73,502,253**

9.31. These figures show that the resourcing of NIC agencies has grown over the five-year period from 2020-21 to 2024-25. The funding of NIC agencies (excluding Defence funding) has grown by 31 per cent over this period from $10.9 billion to $14.3 billion. ASIO's resourcing grew by 37 per cent, although aspects of this funding may have been tied to specific additional functions.[400] Upon review of classified material, the Commission has observed that despite this overall increase, the proportion of funding allocated to counter-terrorism significantly declined across the NIC over the period from 2020 to 2025.

Staffing

9.32. This section is confidential.

Warrants

9.33. This section is confidential.

Conclusion

9.34. Having regard to the above, a question for examination will be whether the resourcing for counter-terrorism in respect of ASIO specifically, and in respect of the NIC more generally, was adequate in the deteriorating security environment, including Hamas's attacks on Israel, and reflected in the raising of the National Terrorism Threat Level to 'PROBABLE'. The Commission will inquire further into this issue.

[399] The Australian Geospatial Intelligence Organisation and Defence Intelligence Organisation are identified as NIC agencies but, as they are functional units within the Department of Defence, their resourcing cannot be disaggregated from the broader Department of Defence resourcing. On this basis, they have been excluded from the analysis of total NIC resourcing.
[400] These figures are estimated actual expenditure and have not been adjusted for inflation.

Chapter 10. Law enforcement priorities and resourcing for counter-terrorism

10.1. In the context of the Bondi attack, subparagraph (c)(vi) of the Terms of Reference requires examination of whether law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness. This chapter is concerned with one aspect of this inquiry, namely, whether the relevant law enforcement agencies, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and NSW Police, identified counter-terrorism as a priority and whether resourcing matched their prioritisation.

10.2. Priorities and resourcing (average staffing levels and budgets) for counter-terrorism, are examined with reference to changes in the National Terrorism Threat Level in 2022 and 2024 and in response to the 7 October 2023 Hamas attacks on Israel. Aspects of the work of the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs) (the Commonwealth's principal counter-terrorism policy department) and the Australia New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC) are addressed. Brief reference is made to the priorities and resources of the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) and Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC), which each provide intelligence support to law enforcement agencies. The principal focus of this chapter is the Commonwealth and NSW.

Counter-terrorism as a law enforcement priority

10.3. Counter-terrorism has been a sustained law enforcement priority. The focus on counter-terrorism has involved the development of counter-terrorism strategies, both by the Australian and state and territory governments.

10.4. At the Commonwealth level, the 2022 Safeguarding our Community Together strategy recognised the challenge posed by terrorism and that new technologies were facilitating the distribution of extremist content and the coordination of malign activities.[401]

10.5. In January 2025, the Australian Government released A Safer Australia – Australia's Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism Strategy, which also acknowledged the continuing threat of terrorism and violent extremism. It noted that '[a] growing

[401] Australian Government, *Safeguarding Our Community Together Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy 2022* (2022) p 4.

number of Australians are being radicalised to violence, and radicalised to violence more quickly'.[402]

10.6. The foreword acknowledged an increase in anti-government and anti-authority violent extremism, antisemitism and Islamophobia.[403]

- This strategy focuses on early identification, intervention and diversion of individuals on a path to violence. It does not include fresh operational strategies or funding for law enforcement operational capabilities.
- The Government allocated $106.2 million over four years from 2024-25 to address risks of terrorism and violent extremism.[404] The allocation included:
  - $85.9 million over three years from 2025-26 for the National Support and Intervention Program to support the states and territories in providing intervention services to at-risk individuals in community and custodial settings
  - $13.5 million over three years from 2025-26 for Home Affairs to partner with the NSW Government to roll out the NSW 'Step Together' online support and referral program on a national level, and
  - $3.6 million over four years from 2024-25 to increase community engagement and understanding of countering violent extremism initiatives.

10.7. At the national level:

- The 2015 counter-terrorism strategy, Strengthening Our Resilience,[405] highlighted the violent extremist threat posed by terrorist groups such as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al-Qa'ida. It noted that, for the first time, in 2014, the National Terrorism Public Alert level had been raised to 'High'. It warned that Australians were facing the most significant threat from terrorism in the nation's history.[406]
- In 2023, the ANZCTC released an updated version of the 2017 Australia's Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism. This strategy acknowledged that crowded places will continue to be attractive targets for terrorism. The strategy established a 'Crowded Places Partnership' to support nationally consistent approaches to protecting these places and to enable governments to engage with

[402] Australian Government, *A Safer Australia Australia's Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism Strategy 2025* (2025) p 3.
[403] Australian Government, *A Safer Australia Australia's Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism Strategy 2025* (2025) p 3.
[404] Australian Government, *Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2024-25*, Budget 2024-25 274 <https://archive.budget.gov.au/2024-25/myefo/donwload/myefo2024-25.pdf>.
[405] Council of Australian Governments, *Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy – Strengthening Our Resilience* (2015).
[406] Council of Australian Governments, *Australia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy – Strengthening Our Resilience* (2015) p 3.

private sector owners and operators of venues to improve their access to threat and protective security information.[407]

10.8. At the state level, NSW released its latest Counter-Terrorism Strategy in January 2025, building on its 2020 predecessor. This strategy acknowledged the importance of 'strong collaboration and coordination between NSW and the Australian Government' in lowering the risk of attack and strengthening incident response and recovery. It noted the essential role of national mechanisms like the ANZCTC in sharing intelligence and coordinating the planning necessary to combat terrorism.[408]

Counter-terrorism resourcing

10.9. There is no single source that definitively captures the total counter-terrorism-related resourcing for any law enforcement agency. Analysis of cross-portfolio funding and resourcing for counter-terrorism programs is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

AFP counter-terrorism priorities and resourcing

Prioritisation

10.10. The long-term priority accorded to counter-terrorism is reflected in the AFP's organisational structure. For example:

- The AFP's 2014-15 Annual Report noted new legislation and fresh funding of $77.2 million over four years 'to address the threat posed by foreign fighters'.[409] It also highlighted the AFP's establishment of a 'National Disruption Group' on this issue, with membership drawn from across the Commonwealth (including intelligence agencies), states and territories.[410] The Report also referenced Operation APPLEBY, 'the largest counter-terrorism operation undertaken in Australia's history', involving 800 officers drawn from the AFP, ASIO and NSW Police.[411] Throughout 2014-15, Operation APPLEBY investigated persons suspected of involvement in domestic terrorist acts, foreign incursions into Syria and Iraq and the funding of terrorist organisations.[412]

[407] ANZCTC, *Australia's Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places From Terrorism* (2023); ANZCTC, *Active Armed Offender Guidelines for Crowded Places* (2023).
[408] NSW Government, NSW Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2025).
[409] AFP, *AFP Annual Report 2014-15* (16 October 2015) p 38.
[410] AFP, *AFP Annual Report 2014-15* (16 October 2015) p 36.
[411] AFP, *AFP Annual Report 2014-15* (16 October 2015) p 36.
[412] AFP, *AFP Annual Report 2014-15* (16 October 2015) p 82.

- The 2020-21 Annual Report highlighted the enduring, complex and diverse threat terrorism poses to the community. COVID19 pandemic restrictions had created an environment in which ideologically-motivated violent extremist propaganda had flourished. The report highlighted successful terrorism disruptions by the Joint Counter-Terrorism Team (JCTT), which demonstrated 'the effectiveness of the JCTT and the merit of this joint approach'.[413]
- The AFP's 2024-25 Annual Report shows that counter-terrorism is led by a senior officer, the Assistant Commissioner, Counter-Terrorism and Special Investigations, who reports to the Deputy Commissioner National Security, who in turn reports to the Commissioner.[414] This structure was also in place in 2020 and in 2015 (although the Assistant Commissioner-equivalent role was then described as the National Manager Counter-Terrorism).[415]

10.11. The AFP has acknowledged that the Hamas attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023 significantly affected the national security environment and, in turn, influenced its priorities.[416] For example:

- Operation LARIMAR was established in October 2023 and focused on protecting 'the Australian community' from the threat of terrorist activity and politically motivated violence.[417]
- On 3 October 2024, the AFP announced the establishment of Operation ARDVARNA which it stated was investigating nine complaints of publicly displaying symbols in Victoria, potentially inciting or advocating violence or hatred, based on race and religion.[418]
- On 9 December 2024, the AFP announced it would lead Special Operation AVALITE which brought together specialist areas of ASIO and the AFP,[419] to investigate threats, violence and hatred towards the Australian Jewish community and parliamentarians.[420]
- On 21 January 2025, Commissioner Kershaw made a statement outlining the impact of antisemitism on the Jewish community, stating that 'there is no doubt as to the escalation of antisemitism in Australia' and that Special Operation AVALITE would 'target high-harm antisemitism'.[421]

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[413] AFP, *AFP Annual Report 2020-21* (19 October 2021) p 49.
[414] AFP, *AFP Annual Report 2024-25* (15 September 2025) p 63.
[415] AFP, 'RC.20020002.01-AFP Organisation Chart 2020' [AFP.0002.0001.0004]; AFP, 'RC.20020002.01-AFP Organisation Chart 2015' [AFP.0002.0001.0003].
[416] AFP, AFP Annual Report 2023-24 (16 September 2024) p 31.
[417] AFP, AFP Annual Report 2023-24 (16 September 2024) p 31.
[418] AFP, 'AFP Statement on display of prohibited symbols' <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-statement/afp-statement-display-prohibited-symbols>.
[419] AFP, 'AFP to lead Special Operation Avalite to investigate anti-Semitism' <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-statement/afp-commissioner-reece-kershaw-antisemitism-statement>.
[420] AFP, 'AFP to lead Special Operation Avalite to investigate anti-Semitism' <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-statement/afp-commissioner-reece-kershaw-antisemitism-statement>.
[421] AFP, 'AFP Commissioner Reece Kershaw antisemitism statement' <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-statement/afp-commissioner-reece-kershaw-antisemitism-statement>.

  - In his media statement on 14 January 2025, Prime Minister Albanese stated that Operation AVALITE had received 124 reports of antisemitism, with 102 under investigation.[422]
- As at 19 December 2025, there were 161 current investigations and ten individuals had been charged under Operation AVALITE.[423]
- The AFP also stated that, after 7 October 2023, its Community Liaison Teams shifted from routine community building to intensive reassurance, sentiment monitoring and security focused liaison, including increased engagement and coordination with peak Jewish bodies.[424]
- On 23 January 2025, the AFP announced the establishment of a dedicated antisemitism coordination group (comprising a Deputy Commissioner from each jurisdiction) that met monthly to share intelligence.[425]

Resourcing

10.12. In October 2025, the AFP announced the launch of three National Security Investigations teams to target groups causing harm to social cohesion.[426]

10.13. Operation AVALITE was folded into the National Security Investigation teams, alongside Enduring Risk Investigations teams in each relevant jurisdiction.[427]

10.14. Funding for new National Security Investigation teams was announced by the Prime Minister, accompanied by the AFP Commissioner and Minister for Home Affairs, on 19 December 2025. The Prime Minister said these teams 'disrupt high harm, high impact, politically motivated violence, communal violence and hate crimes'.[428]

10.15. The high-level counter-terrorism ASL figures provided by the AFP demonstrate growth over time.

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[422] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister ('Tackling rising incident of antisemitism', 14 January 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/tackling-rising-incidents-antisemitism>.
[423] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister and Krissy Barret APM, AFP Commissioner (Press Conference, Canberra, 19 December 2025) <http://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-canberra-30>.
[424] AFP, Written Response to Notice C-2026/0002 (9 February 2026) p 4-5 at [25-29] [AFP.9999.0002.0001].
[425] AFP, 'Australian Police Commissioners' Communique' <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-statement/australian-policecommissioners-communique >.
[426] AFP, 'AFP launches National Security Investigations teams to target groups causing harm to social cohesion' <https://www.afp.gov.au/news-centre/media-release/afp-launches-national-security-investigations-teams-target-groups-causing>.
[427] AFP, 'AFP National Security Investigations (NCI) Costing Questions – Tranche 1 – AFP response v2' p 2 [AFP.0012.0002.1374].
[428] The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister ('Press conference, Parliament House, Canberra, 19 December 2025) <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/press-conference-canberra-30>.

10.16. The confidential Interim Report includes a more detailed analysis of AFP counter-terrorism resourcing.

Operational metrics: Warrants

10.17. Operational metrics provided by the AFP are assessed in the confidential Interim Report.

NSW Police counter-terrorism priorities and resourcing

Prioritisation

10.18. NSW Police is the primary agency responsible for countering terrorism and violent extremism in NSW. This work is primarily conducted by its Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command, led at the Assistant Commissioner level.[429]

10.19. The Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command includes the Terrorism Investigations Squad, responsible for major investigations of terrorist offences and proactive investigations into identified terrorist suspects.[430] NSW Police's Engagement and Hate Crimes Unit is also part of the Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command, reflecting the strong links between hate crimes and terrorism.[431]

10.20. Between 1 July 2022 and 14 December 2025, the Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command identified religiously-motivated violent extremism as a primary threat category, with ideologically-motivated violent extremism also prominent. Both of these forms of extremism are reflected in the Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command's intelligence threat assessments, terrorism investigations and applications made under the *Terrorism (High Risk) Offenders Act 2017* (NSW).[432]

10.21. There is information indicating that NSW Police resourcing and priorities was responsive to the October 2023 commencement of the Hamas-Israel conflict and to the 2024 increase in the National Terrorism Threat Level.

[429] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 1 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[430] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 2 at [6b] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[431] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 4 at [18] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[432] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) pp 3 at [10-12] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].

10.22. While NSW Police does not classify antisemitism as a formal sub-area of counter-terrorism,[433] it identified an increase in hate related incidents and hate crimes targeting the Jewish community in the period between 1 July 2022 and 14 December 2025.[434]

10.23. NSW Police stated that work by the Eastern Suburbs Police Area Command (Eastern Suburbs PAC) is illustrative of the steps taken by NSW Police more broadly.[435] It stated that the Command increased local taskings to synagogues and areas with high concentrations of Jewish businesses and schools.[436] Eastern Suburbs PAC was also the lead command for investigating antisemitic incidents prior to the establishment of Operation SHELTER and the establishment of Strike Force PEARL.[437]

10.24. NSW Police provided the total number of 'miscellaneous investigations' undertaken by the Terrorism Investigations Squad.[438]

10.25. The Terrorism Investigations Squad figures are higher than the JCTT investigations endorsed annually. The Terrorism Investigations Squad focuses on terrorism investigations. If the matter is likely to involve terrorism offences, it will move into the JCTT.[439]

[433] The sub-areas of the Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command are Counter Terrorism Operations; Anti-Terrorism and Intelligence Group; Terrorism Investigation Squad; Public Order and Riot Squad; Protective Security Group; Security Management Group; Tactical Operations Group.
[434] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) pp 3, 13 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[435] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) pp 4, 14 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[436] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) pp 4, 14 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[437] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce 2026/0009 (4 March 2026) pp 4, 14 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[438] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce STP-2026/0013 (23 March 2026) p 1 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.00014].
[439] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce STP-2026/0027 (26 March 2026) p 37 at [91b] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0010].

Table 2: NSW Police investigations by squad

NSW Police total number of investigations undertaken by Terrorism Investigations Squad[440]					
	2022	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**Total**
Terrorism Investigations Squad	30 (3)	66 (8)	86 (4)	61 (2)	**243**
NSW Police total number of investigations commenced or carried out by Security Investigations Unit[441]					
Security Investigations Unit	30 (concluded)	53 (concluded)	56 (commenced)	52 (commenced)	**191**
Grand total					**434**

10.26. The Security Investigations Unit focuses on investigations involving fixated persons, grievance fuelled violence and more significant hate crime that does not meet the terrorism threshold. NSW Police provided the total number of investigations which the Security Investigations Unit 'commenced or carried out'.[442]

10.27. Terrorism Investigations Squad investigations more than doubled between 2022 and 2023, increased further in 2024 (post the 7 October 2023 Hamas attacks on Israel) before reducing in 2025. Security Investigations Unit investigations also increased significantly in 2023 and then stayed at similar levels in 2024 and 2025.[443]

Operation SHELTER

10.28. Operation SHELTER was initially established on 11 October 2023 to coordinate the response and intelligence available in relation to community sentiment, potential protest activity and demonstrations that might occur in the future. Its intelligence summaries are circulated across NSW Police.[444]

10.29. On 25 February 2026, the NSW Premier, together with the NSW Minister for Police and Counter-Terrorism and the NSW Minister for Multiculturalism announced that Operation SHELTER would be made a permanent, rapid response operation with

[440] In this table, the numbers in brackets are those Terrorism Investigations Squad investigations that progressed to Operations/Strike Forces. NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce STP-2026/0013 (23 March 2026) p 1 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0014].
[441] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce STP-2026/0013 (23 March 2026) p 1 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0014].
[442], NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce STP-2026/0013 (23 March 2026) p 1 and p 37 at [91a] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0014]. NSW Police advised that prior to 2024, *Security Investigations Unit* investigations statistics were recorded as 'concluded' instead of 'commenced'.
[443] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce STP-2026/0013 (23 March 2026) p 1 [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0014].
[444] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 5 at [19-22] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].

around 250 dedicated police officers having 'long arms policing capability', supported by a specialist Police Operations Centre.[445]

Strike Force PEARL

10.30. Strike Force PEARL, led by the NSW Police Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command, was set up on 13 December 2024 to investigate antisemitic grievance-based offences in Sydney, including vandalism and arson attacks. On 13 January 2025, Strike Force PEARL's terms of reference expanded to include the investigation of hate crimes involving significant criminal activity or of significant public interest including those committed against places of worship. Investigative resources were increased and Strike Force PEARL engaged with proactive taskings through Operation SHELTER.[446]

10.31. Additional resources were provided by the Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics Command on 28 January 2025 following an incident in which a childcare centre at Maroubra was set alight and defaced with antisemitic graffiti.[447]

10.32. Strike Force PEARL is no longer operating as a standalone strike force with dedicated staffing but investigations are ongoing within the Terrorism Investigations Squad. NSW Police advise that between 13 December 2024 and 9 February 2026, 27 individuals have been charged with offences such as malicious damage arson and graffiti arising out of 14 incidents.[448]

Operation REASSURANCE

10.33. Operation REASSURANCE was also established in February 2025, primarily to support Jewish faith schools. As part of this operation, Youth Engagement Officers attend Jewish schools throughout NSW to provide student and community reassurance and safety guidance.[449]

[445] NSW Government, 'Ministerial Media Release - NSW Government launches permanent rapid response unit' <https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/nsw-government-launches-permanent-rapid-response-unit>.
[446] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 5 at [24-25] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[447] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 5 at [25] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[448] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 5 at [26] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].
[449] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce NSW-STP-2026/0009 (4 March 2026) p 4 at [17] and p 5 at [23] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011].

Resourcing

10.34. NSW Police's resourcing data in Table 3 shows the ongoing prioritisation of counter-terrorism.

Table 3: NSW Police total resourcing

NSW Police total resourcing[450]					
	2010	**2015**	**2020**	**2024**	**2025**
Total NSW Police budget	$2,637,600,000	$3,383,400,000	$3,835,900,000	$5,517,200,000	$5,310,900,000
Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics	$49,900,000	$65,900,000	$85,700,000	$98,100,000	$108,800,000
As a %	**1.9%**	**1.9%**	**2.2%**	**1.8%**	**2.0%**
NSW Police ASL	19,508	20,621	21,453	20,570	20,407
NSW Police Counter-Terrorism and Special Tactics ASL	577	612	704	722	735
As a %	**2.6%**	**3.0%**	**3.3%**	**3.5%**	**3.6%**

10.35. From the data provided, NSW Police's total annual budget reached its peak in 2024, before declining in 2025. Its counter-terrorism budget continued to grow in 2025. Overall, NSW Police's counter-terrorism funding has increased by over 100 per cent in nominal terms since 2010. Counter-terrorism funding as a proportion of total funding has remained largely consistent, increasing slightly from 1.9 per cent in 2010 to 2 per cent in 2025.

10.36. NSW Police's total ASL reached its peak in 2020, but counter-terrorism related ASL continued to grow in 2025. Between 2010 and 2025, overall ASL increased by 4.6 per cent. The counter-terrorism ASL increased at a significantly higher rate (27.4 per cent).

Operational metric: Warrants

10.37. Operational metrics provided by NSW Police are assessed in the confidential Interim Report.

[450] NSW Police, Written Response to Summons to Produce NSW-STP-2026/0009, (4 March 2026) pp 9-11 at [47-49] [NSW_PF.8999.0001.0011]. Provided on a 'Net Cost of Services' basis.

Operational metric: JCTT investigations

10.38. The confidential Interim Report analyses information on JCTT's operational metrics.

Conclusions

10.39. Based on the information provided to the Commission, the AFP's counter-terrorism resourcing, in terms of both budget and average staffing levels, has remained relatively stable over recent years.

10.40. The confidential Interim Report includes additional conclusions in relation to the resourcing of counter-terrorism programs across the AFP and NSW Police.

10.41. NSW Police resourcing in 2010-2025 has involved a generally consistent proportion of overall funding (around 2 per cent) being applied to counter-terrorism, and a gradual growth in average staffing levels (from 2.6 per cent to 3.6 per cent).

Counter-terrorism warrants and investigations

10.42. The confidential Interim Report considers the correlation between counter-terrorism warrants and investigations.

Home Affairs counter-terrorism priorities and resourcing

Prioritisation

10.43. Counter-terrorism is within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Home Affairs under the current Administrative Arrangements Order.[451] Home Affairs, and law enforcement and intelligence agencies within its portfolio such as ACIC and AUSTRAC, play central policy and operational roles in Australia's counter-terrorism efforts.

10.44. Home Affairs is responsible for coordinating the Managing Australians of Counter-Terrorism Interest Risk Framework which relates to terrorism-linked Australians offshore, including any potential return to Australia by these persons.[452]
Home Affairs is also responsible for administering the *Counter-Terrorism (Temporary*

[451] Administrative Arrangements Order (13 May 2025), Part 10.
[452] Home Affairs, Written Response to Notice to Produce C-2026/0048, (17 March 2026) pp 1-2 [DHA.9999.0014.0008]

Exclusion Orders) Act 2019 (Cth), which is concerned with the return of Australian citizens who present national security risks.

10.45. The Counter-Terrorism Coordinator (CT Coordinator) and the Counter-Terrorism Coordination Centre are also located within Home Affairs. The CT Coordinator is Australia's most senior counter-terrorism official and chairs the ANZCTC.

10.46. Home Affairs consults with ANZCTC members and considers feedback from the Home Affairs Community Liaison Office network.[453]

Resourcing

10.47. The confidential Interim Report considers Home Affairs budget and staffing for counter-terrorism functions over time.

10.48. Home Affairs total resourcing has experienced significant fluctuations since 2020. The explanations provided for these fluctuations were not counter-terrorism related.

10.49. Home Affairs clearly received additional funding following the commencement of the Hamas-Israel Conflict in October 2023.[454] This included significant funding for social cohesion and support services.[455] For example, the Australian Government provided $77.7 million over four years from 2023-2024 for a range of initiatives to support Australian communities affected by the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict.[456] These initiatives included significant funding for, and to be administered by, Home Affairs:[457]

- On 18 October 2023, the government announced another $50 million for 177 grants under the Securing Faith-Based Places grant program. The grants aimed to improve security at religious schools and preschools, places of worship and faith-based community centres.
- $50.0 million was committed over three years from 2023-24 to provide direct support, through $25.0 million for the Australian Jewish community, and $25.0 million for Australian Palestinian and Muslim communities and other

[453] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC – National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024' (February 2024); Home Affairs, 'Community Engagement', (1 June 2023) <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/our-porfolios/social-cohesion/community-engagement>.
[454] Australian Government, *Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2023-24* (13 December 2023) pp 273-274 <https://archive.budget.gov.au/2023-24/myefo/donwload/myefo2023-24.pdf>.
[455] Australian Government, *Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2023-24* (13 December 2023) pp 273-274 <https://archive.budget.gov.au/2023-24/myefo/donwload/myefo2023-24.pdf>.
[456] Australian Government, *Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2023-24* (13 December 2023) pp 273-274 <https://archive.budget.gov.au/2023-24/myefo/donwload/myefo2023-24.pdf>.
[457] Australian Government, *Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2023-24* (13 December 2023) pp 273-274 <https://archive.budget.gov.au/2023-24/myefo/donwload/myefo2023-24.pdf>.

Australian communities affected by the conflict, to support a range of safety and wellbeing measures.

- $12.8 million was committed over four years from 2023-24 to protect Australians online, including support for a 24/7 online crisis response capability.
- $6.0 million was committed over four years from 2023-24 for projects to support social cohesion objectives in response to local community needs.[458]

Australia and New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee

10.50. The ANZCTC does not have an operational role in counter-terrorism, but provides strategic guidance, policy coordination and supports the development of nationally consistent capabilities with a strong focus on interoperability.[459]

10.51. The confidential Interim Report examines the resourcing and functions of ANZCTC in detail.

ACIC counter-terrorism priorities and resourcing

10.52. ACIC has the function of protecting Australians from serious and organised crime by collecting, assessing and disseminating intelligence and policing information.[460]

10.53. In certain cases, there can be a nexus between serious and organised crime and terrorism, including where serious and organised crime actors provide enabling services to individuals engaging in terrorism, knowingly or otherwise.

10.54. In 2024-25, ACIC had a total staff of 924 and total resourcing and payments of $582.5 million.[461]

10.55. ACIC manages the National Criminal Intelligence System (NCIS).[462] The 2024-25 Federal Budget provided funding for $109.9 million over two years from 2024-25 for

[458] Home Affairs, 'Supporting Australian Communities Affected by Hamas Attacks on Israel and Ongoing Conflict', *Department of Home Affairs* (20 October 2019) <http://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/AndrewGiles/Pages/supporting-australian-communities-affected-hamas-attacks-israel-ongoing-conflict.aspx>.
[459] Home Affairs, 'ANZCTC – National Counter-Terrorism Plan 5th Edition 2024', (February 2024) p 14, pp 31-32 at [137].
[460] ACIC 'About' *Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission*' <https://www.acic.gov.au/about>.
[461] ACIC, *ACIC Annual Report 2024-25* (30 October 2025) pp 56, 75.
[462] ACIC, 'National Criminal Intelligence System' <https://www.acic.gov.au/services/national-criminal-intelligence-system>.

the NCIS.[463] This funding included $59.9 million from the National Policing Information Systems and Services Special Account.[464]

AUSTRAC counter-terrorism priorities and resourcing

10.56. The confidential Interim Report examines AUSTRAC's cooperation with and support for law enforcement and national security agencies in a counter-terrorism context.

[463] Australian Government, *Budget Paper No. 2 – Budget Measures* p 46 <https://archive.budget.gov.au/2024-25/bp2/download/bp2_2024-25.pdf>.
[464] Australian Government, *Government Response to the Independent Review of the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission and associated Commonwealth law enforcement arrangements* (November 2024) p 15.

Appendix A. Letters patent

KING CHARLES THE THIRD, by the Grace of God King of Australia and His other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth

TO

The Honourable Virginia Bell AC

GREETING

ACKNOWLEDGING the antisemitic terrorist attack on Jewish Australians that took place at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025, and which resulted in the loss of 15 lives and the wounding of a further 40 individuals.

AND the determination of the Australian Government to respond to the attack, and the factors leading up to the attack, as a matter of urgency by addressing antisemitism within the Australian community, including since 7 October 2023.

AND that the Australian Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

AND recognising that strengthening the national consensus in support of democracy, freedom and the rule of law (social cohesion) provides the strongest defence against antisemitism and other forms of religious and ideologically motivated extremism.

AND that hearing from the Jewish Australian community will be important to informing the recommendations of your inquiry and recognising concerns relating to educational and cultural institutions, and other sectors of Australian society.

AND the necessity for the inquiry to be conducted in a manner that does not occasion prejudice to current or future criminal proceedings or national security or undermine social cohesion.

NOW THEREFORE We do, by these Our Letters Patent issued in Our name by Our Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia on the advice of the Federal Executive Council and under the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia, the *Royal Commissions Act 1902* and every other enabling power, appoint you to be a Commission of inquiry, and require and authorise you to inquire into the following matters:

(a) tackling antisemitism by:

(i) investigating the nature and prevalence of antisemitism in institutions and society, and examining its key drivers in Australia, including religious and ideologically motivated extremism and radicalisation, including in the lead up to the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025;

(ii) identifying any opportunities to enhance the responses of governments to antisemitism including, but not limited to, best practice approaches to de-radicalisation and strengthening social cohesion;

(iii) making recommendations to counteract and prevent manifestations of antisemitism;

(iv) assessing the impact of antisemitism on the daily life of Jewish Australians including with respect to security, physical and mental health and wellbeing;

(b) making any recommendations to assist law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to tackle antisemitism, including by:

(i) improvements to guidance and training within law enforcement, border control, immigration, and security agencies to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(ii) having regard to existing security arrangements for the Jewish community, improvement of protective security for Jewish places of worship, major sites, educational and cultural facilities, public events and community leaders;

(iii) whether these authorities have sufficient powers and resources to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(c) examine the circumstances surrounding the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025, including:

(i) lead up to and planning of the attack;

(ii) the interaction and information sharing between Commonwealth agencies, between Commonwealth and State and Territory agencies, and between relevant Commonwealth and State agencies with the organisers of the Chanukah event at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iii) security arrangements for the Chanukah event and Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iv) the attack;

(v) emergency response to the attack;

(vi) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness, including whether they had adequate powers and the right systems, processes and procedures, and whether there was an appropriate authorising environment for information sharing with other Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies;

(vii) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies were prevented from taking prohibitive actions by the current legislative framework and authorising environment;

(viii) identifying any gaps in existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impede the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent and respond to attacks of this nature at both the state and federal levels;

(ix) identifying any lessons for security and law enforcement agencies to prevent and respond to similar attacks in the future;

(d) make any other recommendations arising out of your inquiry into the matters set out in paragraphs (a) to (c) that would contribute to strengthening social cohesion in Australia and countering the spread of ideologically and religiously motivated extremism in Australia;

(e) any matter reasonably incidental to a matter referred to in paragraphs (a) to (d) or that you believe is reasonably relevant to your inquiry.

AND We direct you to make any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you consider appropriate, including recommendations about any policy, legislative, administrative or structural reforms.

AND We further declare that you are not required by these Our Letters Patent to inquire, or to continue to inquire, into a particular matter to the extent that you are satisfied that the matter has been, is being, or will be, sufficiently and appropriately dealt with by another inquiry or investigation or a criminal or civil proceeding.

AND, without limiting the scope of your inquiry or the scope of any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you may consider appropriate, We direct you, for the purposes of your inquiry and recommendations, to consider the following matters, and We authorise you, as you consider appropriate, having regard to the date by which you are required to submit your final report, to take (or refrain from taking) any action arising out of your consideration:

(f) the need to establish mechanisms to facilitate the timely communication of information, or the furnishing of evidence, documents or things, in accordance with section 6P of the *Royal Commissions Act 1902* or any other relevant law, including, for example, for the purpose of enabling the timely investigation and prosecution of offences;

(g) the need to establish appropriate arrangements in relation to current and previous inquiries, in Australia and elsewhere, for evidence and information to be shared with you in ways consistent with relevant obligations so that the work of those inquiries, including, with any necessary consents, the testimony of witnesses, can be taken into account by you in a way that avoids unnecessary duplication, improves efficiency and avoids unnecessary trauma to witnesses;

(h) the need to recognise and appropriately protect any intelligence information or operationally sensitive information obtained by you;

(i) the need to establish appropriate arrangements with the heads of the relevant Australian intelligence entities for obtaining, storing, accessing, using, disclosing and returning intelligence information relating to an Australian intelligence entity.

AND We declare that you are a relevant Commission for the purposes of sections 4 and 5 of the *Royal Commissions Act 1902*.

AND We declare that you are a Royal Commission to which item 5 of the table in subsection 355-70(1) in Schedule 1 to the *Taxation Administration Act 1953* applies.

AND We declare that you are authorised to conduct your inquiry into any matter under these Our Letters Patent in combination with any inquiry into the same matter, or a matter related to that matter, that you are directed or authorised to conduct by any Commission, or under any order or appointment, made by any of Our Governors of the States or by the Government of any of Our Territories.

AND We declare that in these Our Letters Patent:

Australian Defence Force has the same meaning. as in the Defence Act 1903.

Australian intelligence entity means:

(a) the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or
(b) the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation; or
(c) the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation; or
(d) the Defence Intelligence Organisation; or
(e) the Australian Signals Directorate; or
(f) the Office of National Intelligence.

Department of Defence means the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982*.

head, of an Australian intelligence entity, means:

(a) in relation to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation-the Director-General of Security; or
(b) in relation to the Australian Secret Intelligence Service the Director-General of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or
(c) in relation to the Australian Signals Directorate-the Director-General of the Australian Signals Directorate; or
(d) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation-the Director of that part of the Department; or
(e) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Defence Intelligence Organisation-the Director of that part of the Department; or
(f) in relation to the Office of National Intelligence-the Director-General of National Intelligence.

Intelligence information means information:

(a) that was acquired or prepared by or on behalf of an Australian intelligence entity in connection with its functions; or
(b) that relates to the performance by an Australian intelligence entity of its functions; or
(c) that identifies a person as being, or having been, a staff member (within the meaning of the *Intelligence Services Act 2001*) or agent of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service or the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

law enforcement or *security agency* means any of the following agencies:

(a) the Australian Defence Force;
(b) the Australian Federal Police;
(c) the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission;

(d) the Department administered by the Minister administering the Australian Border Force Act 2015;
(e) the Office of the Special Investigator;
(f) the police force of a State or Territory.

operationally sensitive information means:

(a) information about information sources or operational activities or methods available to a law enforcement or security agency; or
(b) information about particular operations that have been, are being or are proposed to be undertaken by a law enforcement or security agency, or about proceedings relating to those operations; or
(c) information provided by a foreign government, or by an agency of a foreign government, where that government does not consent to the public disclosure of the information.

AND We:

(j) require you to begin your inquiry as soon as practicable; and

(k) require you to make your inquiry as expeditiously as possible; and

(l) require you to ensure the inquiry is conducted in a professional, impartial, respectful and courteous manner, including appropriately managing any actual or perceived conflicts of interest; and

(m) require you to submit to Our Governor-General an interim report that you consider appropriate not later than 30 April 2026, focusing on:

(i) the matters mentioned in paragraph (c); and

(ii) any other issues requiring urgent or immediate action; and

(n) require you to submit to Our Governor-General a report of the results of your inquiry, and your recommendations, not later than 14 December 2026.

IN WITNESS, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent.

WITNESS the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Dated 9 January 2026

[signed]
Governor-General

By Her Excellency's Command

[signed]

Attorney-General

NEW SOUTH WALES

CHARLES THE THIRD, By the Grace of God King of Australia and His other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth

TO

The Honourable Virginia Bell AC

GREETING

ACKNOWLEDGING the antisemitic terrorist attack on Jewish Australians that took place at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025, and which resulted in the loss of 15 lives and the wounding of a further 40 individuals.

AND the determination of the Australian Government to respond to the attack, and the factors leading up to the attack, as a matter of urgency by addressing antisemitism within the Australian community, including since 7 October 2023.

AND that the Australian Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

AND recognising that strengthening the national consensus in support of democracy, freedom and the rule of law (social cohesion) provides the strongest defence against antisemitism and other forms of religious and ideologically motivated extremism.

AND that hearing from the Jewish Australian community will be important to informing the recommendations of your inquiry and recognising concerns relating to educational and cultural institutions, and other sectors of Australian society.

AND the necessity for the inquiry to be conducted in a manner that does not occasion prejudice to current or future criminal proceedings or national security or undermine social cohesion.

NOW THEREFORE We do, by these Our Letters Patent issued in Our name by Our Governor on the advice of the Executive Council and under the *Royal Commissions Act 1923* and every other enabling power, appoint you to be a Commission of Inquiry, and require and authorise you to inquire into the following matters:

(a) tackling antisemitism by:

(i) investigating the nature and prevalence of antisemitism in institutions and society, and examining its key drivers in Australia, including religious and ideologically motivated extremism and radicalisation, including in the lead up to the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025;

(ii) identifying any opportunities to enhance the responses of governments to antisemitism including, but not limited to, best practice approaches to de-radicalisation and strengthening social cohesion;

(iii) making recommendations to counteract and prevent manifestations of antisemitism;

(iv) assessing the impact of antisemitism on the daily life of Jewish Australians including with respect to security, physical and mental health and wellbeing;

(b) making any recommendations to assist law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to tackle antisemitism, including by:

(i) improvements to guidance and training within law enforcement, border control, immigration, and security agencies to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(ii) having regard to existing security arrangements for the Jewish community, improvement of protective security for Jewish places of worship, major sites, educational and cultural facilities, public events and community leaders;

(iii) whether these authorities have sufficient powers and resources to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(c) examine the circumstances surrounding the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025, including:

(i) lead up to and planning of the attack;

(ii) the interaction and information sharing between Commonwealth agencies, between Commonwealth and State and Territory agencies, and between relevant Commonwealth and State agencies with the organisers of the Chanukah event at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iii) security arrangements for the Chanukah event and Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iv) the attack;

(v) emergency response to the attack;

(vi) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness, including whether they had adequate powers and the right systems, processes and procedures, and whether there was an appropriate authorising environment for information sharing with other Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies;

(vii) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies were prevented from taking prohibitive actions by the current legislative framework and authorising environment;

(viii) identifying any gaps in existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impede the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent and respond to attacks of this nature at both the state and federal levels;

(ix) identifying any lessons for security and law enforcement agencies to prevent and respond to similar attacks in the future;

(d) make any other recommendations arising out of your inquiry into the matters set out in paragraphs (a) to (c) that would contribute to strengthening social cohesion in Australia and countering the spread of ideologically and religiously motivated extremism in Australia;

(e) any matter reasonably incidental to a matter referred to in paragraphs (a) to (d) or that you believe is reasonably relevant to your inquiry.

AND We direct you to make any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you consider appropriate, including recommendations about any policy, legislative, administrative or structural reforms.

AND We further declare that you are not required by these Our Letters Patent to inquire, or to continue to inquire, into a particular matter to the extent that you are satisfied that the matter has been, is being, or will be, sufficiently and appropriately dealt with by another inquiry or investigation or a criminal or civil proceeding.

AND, without limiting the scope of your inquiry or the scope of any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you may consider appropriate, We direct you, for the purposes of your inquiry and recommendations, to consider the following matters, and We authorise you, as you consider appropriate, having regard to the date by which you are required to submit your final report, to take (or refrain from taking) any action arising out of your consideration:

(f) the need to establish mechanisms to facilitate the timely communication of information, or the furnishing of evidence, documents or things, in accordance with section 12A of the *Royal Commissions Act 1923* or any other relevant Jaw, including, for example, for the purpose of enabling the timely investigation and prosecution of offences;

(g) the need to establish appropriate arrangements in relation to current and previous inquiries, in Australia and elsewhere, for evidence and information to be shared with you in ways consistent with relevant obligations so that the work of those inquiries, including, with any necessary consents, the testimony of witnesses, can be taken into account by you in a way that avoids unnecessary duplication, improves efficiency and avoids unnecessary trauma to witnesses;

(h) the need to recognise and appropriately protect any intelligence information or operationally sensitive information obtained by you;

(i) the need to establish appropriate arrangements with the heads of the relevant Australian intelligence entities for obtaining, storing, accessing, using, disclosing and returning intelligence information relating to an Australian intelligence entity.

AND We declare that the provisions of Division 2 of Part 2 of the *Royal Commissions Act 1923* are to have effect in relation to this Commission AND IT IS FURTHER declared that section 17 of the *Royal Commissions Act 1923* shall apply to and with respect to your inquiry.

AND We declare that you are authorised to conduct your inquiry into any matter under these Our Letters Patent in combination with any inquiry into the same matter, or a matter related to that matter, that you are directed or authorised to conduct by any Commission, or under any order or appointment, made by Our Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, by any of Our Governors of the States or by the Government of any of Our Territories.

AND We declare that in these Our Letters Patent:

Australian Defence Force has the same meaning as in the *Defence Act 1903*.

***Australian intelligence entity means*:**

(a) the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or
(b) the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation; or
(c) the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation; or
(d) the Defence Intelligence Organisation; or

(e) the Australian Signals Directorate; or
(f) the Office of National Intelligence.

Department of Defence means the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982*.

head**,** of an Australian intelligence entity, means**:**
(a) in relation to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation–the Director-General of Security; or
(b) in relation to the Australian Secret Intelligence Service–the Director-General of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or
(c) in relation to the Australian Signals Directorate–the Director-General of the Australian Signals Directorate; or
(d) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation–the Director of that part of the Department; or
(e) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Defence Intelligence Organisation–the Director of that part of the Department; or
(f) in relation to the Office of National Intelligence–the Director-General of National Intelligence.

intelligence information means information:
(a) that was acquired or prepared by or on behalf of an Australian intelligence entity in connection with its functions; or
(b) that relates to the performance by an Australian intelligence entity of its functions; or
(c) that identifies a person as being, or having been, a staff member (within the meaning of the *Intelligence Services Act 2001*) or agent of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service or the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

law enforcement or security agency means any of the following agencies**:**
(a) the Australian Defence Force;
(b) the Australian Federal Police;
(c) the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission;
(d) the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Australian Border Force Act 2015*;
(e) the Office of the Special Investigator;
(f) the police force of a State or Territory.

operationally sensitive information means**:**
(a) information about information sources or operational activities or methods available to a law enforcement or security agency; or
(b) information about particular operations that have been, are being or are proposed to be undertaken by a law enforcement or security agency, or about proceedings relating to those operations; or
(c) information provided by a foreign government, or by an agency of a foreign government, where that government does not consent to the public disclosure of the information.

AND We:
(j) require you to begin your inquiry as soon as practicable; and

(k) require you to make your inquiry as expeditiously as possible; and

(l) require you to ensure the inquiry is conducted in a professional, impartial, respectful and courteous manner, including appropriately managing any actual or perceived conflicts of interest; and

(m) require you to submit to Our Governor an interim report that you consider appropriate not later than 30 April 2026, focusing on:

(i) the matters mentioned in paragraph (c); and

(ii) any other issues requiring urgent or immediate action; and

(n) require you to submit to Our Governor a report of the results of your inquiry, and your recommendations, not later than 14 December 2026.

IN WITNESS, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Public Seal of Our State to be hereunto affixed.

WITNESS Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley, Companion of the Order of Australia, King's Counsel, Governor of the State of New South Wales in the Commonwealth of Australia.

Dated this 21st January 2026.

[signed]

Margaret Beazley

Governor

By Her Excellency's Command,

Premier [signed]

Chris Minns

ENTERED on the Record by me in Register of Patents No. 94 Page 40, this 21 January 2026.
SECRETARY
THE CABINET OFFICE

Approved by the

Executive Council

Min No: -- 01 -- 21 JANUARY 2026

CHARLES THE THIRD, BY THE GRACE OF GOD
KING OF AUSTRALIA AND HIS OTHER REALMS AND TERRITORIES,
HEAD OF THE COMMONWEALTH:

TO

The Honourable Virginia Bell AC

GREETING

WHEREAS the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, on the advice of the Federal Executive Council and under the *Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia, the Royal Commissions Act 1902* (Cth) and every other enabling power, has by Letters Patent appointed you to be a Commission of inquiry to inquire into, and report upon, certain matters relating to antisemitism in Australia, including tackling antisemitism, and the circumstances of the antisemitic terrorist attack that took place at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025.

AND the Governor-General has declared that you are authorised to conduct that inquiry in combination with any inquiry into the same matter, or a matter related to that matter, that you are directed or authorised to conduct by any Commission issued, or under any order or appointment made, by any of the Governors of the States or the Government of any Territory.

AND WHEREAS the Governor of the State of Victoria, by and with the advice of the Premier, has deemed it expedient that a Commission should issue to you in the terms set out below.

ACKNOWLEDGING the antisemitic terrorist attack on Jewish Australians that took place at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025, and which resulted in the loss of 15 lives and the wounding of a further 40 individuals.

AND the determination of the Australian Government to respond to the attack, and the factors leading up to the attack, as a matter of urgency by addressing antisemitism within the Australian community, including since 7 October 2023.

AND that the Australian Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

AND recognising that strengthening the national consensus in support of democracy, freedom and the rule of law (social cohesion) provides the strongest defence against antisemitism and other forms of religious and ideologically motivated extremism.

AND that hearing from the Jewish Australian community will be important to informing the recommendations of your inquiry and recognising concerns relating to educational and cultural institutions; and other sectors of Australian society.

AND the necessity for the inquiry to be conducted in a manner that does not occasion prejudice to current or future criminal proceedings or national security or undermine social cohesion.

NOW THEREFORE the Governor of the State of Victoria, by and with the advice of the Premier and acting pursuant to section 5 of the *Inquiries Act 2014* (Vic) and every other enabling power, appoints and constitutes you to be Our Commissioner, and requires and authorises you to inquire into the following matters:

(a) tackling antisemitism by:

(i) investigating the nature and prevalence of antisemitism in institutions and society, and examining its key drivers in Australia, including religious and ideologically motivated extremism and radicalisation, including in the lead up to the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025;

(ii) identifying any opportunities to enhance the responses of governments to antisemitism including, but not limited to, best practice approaches to deradicalisation and strengthening social cohesion;

(iii) making recommendations to counteract and prevent manifestations of antisemitism;

(iv) assessing the impact of antisemitism on the daily life of Jewish Australians including with respect to security, physical and mental health and wellbeing;

(b) making any recommendations to assist law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to tackle antisemitism, including by:

(i) improvements to guidance and training within law enforcement, border control, immigration, and security agencies to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(ii) having regard to existing security arrangements for the Jewish community, improvement of protective security for Jewish places of worship, major sites, educational and cultural facilities, public events and community leaders;

(iii) whether these authorities have sufficient powers and resources to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(c) examine the circumstances surrounding the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025, including:

(i) lead up to and planning of the attack;

(ii) the interaction and information sharing between Commonwealth agencies, between Commonwealth and State and Territory agencies, and between relevant Commonwealth and State agencies with the organisers of the Chanukah event at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iii) security arrangements for the Chanukah event and Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iv) the attack;

(v) emergency response to the attack;

(vi) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness, including whether they had adequate powers and the right systems, processes and procedures, and whether there was an appropriate authorising environment for information sharing with other Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies;

(vii) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies were prevented from taking prohibitive actions by the current legislative framework and authorising environment;

(viii) identifying any gaps in existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impede the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent and respond to attacks of this nature at. both the state and federal levels;

(ix) identifying any lessons for security and law enforcement agencies to prevent and respond to similar attacks in the future;

(d) make any other recommendations arising out of your inquiry into the matters set out in paragraphs (a) to (c) that would contribute to strengthening social cohesion in Australia and countering the spread of ideologically and religiously motivated extremism in Australia;

(e) any matter reasonably incidental to a matter referred to in paragraphs (a) to (d) or that you believe is reasonably relevant to your inquiry.

AND We direct you to make any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you consider appropriate, including recommendations about any policy, legislative, administrative or structural reforms.

AND We further declare that you are not required by these Our Letters Patent to inquire, or to continue to inquire, into a particular matter to the extent that you are satisfied that the matter has been, is being, or will be, sufficiently and appropriately dealt with by another inquiry or investigation or a criminal or civil proceeding.

AND, without limiting the scope of your inquiry or the scope of any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you may consider appropriate, We direct you, for the purposes of your inquiry and recommendations, to consider the following matters, and We authorise you, as you consider appropriate, having regard to the date by which you are required to submit your final report, to take (or refrain from taking) any action arising out of your consideration:

(f) the need to provide or disclose information, or give any document or other thing, to any person or body, in accordance with section 44 of the *Inquiries Act 2014* (Vic) or any other relevant law, including, for example, for the purpose of enabling the timely investigation and prosecution of offences;

(g) the need to establish appropriate arrangements in relation to current and previous inquiries, in Australia and elsewhere, for evidence and information to be shared with you in ways consistent with relevant obligations so that the work of those inquiries, including, with any necessary consents, the testimony of witnesses, can be taken into account by you in a way that avoids unnecessary duplication, improves efficiency and avoids unnecessary trauma to witnesses;

(h) the need to recognise and appropriately protect any intelligence information or operationally sensitive information obtained by you;

(i) the need to establish appropriate arrangements with the heads of the relevant Australian intelligence entities for obtaining, storing, accessing, using, disclosing and returning intelligence information relating to an Australian intelligence entity.

AND We appoint you, the Honourable Virginia Bell AC, to constitute the Commission.

AND We direct that you, the Honourable Virginia Bell AC, be responsible for ensuring the effective, orderly and expeditious conduct of the inquiry in all its facets.

AND We declare that you are a Royal Commission for the purposes 'of section 5 of the *Inquiries Act 2014* (Vic).

AND We declare that you are authorised to conduct your inquiry into any matter under these Our Letters Patent in combination with any inquiry into the same matter, or a matter related to that matter, that you are directed or authorised to conduct by any Commission, or under any order or appointment, made by the Governor-General of the Commonwealth, or the Governor of Victoria, or the Governor of any other State or the Government of any Territory.

AND We declare and specify that you may perform functions conferred on you under the law of the Commonwealth, another State or a Territory in conjunction with the performance of your functions under the *Inquiries Act 2014* (Vic}.

AND We declare that in these Our Letters Patent:

Australian Defence Force has the same meaning as in the *Defence Act 1903* (Cth).

Australian Intelligence entity means:

(a) the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or
(b) the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation; or
(c) the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation; or
(d) the Defence Intelligence Organisation; or
(e) the Australian Signals Directorate; or
(f) the Office of National Intelligence.

Department of Defence means the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982* (Cth).

head, of an Australian intelligence entity means:

(a) in relation to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation—the Director-General of Security; or
(b) in relation to the Australian Secret Intelligence Service—the Director-General of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or
(c) in relation to the Australian Signals Directorate—he Director-General of the Australian Signals Directorate; or
(d) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation—the Director of that part of the Department; or
(e) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Defence Intelligence Organisation—the Director of that part of the Department; or
(f) in relation to the Office of National Intelligence—the Director-General of National Intelligence.

intelligence information means information:

(a) that was acquired or prepared by or on behalf of an Australian intelligence entity in connection with its functions; or
(b) that relates to the performance by an Australian intelligence entity of its functions; or
(c) that identifies a person as being, or having been, a staff member (within the meaning of the *Intelligence Services Act 2001* (Cth)) or agent of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service or the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

law enforcement or security agency means any of the following agencies:

(a) the Australian Defence Force;

(b) the Australian Federal Police;
(c) the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission;
(d) the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Australian Border Force Act 2015* (Cth);
(e) the Office of the Special Investigator;
(f) the police force of a State or Territory.

operationally sensitive information means:
(a) information about information sources or operational activities or methods available to a law enforcement or security agency; or
(b) information about particular operations that have been, are being or are proposed to be undertaken by a law enforcement or security agency, or about proceedings relating to those operations; or
(c) information provided by a foreign government, or by an agency of a foreign government, where that government does not consent to the public disclosure of the information.

AND We:

(j) require you to begin your inquiry as soon as practicable; and

(k) require you to make your inquiry as expeditiously as possible; and

(l) require you to ensure the inquiry is conducted in a professional, impartial, respectful and courteous manner, including appropriately managing any actual or perceived conflicts of interest; and

(m) require you to submit to Our Governor an interim report that you consider appropriate not later than 30 April 2026, focusing on:

(i) the matters mentioned in paragraph (c); and

(ii) any other issues requiring urgent or immediate action; and

(n) require you to submit to Our Governor a report of the results of your inquiry, and your recommendations, not later than 14 December 2026.

IN WITNESS, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Seal of the State to be hereunder affixed.

WITNESS Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner, Companion of the Order of Australia, Governor of the State of Victoria in the Commonwealth of Australia at Melbourne this 17th day of February two thousand and twenty-six.

[signed]
MARGARET GARDNER
By Her Excellency's Command

[signed]
THE HON JACINTA MP
Premier of Victoria

Entered on the record by me in the Register of Patents Book No. 48 Page No. 182 on the 17th day of February 2026.

[signed]
JEREMI MOUL
Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet

LETTERS PATENT

KING CHARLES THE THIRD, by the Grace of God King of Australia and His other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth:

TO:

The Honourable Virginia Bell AC

GREETING:

ACKNOWLEDGING the antisemitic terrorist attack on Jewish Australians that took place at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025, and which resulted in the loss of 15 lives and the wounding of a further 40 individuals.

AND the determination of the Australian Government to respond to the attack, and the factors leading up to the attack, as a matter of urgency by addressing antisemitism within the Australian community, including since 7 October 2023.

AND that the Australian Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

AND recognising that strengthening the national consensus in support of democracy, freedom and the rule of law (social cohesion) provides the strongest defence against antisemitism and other forms of religious and ideologically motivated extremism.

AND that hearing from the Jewish Australian community will be important to informing the recommendations of your inquiry and recognising concerns relating to educational and cultural institutions and other sectors of Australian society.

AND the necessity for the inquiry to be conducted in a manner that does not occasion prejudice to current or future criminal proceedings or national security or undermine social cohesion.

NOW THEREFORE We do, by these Our Letters Patent issued in Our name by Our Governor in and over Our State of Queensland acting by and with the advice of Our Executive Council of Our State of Queensland and in pursuance to the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950* and all other powers her thereunto enabling HEREBY APPOINT YOU to be a Commission of Inquiry, and require and authorise you to inquire into the following matters:

(a) tackling antisemitism by:

(i) investigating the nature and prevalence of antisemitism in institutions and society, and examining its key drivers in Australia, including religious and ideologically motivated extremism and radicalisation, including in the lead up to the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025;

(ii) identifying any opportunities to enhance the responses of governments to antisemitism including, but not limited to, best practice approaches to de-radicalisation and strengthening social cohesion;

(iii) making recommendations to counteract and prevent manifestations of antisemitism;

(iv) assessing the impact of antisemitism on the daily life of Jewish Australians including with respect to security, physical and mental health and wellbeing;

(b) making any recommendations to assist law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to tackle antisemitism, including by:

(i) improvements to guidance and training within law enforcement, border control, immigration, and security agencies to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(ii) having regard to existing security arrangements for the Jewish community, improvement of protective security for Jewish places of worship, major sites, educational and cultural facilities, public events and community leaders;

(iii) whether these authorities have sufficient powers and resources to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(c) examine the circumstances surrounding the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025, including:

(i) lead up to and planning of the attack;

(ii) the interaction and information sharing between Commonwealth agencies, between Commonwealth and State and Territory agencies, and between relevant Commonwealth and State agencies with the organisers of the Chanukah event at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iii) security arrangements for the Chanukah event and Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iv) the attack;

(v) emergency response to the attack;

(vi) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness, including whether they had adequate powers and the right systems, processes and procedures, and whether there was an appropriate authorising environment for information sharing with other Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies;

(vii) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies were prevented from taking prohibitive actions by the current legislative framework and authorising environment;

(viii) identifying any gaps in existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impede the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent and respond to attacks of this nature at both the state and federal levels;

(ix) identifying any lessons for security and law enforcement agencies to prevent and respond to similar attacks in the future;

(d) make any other recommendations arising out of your inquiry into the matters set out in paragraphs (a) to (c) that would contribute to strengthening social cohesion in Australia and countering the spread of ideologically and religiously motivated extremism in Australia;

(e) any matter reasonably incidental to a matter referred to in paragraphs (a) to (d) or that you believe is reasonably relevant to your inquiry.

AND We direct you to make any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you consider appropriate, including recommendations about any policy, legislative, administrative or structural reforms.

AND We further declare that you are not required by these Our Letters Patent to inquire, or to continue to inquire, into a particular matter to the extent that you are satisfied that the matter has been, is being, or will be, sufficiently and appropriately dealt with by another inquiry or investigation or a criminal or civil proceeding.

AND without limiting the scope of your inquiry or the scope of any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you may consider appropriate, We direct you, for the purposes of your inquiry and recommendations, to consider the following matters, and We authorise you, as you consider appropriate, having regard to the date by which you are required to submit your final report, to take (or refrain from taking) any action arising out of your consideration:

(f) the need to establish mechanisms to facilitate the timely communication of information, or the furnishing of evidence, documents or things, in accordance with any relevant law, including, for example, for the purpose of enabling the timely investigation and prosecution of offences;

(g) the need to establish appropriate arrangements in relation to current and previous inquiries, in Australia and elsewhere, for evidence and information to be shared with you in ways consistent with relevant obligations so that the work of those inquiries, including, with any necessary consents, the testimony of witnesses, can be taken into account by you in a way that avoids unnecessary duplication, improves efficiency and avoids unnecessary trauma to witnesses;

(h) the need to recognise and appropriately protect any intelligence information or operationally sensitive information obtained by you;

(i) the need to establish appropriate arrangements with the heads of the relevant Australian intelligence entities for obtaining, storing, accessing, using, disclosing and returning intelligence information relating to an Australian intelligence entity.

AND We declare that you are authorised to conduct your inquiry into any matter under these Our Letters Patent in combination with any inquiry into the same matter, or a matter related to that matter, that you are directed or authorised to conduct by any Commission, or under any order or appointment, made by Our Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia or any of Our Governors of the States or by the Government of any of Our Territories.

AND We declare that in these Our Letters Patent:

Australian Defence Force has the same meaning as in the *Defence Act 1903*.

Australian intelligence entity means:

(a) the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or
(b) the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation; or
(c) the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation; or
(d) the Defence Intelligence Organisation; or
(e) the Australian Signals Directorate; or
(f) the Office of National Intelligence.

Department of Defence means the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982*.

head, of an Australian intelligence entity, means:

(a) in relation to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation–the Director-General of Security; or

(b) in relation to the Australian Secret Intelligence Service–the Director-General of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or

(c) in relation to the Australian Signals Directorate–the Director-General of the Australian Signals Directorate; or

(d) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation–the Director of that part of the Department; or

(e) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Defence Intelligence Organisation–the Director of that part of the Department; or

(f) in relation to the Office of National Intelligence–the Director-General of National Intelligence.

intelligence information means information:

(a) that was acquired or prepared by or on behalf of an Australian intelligence entity in connection with its functions; or

(b) that relates to the performance by an Australian intelligence entity of its functions; or

(c) that identifies a person as being, or having been, a staff member (within the meaning of the *Intelligence Services Act 2001*) or agent of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service or the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

law enforcement or security agency means any of the following agencies:

(a) the Australian Defence Force;

(b) the Australian Federal Police;

(c) the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission;

(d) the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Australian Border Force Act 2015*;

(e) the Office of the Special Investigator;

(f) the police force of a State or Territory.

operationally sensitive information means:

(a) information about information sources or operational activities or methods available to a law enforcement or security agency; or

(b) information about particular operations that have been, are being or are proposed be to undertaken by a law enforcement or security agency, or about proceedings relating to those operations; or

(c) information provided by a foreign government, or by an agency of a foreign government, where that government does not consent to the public disclosure of the information.

AND We:

(j) require you to begin your inquiry as soon as practicable; and

(k) require you to make your inquiry as expeditiously as possible; and

(l) require you to ensure the inquiry is conducted in a professional, impartial, respectful and courteous manner, including appropriately managing any actual or perceived conflicts of interest; and

(m) require you to submit to Our Governor an interim report that you consider appropriate not later than 30 April 2026, focusing on:

(i) the matters mentioned in paragraph (c); and

(ii) any other issues requiring urgent or immediate action; and

(n) require you to submit to Our Governor a report of the results of your inquiry, and your recommendations, not later than 14 December 2026.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF We have caused the Public Seal of Our said State to be hereunto affixed.

[signed]

WITNESS Our Trusty and Well-beloved Her Excellency the Honourable Doctor Jeannette Rosita Young, Companion of the Order of Australia, Public Service Medal, Governor in and over the State of Queensland and its Dependencies, in the Commonwealth of Australia, at Government House, Brisbane, this the nineteenth day of February, in the year, of Our Lord, Two thousand and twenty-six and in the fourth year of Our Reign.

By Command,

[signed]

RECORDED in the Register of Patents, No. 54, page 62, on 19 February 2026.

[signed]

Clerk of the Executive Council

Western Australia

Commission

appointing a Royal Commission to inquire into and report on antisemitism and social cohesion

To: **The Honourable Virginia Bell AC**

RECITALS

1. The antisemitic terrorist attack on Jewish Australians that took place at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025, and which resulted in the loss of 15 lives and the wounding of a further 40 individuals, is acknowledged.

2. The Australian Government is determined to respond to the attack, and the factors leading up to the attack, as a matter of urgency by addressing antisemitism within the Australian community, including since 7 October 2023.

3. The Australian Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

4. Strengthening the national consensus in support of democracy, freedom and the rule of law (social cohesion) provides the strongest defence against antisemitism and other forms of religious and ideologically motivated extremism.

5. Hearing from the Jewish Australian community will be important to informing the recommendations of your inquiry and recognising concerns relating to educational and cultural institutions, and other sectors of Australian society.

6. It is necessary for the inquiry to be conducted in a manner that does not occasion prejudice to current or future criminal proceedings or national security or undermine social cohesion.

OPERATIVE PART

By this commission under the Public Seal of the State, I, the Governor, acting under the *Royal Commissions Act 1968* and all other enabling powers and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council -

(a) appoint you to be a Royal Commission to inquire into the following matters —

  (i) tackling antisemitism by —

    (A) investigating the nature and prevalence of antisemitism in institutions and society, and examining its key drivers in Australia, including religious and ideologically motivated extremism and radicalisation, including in the lead up to the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025; and

    (B) identifying any opportunities to enhance the responses of governments to antisemitism, including, but not limited to, best practice approaches to de-radicalisation and strengthening social cohesion; and

    (C) making recommendations to counteract and prevent manifestations of antisemitism; and

(D) assessing the impact of antisemitism on the daily life of Jewish Australians, including with respect to security, physical and mental health and wellbeing;

(ii) making any recommendations to assist law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to tackle antisemitism, including by —

(A) improvements to guidance and training within law enforcement, border control, immigration, and security agencies to respond to antisemitic conduct; and

(B) having regard to existing security arrangements for the Jewish community, improvement of protective security for Jewish places of worship, major sites, educational and cultural facilities, public events and community leaders; and

(C) whether these authorities have sufficient powers and resources to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(iii) examine the circumstances surrounding the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025, including —

(A) lead up to and planning of the attack; and

(B) the interaction and information sharing between Commonwealth agencies, between Commonwealth and State and Territory agencies, and between relevant Commonwealth and State agencies with the organisers of the Chanukah event at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025; and

(C) security arrangements for the Chanukah event and Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025; and

(D) the attack; and

(E) emergency response to the attack; and

(F) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness, including whether they had adequate powers and the right systems, processes and procedures, and whether there was an appropriate authorising environment for information sharing with other Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies; and

(G) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies were prevented from taking prohibitive actions by the current legislative framework and authorising environment; and

(H) identifying any gaps in existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impede the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent and respond to attacks of this nature at both the state and federal levels; and

(I) identifying any lessons for security and law enforcement agencies to prevent and respond to similar attacks in the future;

(iv) make any other recommendations arising out of your inquiry into the matters set out in subparagraphs (i) to (iii) that would contribute to strengthening social cohesion in

Australia and countering the spread of ideologically and religiously motivated extremism in Australia;

(v) any matter reasonably incidental to a matter referred to in subparagraphs (i) to (iv) or that you believe is reasonably relevant to your inquiry;

and

(b) direct you to make any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you consider appropriate, including recommendations about any policy, legislative, administrative or structural reforms; and

(c) declare that you are not required to inquire, or to continue to inquire, into a particular matter to the extent that you are satisfied that the matter has been, is being, or will be, sufficiently and appropriately dealt with by another inquiry or investigation or a criminal or civil proceeding; and

(d) without limiting the scope of your inquiry or the scope of any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you may consider appropriate, direct you, for the purposes of your inquiry and recommendations, to consider the following matters, and authorise you, as you consider appropriate, having regard to the date by which you are required to submit your final report, to take (or refrain from taking) any action arising out of your consideration —

(i) the need to establish mechanisms to facilitate, subject to any applicable law, the timely communication of information, or the furnishing of evidence, documents or things, including, for example, for the purpose of enabling the timely investigation and prosecution of offences;

(ii) the need to establish appropriate arrangements in relation to current and previous inquiries, in Australia and elsewhere, for evidence and information to be shared with you in ways consistent with relevant obligations so that the work of those inquiries, including, with any necessary consents, the testimony of witnesses, can be taken into account by you in a way that avoids unnecessary duplication, improves efficiency and avoids unnecessary trauma to witnesses;

(iii) the need to recognise and appropriately protect any intelligence information or operationally sensitive information obtained by you;

(iv) the need to establish appropriate arrangements with the heads of the relevant Australian intelligence entities for obtaining, storing, accessing, using, disclosing and returning intelligence information relating to an Australian intelligence entity;

and

(e) declare that the *Royal Commissions Act 1968* section 18 applies to the Royal Commission; and

(f) declare that you are authorised to conduct your inquiry into any matter under this commission in combination with any inquiry into the same matter, or a matter related to that matter, that you are directed or authorised to conduct by any commission, letters patent, order or appointment issued or made by the Commonwealth, another State or a Territory; and

(g) declare that in this commission —

Australian Defence Force has the same meaning as in the *Defence Act 1903* (Cth);

Australian intelligence entity means —

(a) the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or

(b) the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation; or

(c) the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation; or

(d) the Defence Intelligence Organisation; or

(e) the Australian Signals Directorate; or

(f) the Office of National Intelligence;

Department of Defence means the Department of the Commonwealth administered by the Minister administering the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982* (Cth);

head, of an Australian intelligence entity means —

(a) in relation to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation — the Director-General of Security; or

(b) in relation to the Australian Secret Intelligence Service — the Director-General of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or

(c) in relation to the Australian Signals Directorate — the Director-General of the Australian Signals Directorate; or

(d) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation — the Director of that part of the Department; or

(e) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Defence Intelligence Organisation — the Director of that part of the Department; or

(f) in relation to the Office of National Intelligence — the Director-General of National Intelligence;

intelligence information means information —

(a) that was acquired or prepared by or on behalf of an Australian intelligence entity in connection with its functions; or

(b) that relates to the performance by an Australian intelligence entity of its functions; or

(c) that identifies a person as being, or having been, a staff member (within the meaning of the *Intelligence Services Act 2001* (Cth)) or agent of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service or the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation;

law enforcement or security agency means any of the following agencies —

(a) the Australian Defence Force;

(b) the Australian Federal Police;

(c) the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission;

(d) the Department of the Commonwealth administered by the Minister administering the *Australian Border Force Act 2015* (Cth);

(e) the Office of the Special Investigator;

(f) the police force of a State or Territory;

operationally sensitive information means —

(a) information about information sources or operational activities or methods available to a law enforcement or security agency; or

(b) information about particular operations that have been, are being or are proposed to be undertaken by a law enforcement or security agency, or about proceedings relating to those operations; or

(c) information provided by a foreign government, or by an agency of a foreign government, where that government does not consent to the public disclosure of the information;

and

(h) require you to begin your inquiry as soon as practicable; and

(i) require you to make your inquiry as expeditiously as possible; and

(j) require you to ensure the inquiry is conducted in a professional, impartial, respectful and courteous manner, including appropriately managing any actual or perceived conflicts of interest; and

(k) require you to submit to me an interim report that you consider appropriate not later than 30 April 2026, focusing on -

(i) the matters mentioned in paragraph (a)(iii); and

(ii) any other issues requiring urgent or immediate action; and

(l) require you to submit to me a report of the results of your inquiry, and your recommendations, not later than 14 December 2026.

Issued under the Public Seal of the State

at Perth on 20 January 2026.

[signed]

Governor

[signed]

Premier

HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE FRANCES JENNIFER ADAMSON, Companion of the Order of Australia, Governor in and over the State of South Australia:

TO

THE HONOURABLE VIRGINIA BELL AC

Greeting:

ACKNOWLEDGING the antisemitic terrorist attack on Jewish Australians that took place at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025, and which resulted in the loss of 15 lives and the wounding of a further 40 individuals.

AND the determination of the Australian Government to respond to the attack, and the factors leading up to the attack, as a matter of urgency by addressing antisemitism within the Australian community, including since 7 October 2023.

AND that the Australian Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

AND recognising that strengthening the national consensus in support of democracy, freedom and the rule of law (social cohesion) provides the strongest defence against antisemitism and other forms of religious and ideologically motivated extremism.

AND that hearing from the Jewish Australian community will be important to informing the recommendations of your inquiry and recognising concerns relating to educational and cultural institutions, and other sectors of Australian society.

AND the necessity for the inquiry to be conducted in a manner that does not occasion prejudice to current or future criminal proceedings or national security or undermine social cohesion.

NOW THEREFORE I, the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Executive Council and under the *Royal Commissions Act 1917*, DO HEREBY APPOINT YOU to be a Commissioner and require and authorise you to inquire into the following matters:

(b) tackling antisemitism by:

  (i) investigating the nature and prevalence of antisemitism in institutions and society, and examining its key drivers in Australia, including religious and ideologically motivated extremism and radicalisation, including in the lead up to the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025;

(ii) identifying any opportunities to enhance the responses of governments to antisemitism including, but not limited to, best practice approaches to de-radicalisation and strengthening social cohesion;

(iii) making recommendations to counteract and prevent manifestations of antisemitism;

(iv) assessing the impact of antisemitism on the daily life of Jewish Australians including with respect to security, physical and mental health and wellbeing;

(c) making any recommendations to assist law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to tackle antisemitism, including by:

(i) improvements to guidance and training within law enforcement, border control, immigration, and security agencies to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(ii) having regard to existing security arrangements for the Jewish community, improvement of protective security for Jewish places of worship, major sites, educational and cultural facilities, public events and community leaders;

(iii) whether these authorities have sufficient powers and resources to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(d) examine the circumstances surrounding the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025, including:

(i) lead up to and planning of the attack;

(ii) the interaction and information sharing between Commonwealth agencies, between Commonwealth and State and Territory agencies, and between relevant Commonwealth and State agencies with the organisers of the Chanukah event at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iii) security arrangements for the Chanukah event and Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iv) the attack;

(v) emergency response to the attack;

(vi) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness, including whether they had adequate powers and the right systems, processes and procedures, and whether there was an appropriate authorising environment for information sharing with other Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies;

(vii) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies were prevented from taking prohibitive actions by the current legislative framework and authorising environment;

(viii) identifying any gaps in existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impede the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent and respond to attacks of this nature at both the state and federal levels;

(ix) identifying any lessons for security and law enforcement agencies to prevent and respond to similar attacks in the future;

(e) make any other recommendations arising out of your inquiry into the matters set out in paragraphs (a) to (c) that would contribute to strengthening social cohesion in Australia and countering the spread of ideologically and religiously motivated extremism in Australia;

(f) any matter reasonably incidental to a matter referred to in paragraphs (a) to (d) or that you believe is reasonably relevant to your inquiry.

AND I direct you to make any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you consider appropriate, including recommendations about any policy, legislative, administrative or structural reforms.

AND I further declare that you are not required by this Commission to inquire, or to continue to inquire, into a particular matter to the extent that you are satisfied that the matter has been, is being, or will be, sufficiently and appropriately dealt with by another inquiry or investigation or a criminal or civil proceeding.

AND, without limiting the scope of your inquiry or the scope of any recommendations arising out of your inquiry that you may consider appropriate, I direct you, for the purposes of your inquiry and recommendations, to consider the following matters, and I authorise you, as you consider appropriate, having regard to the date by which you are required to submit your final report, to take (or refrain from taking) any action arising out of your consideration:

(g) the need to establish mechanisms to facilitate the timely communication of information, or the furnishing of evidence, documents or things, in accordance with section 6P of the *Royal Commissions Act 1902* (Cth) or any other relevant law, including, for example, for the purpose of enabling the timely investigation and prosecution of offences;

(h) the need to establish appropriate arrangements in relation to current and previous inquiries, in Australia and elsewhere, for evidence and information to be shared with you in ways consistent with relevant obligations so that the work of those inquiries, including, with any necessary consents, the testimony of witnesses, can be taken into account by you in a way that

avoids unnecessary duplication, improves efficiency and avoids unnecessary trauma to witnesses;

(i) the need to recognise and appropriately protect any intelligence information or operationally sensitive information obtained by you;

(j) the need to establish appropriate arrangements with the heads of the relevant Australian intelligence entities for obtaining, storing, accessing, using, disclosing and returning intelligence information relating to an Australian intelligence entity.

AND I declare that you are authorised to conduct your inquiry into any matter under this Commission in combination with any inquiry into the same matter, or a matter related to that matter, that you are directed or authorised to conduct by any Commission, or under any order or appointment, made by the Governor-General, the Governors of the States or by the Government of any of the Territories.

AND I declare that in this Commission:

Australian Defence Force has the same meaning as in the *Defence Act 1903* (Cth).

Australian intelligence entity means:

(a) the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or

(b) the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation; or

(c) the Australian Geospatial-lntelligence Organisation; or

(d) the Defence Intelligence Organisation; or

(e) the Australian Signals Directorate; or

(f) the Office of National Intelligence.

Department of Defence means the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982* (Cth).

head, of an Australian intelligence entity means:

(a) in relation to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation–the Director-General of Security; or

(b) in relation to the Australian Secret Intelligence Service–the Director-General of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or

(c) in relation to the Australian Signals Directorate–the Director-General of the Australian Signals Directorate; or

(d) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Australian Geospatial-lntelligence Organisation–the Director of that part of the Department; or

(e) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Defence Intelligence Organisation–the Director of that part of the Department; or

(f) in relation to the Office of National Intelligence–the Director-General of National Intelligence.

intelligence information means information:

(a) that was acquired or prepared by or on behalf of an Australian intelligence entity in connection with its functions;

(b) that relates to the performance by an Australian intelligence entity of its functions; or

(c) that identifies a person as being, or having been, a staff member (within the meaning of the *Intelligence Services Act 2001* (Cth)) or agent of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service or the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

law enforcement or security agency means any of the following agencies:

(a) the Australian Defence Force;

(b) the Australian Federal Police;

(c) the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission;

(d) the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Australian Border Force Act 2015* (Cth);

(e) the Office of the Special Investigator;

(f) the police force of a State or Territory.

operationally sensitive information means:

(a) information about information sources or operational activities or methods available to a law enforcement or security agency; or

(b) information about particular operations that have been, are being or are proposed to be undertaken by a law enforcement or security agency, or about proceedings relating to those operations; or

(c) information provided by a foreign government, or by an agency of a foreign government, where that government does not consent to the public disclosure of the information.

AND I:

(k) require you to begin your inquiry as soon as practicable; and

(l) require you to make your inquiry as expeditiously as possible; and

(m) require you to ensure the inquiry is conducted in a professional, impartial, respectful and courteous manner, including appropriately managing any actual or perceived conflicts of interest; and

(n) require you to submit to me an interim report that you consider appropriate not later than 30 April 2026, focusing on:

(i) the matters mentioned in paragraph (c); and

(ii) any other issues requiring urgent or immediate action; and

(o) require you to submit to me a report of the results of your inquiry, and your recommendations, not later than 14 December 2026.

Given under my hand and the Public Seal of South Australia, at Adelaide this 22nd day of January 2026.

By command,

[signed]

For Premier

Recorded in Register of Commissions,
Letters Patent, Etc., Vol. XXXI

[signed]

Clerk of Executive Council

GOD SAVE THE KING!

TASMANIA

Commissions of Inquiry Act 1995

Section 4

ORDER

ACKNOWLEDGING the antisemitic terrorist attack on Jewish Australians that took place at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025, and which resulted in the loss of 15 lives and the wounding of a further 40 individuals.

AND the determination of the Australian Government to respond to the attack, and the factors leading up to the attack, as a matter of urgency by addressing antisemitism within the Australian community, including since 7 October 2023.

AND that the Australian Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

AND recognising that strengthening the national consensus in support of democracy, freedom and the rule of law (social cohesion) provides the strongest defence against antisemitism and other forms of religious and ideologically motivated extremism.

AND that hearing from the Jewish Australian community will be important to informing the recommendations of your inquiry and recognising concerns relating to educational and cultural institutions, and other sectors of Australian society.

AND the necessity for the inquiry to be conducted in a manner that does not occasion prejudice to current or future criminal proceedings or national security or undermine social cohesion.

NOW THEREFORE I, the Governor in and over the State of Tasmania and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia, acting with the advice of the Executive Council, being satisfied that it is in the public interest and expedient to do so, by this my order made under section 4 of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1995* (Tas):

1. direct that an inquiry be made into the attack on Jewish Australians that took place at Bondi Beach, antisemitism and social cohesion;
2. establish a Commission to conduct and report on that inquiry, with such recommendations as it considers appropriate; and
3. appoint the Hon Virgina Bell AC as the Commissioner.

AND I require and authorise the Commission to inquire into the following matters:

(a) **tackling antisemitism by:**

(i) investigating the nature and prevalence of antisemitism in institutions and society, and examining its key drivers in Australia, including religious and ideologically motivated extremism and radicalisation, including in the lead up to the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025;

(ii) identifying any opportunities to enhance the responses of governments to antisemitism including, but not limited to, best practice approaches to de-radicalisation and strengthening social cohesion;

(iii) making recommendations to counteract and prevent manifestations of antisemitism;

(iv) assessing the impact of antisemitism on the daily life of Jewish Australians including with respect to security, physical and mental health and wellbeing;

(b) **making any recommendations to assist law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to tackle antisemitism, including by:**

(i) improvements to guidance and training within law enforcement, border control, immigration, and security agencies to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(ii) having regard to existing security arrangements for the Jewish community, improvement of protective security for Jewish places of worship, major sites, educational and cultural facilities, public events and community leaders;

(iii) whether these authorities have sufficient powers and resources to respond to antisemitic conduct;

(c) **examining the circumstances surrounding the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025, including:**

(i) lead up to and planning of the attack;

(ii) the interaction and information sharing between Commonwealth agencies, between Commonwealth and State and Territory agencies, and between relevant Commonwealth and State agencies with the organisers of the Chanukah event at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iii) security arrangements for the Chanukah event and Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025;

(iv) the attack;

(v) emergency response to the attack;

(vi) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies performed to maximum effectiveness, including whether they had adequate powers and the right systems, processes and procedures, and whether there was an appropriate authorising environment for information sharing with other Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies;

(vii) whether relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory intelligence and law enforcement agencies were prevented from taking prohibitive actions by the current legislative framework and authorising environment;

(viii) identifying any gaps in existing legal and regulatory frameworks that impede the ability for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to prevent and respond to attacks of this nature at both the state and federal levels;

(ix) identifying any lessons for security and law enforcement agencies to prevent and respond to similar attacks in the future;

(d) **make any other recommendations arising out of the Commission's inquiry into the matters set out in paragraphs (a) to (c) that would contribute to strengthening social**

cohesion in Australia and countering the spread of ideologically and religiously motivated extremism in Australia;

(e) **any matter reasonably incidental to a matter referred to in paragraphs (a) to (d) or that the Commission believes is reasonably relevant to your inquiry.**

AND I direct the Commission to take any recommendations arising out of the inquiry that it considers appropriate, including recommendations about any policy, legislative, administrative or structural reforms.

AND I further declare that the Commission is not required by this Order to inquire, or to continue to inquire, into a particular matter to the extent that the Commission is satisfied that the matter has been, is being, or will be, sufficiently and appropriately dealt with by another inquiry or investigation or a criminal or civil proceeding.

AND, without limiting the scope of the Commission's inquiry or the scope of any recommendations arising out of the Commission's inquiry that the Commission may consider appropriate, I direct the Commission, for the purposes of the inquiry and recommendations, to consider the following matters, and I authorise the Commission, as it considers appropriate, having regard to the date by which the Commission is required to submit its final report, to take (or refrain from taking) any action arising out of its consideration:

(f) the need to establish mechanisms to facilitate the timely communication of information, or the furnishing of evidence, documents or things, in accordance with section 34A of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1995* or any other relevant law, including, for example, for the purpose of enabling the timely investigation and prosecution of offences;

(g) the need to establish appropriate arrangements in relation to current and previous inquiries, in Australia and elsewhere, for evidence and information to be shared with the Commission in ways consistent with relevant obligations so that the work of those inquiries, including, with any necessary consents, the testimony of witnesses, can be taken into account by the Commission in a way that avoids unnecessary duplication, improves efficiency and avoids unnecessary trauma to witnesses;

(h) the need to recognise and appropriately protect any intelligence information or operationally sensitive information obtained by the Commission;

(i) the need to establish appropriate arrangements with the heads of the relevant Australian intelligence entities for obtaining, storing, accessing, using, disclosing and returning intelligence information relating to an Australian intelligence entity.

AND I declare that the Commission is authorised to conduct its inquiry into any matter under this Order in combination with any inquiry into the same matter, or a matter related to that matter, that the Commission is directed or authorised to conduct by any Commission, or under any order or appointment, made by the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia or any of Our Governors of the States or by the Government of any of Our Territories.

AND I declare that in this Order:

Australian Defence Force has the same meaning as in the *Defence Act 1903*.

Australian intelligence entity means:

(a) the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or

(b) the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation; or

(c) the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation; or

(d) the Defence Intelligence Organisation; or

(e) the Australian Signals Directorate; or

(f) the Office of National Intelligence.

Department of Defence means the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982*.

head, of an Australian intelligence entity, means**:**

(a) in relation to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, the Director-General of Security; or

(b) in relation to the Australian Secret Intelligence Service, the Director-General of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service; or

(c) in relation to the Australian Signals Directorate, the Director-General of the Australian Signals Directorate; or

(d) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation, the Director of that part of the Department; or

(e) in relation to the part of the Department of Defence known as the Defence Intelligence Organisation, the Director of that part of the Department; or

(f) in relation to the Office of National Intelligence, the Director-General of National Intelligence.

intelligence information means information**:**

(a) that was acquired or prepared by or on behalf of an Australian intelligence entity in connection with its functions; or

(b) that relates to the performance by an Australian intelligence entity of its functions; or

(c) that identifies a person as being, or having been, a staff member (within the meaning of the *Intelligence Services Act 2001*) or agent of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service or the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

law enforcement or security agency means any of the following agencies**:**

(a) the Australian Defence Force;

(b) the Australian Federal Police;

(c) the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission;

(d) the Department administered by the Minister administering the *Australian Border Force Act 2015*;

(e) the Office of the Special Investigator;

(f) the police force of a State or Territory.

operationally sensitive information means**:**

(a) information about information sources or operational activities or methods available to a law enforcement or security agency; or

(b) information about particular operations that have been, are being or are proposed to be undertaken by a law enforcement or security agency, or about proceedings relating to those operations; or

(c) information provided by a foreign government, or by an agency of a foreign government, where that government does not consent to the public disclosure of the information.

AND I:

(j) require the Commission to begin its inquiry as soon as practicable; and

(k) require the Commission to make its inquiry as expeditiously as possible; and

(l) require the Commission to ensure the inquiry is conducted in a professional, impartial, respectful and courteous manner, including appropriately managing any actual or perceived conflicts of interest; and

(m) require the Commission to submit to me an interim report that the Commission considers appropriate not later than 30 April 2026, focusing on:

(i) the matters mentioned in paragraph (c); and

(ii) any other issues requiring urgent or immediate action; and

(n) require Commission to submit to me a report of the results of its inquiry, and its recommendations, not later than 14 December 2026.

IN WITNESS I cause this Order to be made.

WITNESS the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, Governor of the State of Tasmania.

Dated 03 FEB 2026

(Signed) Barbara Baker

Governor

By Her Excellency's Command

(Signed)

Guy Barnett

Guy Barnett MP
Attorney-General