



Australian Government

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

to the Interim Report of the Royal Commission
on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion

May 2026

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Foreword

Australia is a country where everyone should be able to be safe and feel safe. The attack at Bondi on 14 December 2025 was an antisemitic terrorist attack on people practicing their faith and sharing their traditions. It was an attack on Australia.

The Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion has already delivered critical answers about the ongoing work of protecting Australians and strengthening social cohesion. The Interim Report makes clear that our existing legal and regulatory frameworks did not hinder our agencies in preventing or responding to the Bondi attack, and that no urgent legislative changes are required to keep Australians safe. However, the Royal Commission also notes that we must strengthen prevention, detection and responses to antisemitism.

The Australian Government accepts the recommendations relevant to the Commonwealth and is working with states and territories on those requiring a national approach. The purpose of the interim report is to allow us to begin work on these recommendations without needing to wait until the end of the Royal Commission process.

We will deliver clearer national crisis coordination, strengthened information sharing and enhanced operational readiness. In the months since the attack we have already strengthened support for victims and families, expanded protective security for Jewish schools, synagogues, community centres and events, and increased our focus on identifying and disrupting those who incite or plan violence.

Australians rightly expect leadership from a government that is united in its commitment to call out antisemitism, reject intimidation and violence, and insist that there can be no excuse for hatred. This response sets out the actions we are taking now. Some recommendations are included in the Royal Commission's confidential report and have been accepted and addressed in a confidential Government response.

We acknowledge the Commission, and the security, intelligence, law enforcement and emergency services personnel, including state and territory partners, who have supported its work. We also thank the Australian Jewish community and all communities affected by hatred and violence for their participation in this process. Our commitment is clear. We will implement these recommendations, and continue the work of protecting an Australia where people can be and feel safe.

The Hon Tony Burke MP
Minister for Home Affairs

The Hon Michelle Rowland MP
Attorney-General

About the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion

The Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion was established in response to the horrific antisemitic terrorist attack at Bondi, Sydney on 14 December 2025.

On 21 December 2025, the Prime Minister announced the establishment of a review, to be led by Dennis Richardson AC, to examine federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies' legislative powers, structures, processes and sharing arrangements.

On 8 January 2026, the Royal Commission was established by Letters Patent. Former High Court Justice the Honourable Virginia Bell AC SC was appointed as the Commissioner. Mr Richardson's review was incorporated into the Royal Commission. The terms of reference for the Royal Commission were set out in Letters Patent and included considering recommendations for law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to tackle antisemitism, examining the circumstances of the Bondi attack and recommending actions to strengthen social cohesion.

The Royal Commission released its Interim Report on 30 April 2026. The Interim Report makes 14 recommendations relating to national counter-terrorism arrangements and policies, law enforcement procedures and information sharing. The Government accepts all recommendations that relate to the Commonwealth and is committed to working with states and territories to strengthen our collective response.

Our actions to date

The antisemitic terrorist attack at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025 was a devastating shock to the Australian community and an intolerable attack on modern Australia and our way of life.

The Australian Government recognises the urgent need to respond and has taken decisive steps since the attack to support victims, promote social cohesion, combat antisemitism and enhance law enforcement and national security. These actions have been taken forward through engagement with states and territories, and in consultation with affected communities.

Actions following 7 October 2023

In the wake of the 7 October 2023 Hamas attack on Israel, the Government delivered a range of measures to address social cohesion harms linked to the conflict and to support affected communities in Australia. This included support to enhance the safety and security of Jewish sites nationally, including schools, synagogues and community facilities. The Government also extended support for the National Council for Jewish Community Security and state-based Community Security Groups. These measures complemented work led by the eSafety Commissioner to protect Australians online and expanded targeted mental health and community wellbeing supports.

The Government also took further action to strengthen safety and accountability in education settings, including by establishing Australia's first National Student Ombudsman and supporting education-focused initiatives to address antisemitism and promote social cohesion.

Since 2023, the Government has progressed a range of legislative reforms to enhance Commonwealth responses to antisemitism and other hate-motivated conduct. This included banning the Nazi salute and the public display and trade of hate symbols, criminalising doxxing and expanding offences for urging violence and advocating terrorism. The Government also strengthened hate speech offences, including by establishing stronger penalties for threats made on the basis of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, disability, nationality, national or ethnic origin or political opinion.

These reforms have been supported by enhanced policing, intelligence and other law enforcement actions to detect, disrupt and respond to antisemitism and related threats. The AFP and ASIO established Special Operation Avalite as a joint operation to detect, disrupt and investigate acts of antisemitism. In October 2025, the AFP also announced the establishment of new National Security Investigations teams focused on individuals and groups assessed as posing a high risk to Australia's social cohesion, with 21 arrests reported to date.

The Government also took action to counter extremist propaganda and foreign interference, including by imposing counter-terrorism financing sanctions on Terrorgram and taking additional diplomatic and sanctions measures where appropriate, including listing Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organisation. The Government also expelled the Iranian Ambassador to Australia.

Alongside these actions, the Government has stepped up efforts to increase community awareness of antisemitism. This has included the establishment of the National Holocaust Education Centre in Canberra and support for upgrades to the Sydney Jewish Museum, the Centre for Jewish Life and Tolerance and the Holocaust Institute of Western Australia's Education Centre in Yokine. The Government also provided funding for *Together for Humanity* to expand their social cohesion programs into more schools.

Recognising the importance of community driven solutions, the Prime Minister appointed Ms Jillian Segal AO as Australia's Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism in July 2024. As Special Envoy, Ms Segal AO engages with Jewish Australians, the wider Australian community, religious discrimination experts and all levels of government on the most effective way to combat antisemitism.

In January 2025, the Government released a new *A Safer Australia: Australia's Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism Strategy* to focus whole-of-society efforts to implement counter violent extremism programs designed to prevent radicalisation, disengage individuals from violent ideologies, and build community resilience.

Actions following the Bondi attack

In the immediate aftermath of the attack, the Government prioritised support to victims, their families and the broader community. Support included facilitating victims and their families to access critical services, including mental health and primary care, and assistance with medial transfers overseas for people injured in the attack. The Government also provided visa support and permanent resident pathways for impacted families.

The Government also supported recovery in affected businesses and communities, and strengthened protective security at Jewish community locations, including by expanding existing security programs for Jewish schools, synagogues, community centres and events. This included direct engagement with the insurance sector to ensure insurers would quickly provide payments to local businesses for eligible losses.

Building on the earlier legal reforms to combat antisemitism, the Government acted immediately to strengthen existing laws and enact new offences targeting hate-motivated violence and extremism. This legislation established a new framework to enable organisations who engage in conduct constituting a hate crime to be listed as prohibited hate groups. Migration and citizenship powers have also been expanded, providing for more flexible powers to refuse to grant, or to cancel a visa for individuals involved in the spread of hate and division.

Alongside these reforms, the Government has strengthened import controls on firearms and violent extremist material and established a National Gun Buyback Scheme. As part of this package of measures, and in line with National Cabinet's agreement, work to deliver a National Firearms Register has also been accelerated.

The Government has progressed a range of complementary initiatives to combat antisemitism and violent extremism and strengthen social cohesion.

On 18 December 2025, the Government released its response to the Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism's *Plan to Combat Antisemitism*, with immediate actions delivered including establishing the first phase of the National Hate Crimes and Incidents Database. As part of its response, the Government has directed the eSafety Commissioner and the Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism to work together, with the Minister for Communications, to provide online safety advice on best practices to address online antisemitism.

The Government has also established an Antisemitism Education Taskforce to be led by David Gonski AC. The Taskforce will lead the implementation of measures outlined in the Government's response to the Special Envoy's Plan to Combat Antisemitism and provide advice on further actions to promote an inclusive Australia.

The Government will continue to work with states and territories and affected communities to combat antisemitism, counter violent extremism and strengthen social cohesion, including through implementation of the Royal Commission's Interim Report recommendations set out below.

Government Response

The Royal Commission has made 14 recommendations in its Interim Report. The Government **accepts** all recommendations relevant to the Commonwealth. This response sets out actions the Government will take to implement recommendations relevant to the Commonwealth. A classified response has also been developed to respond to classified recommendations.

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.

The Government notes that this recommendation is a matter for state and territory governments.

Consistent with a cooperative national approach, the Government will continue to work closely with states and territories to share operational lessons, including through the Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC), to support implementation of this recommendation.

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 CT Coordinator's role full-time.

The Government **accepts** this recommendation.

The Government acknowledges the important role the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator plays in bringing together federal, state and territory to support Australia's strategic counter-terrorism agenda.

Since 2019, the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator function has been performed concurrently with other responsibilities, reflecting its close integration with broader leadership arrangements on national security, social cohesion and citizenship issues.

A full-time Counter-Terrorism Coordinator will be appointed within the Department of Home Affairs with immediate effect. A dedicated Counter-Terrorism Coordinator will provide sustained national coordination – engaging affected communities, working with senior counter-terrorism officials through the ANZCTC, coordinating exercises, and responding to emerging threats and priorities.

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.

The Government **accepts** this recommendation and will work closely with state and territory governments, through the ANZCTC, to support implementation.

The Government acknowledges the need for clear crisis coordination arrangements during a terrorist attack. Effective crisis coordination mechanisms coordinate relevant Commonwealth, state and territory agencies responding to an incident and ensure that information sharing is balanced with security and operational requirements.

The Australian Government Crisis Management Framework establishes the National Coordination Mechanism (NCM) as the peak senior officials' crisis coordination mechanism to provide a national picture of crises to governments and key stakeholders. Experience from NCM activations following previous incidents has highlighted challenges in sharing operationally sensitive information and managing the flow of information between participants.

The Government, through the ANZCTC, has agreed to formalise arrangements to establish a limited attendance NCM, rather than an ANZCTC meeting, which can be convened rapidly at a classified level. These arrangements will manage sensitive information through restricted participation and appropriate security clearance requirements. The Government will work with states and territories to test these arrangements by convening an exercise, in consultation with the ANZCTC.

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.

The Government **accepts** this recommendation and will work closely with state and territory governments, through the ANZCTC, to support implementation.

The 2026 ANZCTC Triennial Review recognises the importance of maintaining effective counter-terrorism operational protocols and procedures that regularly incorporate lessons learned from terrorism incidents, evolving threats and amendments to legislative powers.

The Counter-Terrorism Handbook contains nationally agreed guidelines, policies and procedures for commanders, controllers, coordinators, senior officials and other decision makers involved in the counter-terrorism environment. It is used in conjunction with the National Counter-Terrorism Plan and agency specific plans and procedures for all levels of government.

The ANZCTC has agreed to commission a review of the Counter-Terrorism Handbook. The Review has commenced and will be completed before the end of 2026. The Government will work with states and territories to ensure regular updates are implemented, in conjunction with updates to the Counter-Terrorism Plan and the ANZCTC Triennial Review, at least once every three years.

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).

The Government **accepts** this recommendation and will work closely with state and territory governments, through the ANZCTC, to support implementation.

National Cabinet oversight of national counter-terrorism capability uplift and priority setting will help align Commonwealth, state and territory efforts and strengthen strategic leadership and policy coordination.

The Government will engage states and territories on the format and frequency of regular briefings to National Cabinet, with a proposed first briefing before the end of the 2025-26 financial year. The First Secretaries Group will be briefed as a priority in advance of National Cabinet.

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

The Government **accepts** this recommendation and will work closely with state and territory governments, through the ANZCTC, to support implementation.

Joint Counter-Terrorism Teams provide a critical operational capability, supporting integration of Commonwealth, state and territory agencies to jointly investigate and disrupt terrorist activity. Given the evolving threat environment and emerging operational lessons from the Bondi terrorist attack, a review of arrangements for Joint Counter-Terrorism Teams will ensure that operational and information sharing procedures remain fit for purpose.

Subject to state and territory agreement, the Government proposes that the ANZCTC immediately commission an independent review, with findings to be provided to relevant lead agencies within three months of commencement.

Recommendation 7

The Australian Government should consider whether NSC 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.

The Government **accepts** this recommendation and will work closely with state and territory governments, through the ANZCTC, to support implementation.

The Government recognises the critical role that counter-terrorism exercises play in maintaining Australia's preparedness to respond to complex and evolving terrorist threats.

Recommendation 8

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Recommendation 9

This recommendation is contained in the confidential Interim Report.

Recommendation 10

This recommendation is contained 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.

Recommendation 13

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

The Government **accepts** this recommendation and continues to work with state and territory governments to prioritise efforts to strengthen national gun laws.

In the aftermath of the Bondi terrorist attack, National Cabinet agreed that firearms regulation reform, including a renegotiated National Firearms Agreement, was needed. These initiatives are being progressed through First Ministers.

The Government has progressed early actions to support the implementation of this recommendation. On 20 January 2026, the Commonwealth Government passed legislation to enable state and territory governments to access relevant Commonwealth intelligence and background checks to inform firearms licensing decisions.

The Government will continue to engage constructively with states and territories, recognising that nationally consistent settings are critical to strengthening information sharing and law enforcement cooperation.

The Government has established a Firearms Taskforce in the Department of Home Affairs to work with state and territory governments as a matter of priority.

Recommendation 14

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

The Government **accepts** this recommendation and continues to work with state and territory governments to prioritise efforts to establish a National Gun Buyback Scheme in support of national firearms reforms.

On 19 December 2025, the Commonwealth Government announced its commitment to establish the National Gun Buyback Scheme (the scheme). The scheme will support a suite of firearm regulation reforms highlighted earlier and the purchase of surplus and newly restricted firearms. This supports broader national firearms regulation changes outlined under the Government's response to Recommendation 13.

The Government acknowledges that implementation of the scheme will occur through a federated approach, reflecting different legislative sequencing across jurisdictions. Several state and territory governments have introduced or progressed reforms consistent with this recommendation, while others are still considering reform as part of national discussions. These initiatives are being progressed through First Ministers.

As outlined above under recommendation 13, the establishment of a Firearms Taskforce in the Department of Home Affairs will help to drive these efforts.