Australian Government

COMBATTING ISLAMOPHOBIA

Australian Government Response to the Special Envoy's National Response to Islamophobia

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Table of Contents

Support services **2**

Introduction **3**

The Special Envoy's ongoing workplan **5**

The Australian Government response to the Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia **6**

1. Education and awareness 7
2. Protection and support 10
3. Building social cohesion 11
4. Accountability and responsibility 13

Conclusion **15**

Support services

If you experience or witness hate, racism or prejudice, stand up; speak up; and report it. When you report, you can help stop the behaviour from continuing or growing. You also become part of a larger movement to remove hate, racism and prejudice from our society.

In an emergency or life-threatening situation, call Triple Zero (000) and ask for Police. If there is no immediate danger, call the Police Assistance Line (131 444) or report anonymously via Crime Stoppers (1800 333 000).

Reporting hate lets authorities understand patterns of behaviour in local areas, so they can create a safer community for everyone. More information on reporting a hate crime or incident is available on the Department of Home Affairs website, along with contact information for support services for those targeted: Addressing hate.

If you have witnessed or suspect a hate crime, call the 24-hour National Security Hotline 1800 123 400.

Traumatic events and/or experiences can cause significant psychological distress; it is important to connect with supports when they are needed. If you are experiencing distress, you can seek advice through Lifeline on 13 11 14, text on 0477 131 114, or through their online crisis chat service at any time at Lifeline Crisis Chat.

Introduction

Islamophobia propagates hate, tears at our social cohesion, and cannot be tolerated in Australia.

For generations, the Muslim community has been a valued part of the breadth and richness of who we are as a nation, integral to the character and success of modern Australia.

Indeed, the Muslim story on this continent began long before European settlement, when Makassan seafarers established a flourishing trade with the Yolngu people of East Arnhem Land.

What grew out of that powerful first chapter is a long and vibrant story, one that Muslim Australians continue to write in the ink of aspiration, hard work and love of country.

A defining feature of what makes this the best country on earth is that every Australian has the right to be proud of who they are.

Muslim Australians have the right to follow their faith freely and openly, to build a good life for their families and to play their full and equal part in the life of our nation.

This is where Islamophobia is not only a threat to the Muslim community's happiness and safety, it undermines our national unity and betrays our Australian values.

Islamophobia has its roots in ancient prejudice, yet it has found new life in those who seek to blame all Muslims for acts of terrorism that are an offence against their faith as well as our common humanity.

Islamophobia can range from physical violence and verbal abuse to vandalism, graffiti, and hatred expressed on social media. Women, who so visibly wear their faith, are particularly vulnerable.

Wherever Islamophobia originates and however it manifests - violence, abuse, prejudice or discrimination – it takes a punishing toll on individuals and communities.

The inescapable lesson of the atrocity at Christchurch, the mass murder of Muslims by an Australian gunman, is that what begins with hateful ideas can end in unimaginable violence.

The position of the Australian Government is clear: we will not tolerate Islamophobia in any form. It goes against all we are as a nation, and we will combat it with the full force of our laws.

This work begins with changing attitudes.

We are profoundly grateful to Mr Aftab Malik for his work as Special Envoy for Combatting Islamophobia in Australia.

Likewise we appreciate the invaluable contributions of the many individuals and organisations in the Muslim Australian community. The hard truths you have shared with such courage and generosity in the belief that it can help light the path to a better future.

Our government is committed to providing national leadership and we will back community leadership, which is every bit as critical to the task. We will work with all Australians in good faith to ensure our nation is stronger and safer for Australians of every faith.

As part of our response to this report, our government will implement a package of measures including:

- a dedicated Islamophobia Education Taskforce to help the education system prevent, tackle and properly respond to Islamophobia
- training and professional development resources for parliamentarians, their staff and the Australian Public Service to enable better identification of, and responses to, Islamophobia
- targeted supports to Muslim organisations to assist local communities through wellbeing and resilience initiatives

- new multicultural grant programs to increase education and awareness around Muslim identity and history, support inter-community, inter-culture and inter-faith understanding, and build the wellbeing, leadership and capability of Muslims and Muslim organisations, with a specific focus on Muslim women and youth
- better reporting of, and responses to, Islamophobia in the community through expanded Australian Federal Police Community Liaison teams and finalising the establishment of an Australian Federal Police Social Cohesion Consultative Board.

This is not the end of our work.

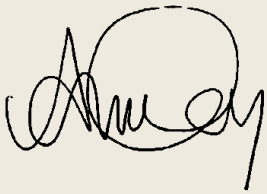
These initiatives represent an ongoing commitment to meaningful change and a clear recognition that combatting Islamophobia is a duty that belongs to all Australians.

One hundred and twenty five years ago, our Federation was born from an instinct to unify. We have always understood that we are a better and stronger country when we work together, respect each other and draw on the contribution of all our citizens.

That respect, unity and co-operation is the true spirit of our nation it is a commitment that we renew through our response and the work ahead.



The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister



The Hon Dr Anne Aly MP
Minister for Multicultural Affairs



The Hon Tony Burke MP
Minister for Home Affairs

The Special Envoy's ongoing workplan

The Office of the Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia is delivering a national program of work that advances practical, evidence-based responses to Islamophobia across Australia.

The Office of the Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia (OSECI) is focused on building partnerships across government and non-government sectors, engaging internationally and advancing practical, evidence-based responses to Islamophobia across Australia, including:

- delivering the national awareness campaign *Living with Hate – Islamophobia in Australia* (PDF 4.10 MB)
- working with the Online Hate Prevention Institute and the Online Hate Task Force on United Against Hate.
- delivering keynote addresses, educational resources, public engagement programs, submissions to parliamentary inquiries and national media advocacy around Islamophobia and its impacts
- establishing relationships with the United Nations, the European Commission, Canada's Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia, and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
- undertaking extensive community consultation, including to inform the *National Response to Islamophobia: A Strategic Framework for Inclusion, Safety and Prosperity* (PDF 3.82 MB)
- launching the first-ever Australian Muslim Poll, to better understand the experiences, safety and belonging of Muslim Australians.

For the remainder of 2026, OSECI will expand its collaboration with academics and experts and continue its work to help governments, public institutions and communities to better respond to the needs of Muslim Australians. This will include:

- launching a national guidebook on responding to Islamophobia through global best practice
- working with the health sector, and the eSafety Commissioner to address online harms and improve safety
- implementing faith literacy training and national education initiatives that challenge stereotypes and improve public understanding
- developing Australia's first Islamophobia Index, to measure trends, drivers and impacts of Islamophobia
- continuing to identify and address structural barriers within legislation, policy and regulatory frameworks.

OSECI is committed to advancing practical reforms that strengthen social cohesion, safeguard rights and address Islamophobia across Australia.

The Australian Government response to the Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia

Mr Aftab Malik was appointed to the role of Australia's first ever Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia on 14 October 2024.

The Prime Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, joined the Special Envoy in launching his report, *A National Response to Islamophobia: A Strategic Framework for Inclusion, Safety and Prosperity*, on 12 September 2025.

The National Response has 54 recommendations, which the Australian Government is now responding to with significant new, and extensive ongoing, work. This work reflects Australia's resolve to confront Islamophobia and set a new benchmark for inclusion, safety and prosperity.

The Australian Government's response is aligned to the 4 key themes that the Special Envoy identified as encapsulating the recommendations in his National Response :[1]

1. **Education and awareness** – challenging Islamophobia and promoting understanding and respectful dialogue through training, media, arts and education
2. **Protection and support** – ensuring that victims of Islamophobia have accessible support services and that communities feel safe and valued
3. **Building social cohesion** – building trust, encouraging positive interactions, intercultural exchange and collaborative efforts to reduce prejudice and foster mutual respect
4. **Accountability and responsibility** – holding individuals and institutions accountable for hate speech, discriminatory actions and policies.

This national package is part of a sustained, long-term effort to address Islamophobia. The government will continue working with the Special Envoy and members of the Muslim Australian community to address and eradicate Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim hate in all its forms. Two key principles will be central to these efforts:

- Anti-Muslim hate, racism and threats to social cohesion are not issues for Muslim communities to confront alone. Addressing Islamophobia is a responsibility shared by all Australians, and one we must face together.
- Reflecting the Special Envoy's finding that Muslim women experience a distinct form of Islamophobia, government actions under this package will be designed and implemented with a gender-conscious approach, where appropriate.

1. Education and awareness

Education and community engagement are among the most powerful levers to prevent racism and discrimination, including Islamophobia, before it takes hold. There are opportunities across the education lifecycle – including early childhood education and care, schools and universities – to help build intercultural understanding and support social cohesion. Addressing Islamophobia in the education system, as well as identifying opportunities in the system to build knowledge and capability around religious and cultural tolerance, can replace harmful stereotypes and historical biases with factual knowledge, empathy and critical thinking.

More broadly, there are opportunities to build interfaith and intercultural understanding across the Australian community. It is important that Muslim communities are empowered to take part in efforts to support dialogue and decision-making on addressing Islamophobia, including through building an evidence base on the nature and impacts of and best-practice solutions to Islamophobia, racism and discrimination. By strengthening awareness, capability and responses across schools, workplaces, communities and broader settings, the Australian Government will foster greater understanding and respect across Australian society.

To address Islamophobia and strengthen education, awareness and community connections, the government is announcing:

- the establishment of the Islamophobia Education Taskforce to rapidly help the education system prevent, tackle and properly respond to Islamophobia. Membership will include state and territory education authorities, agencies and departments
- the establishment of an ongoing Social Cohesion Education Advisory Council as an overarching governance function to drive a broader suite of actions to strengthen social cohesion through Australia's education systems. It will help education systems prevent, tackle and appropriately respond to all forms of racism and discrimination in, and through, education. The Advisory Council will oversee the workstreams of the Islamophobia and Antisemitism Education Taskforces once they have completed their terms. In addition, the Advisory Council will – as a priority – implement recommendation 1 of the *Respect at Uni: Study into antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism and the experience of First Nations people* Report, to develop a national framework for anti-racism in universities building on the government's reforms in this space
- a focused review of the Australian Curriculum to identify opportunities to strengthen racial and religious tolerance, ensuring that students can develop the knowledge and capabilities required to support a cohesive, inclusive and respectful society. The review will be undertaken by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, in consultation with states and territories and the non-government schools sector. The review will examine all forms of hatred, including Islamophobia
- the development of a Social Cohesion Framework for schools to support whole-of-school approaches that combat Islamophobia and racism.

Funding under the Multicultural Grants Program will support education and awareness around Muslim history and identity, including by:

- establishing a research institute on Australian Muslim affairs, based on proven international models to build capacity within the Muslim community and support well-informed dialogue and decision-making. Work will also include research and analysis on the nature, impacts and gendered dimensions of Islamophobia
- supporting the delivery of cultural and educational initiatives that promote cross-cultural understanding, community engagement and public awareness of Muslims and Islam
- supporting young Muslim creatives to bolster storytelling through major works to promote awareness and understanding.

The government is also committing to work with the Special Envoy and other subject matter experts, including those with lived experience of Islamophobia, to:

- promote and provide access to APS-wide cultural competency learning resources, particularly resources that address discrimination and Islamophobia for all APS staff, including legal professionals in the Attorney-General's Department and other legal practitioners
- incorporate training into professional development programs for parliamentarians and their staff to better enable them to identify and respond to Islamophobia
- undertake a stocktake of anti-racism and cultural sensitivity training within the Australian Federal Police, with a view to developing professional development resources focused on religious sensitivity.

These initiatives respond to the recommendations of the Special Envoy and build on existing government action to strengthen education settings and address racism.

Driving change in educational settings

Educational institutions play an important role in shaping social attitudes and are integral in efforts to dismantle stereotypes and halt the spread of misinformation. The Australian Government is addressing racism in educational settings, including by allocating $2.5 million in funding to the Australian Human Rights Commission to lead the *Respect at Uni: Study into antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism and the experience of First Nations people* in 2025. The Respect at Uni report was released on 17 February 2026.

To ensure students in higher education have access to an independent and impartial complaints service to address unresolved issues including Islamophobia and other forms of racism, the government has established the National Student Ombudsman. The government is also strengthening Commonwealth regulation of higher education to ensure institutions demonstrate a clear commitment to addressing racism and enabling the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency to monitor compliance with anti-discrimination obligations.

For the early childcare and school sector, the government has allocated funding to the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority to administer the National Quality Framework, embedding anti-racism, cultural safety and diversity best practice into early learning and school-age care settings, and establishing an online Social Cohesion Education Hub. The hub provides free resources for educators, teachers, school leaders and parents to strengthen social cohesion and address racism in educational settings. Further investment includes school-based initiatives, including Together For Humanity, to strengthen intercultural and interfaith understanding.

Positive representation in the media and the arts

What is reflected in popular media and the arts can shape public opinion. The Australian Government is therefore championing positive representation and amplifying diverse voices, including those of Muslim Australians. Initiatives include funding the launch of the Australian Human Rights Commission's new anti-racism campaign, There's nothing casual about racism, and the allocation of $85.7 million over 3 years to the Community Broadcasting Foundation to support more than 450 community broadcasters to strengthen inclusion. To promote voices and views not represented in other media, the government will also allocate $24 million in funding each year to create local content, develop media skills and deliver projects that benefit the sector.

To ensure that representation in Australian news and journalism authentically reflects the diversity of the Australian community, the government has implemented the News Media Assistance Program, along with investing $10 million under the Multicultural Media Grant Program to support eligible multicultural media organisations transition to sustainable news media practices. To further support efforts to break down harmful stereotypes, with a focus on identifying vulnerable demographics, the government has developed Australia's first National Media Literacy Strategy to align and coordinate media literacy efforts nationwide.

The government is also supporting efforts to ensure cultural expression reflects the breadth of Australia's multicultural society through Australia's National Cultural Policy, *Revive*: a place for every story, a story for every place. Pillar 2, 'A Place for Every Story', is a core part of the policy, focusing on making sure all Australians can share their experiences and see themselves in the national cultural narrative. This incorporates supporting under-represented voices, including Muslim Australians, by investing in inclusive institutions and arts leadership that reflects contemporary Australia, while reinforcing rights for all to participate. Moreover, the government has undertaken public consultation to inform the development of a new National Cultural Policy to succeed *Revive,* which concludes in 2027.

Combatting online hate

The Australian Government recognises the severe impacts that the proliferation of hateful online content can have on both individuals and communities. To address this, the government has introduced a landmark social media minimum age, restricting access for children under 16 in order to reduce exposure to harmful online content.

The government has also quadrupled funding for the eSafety Commissioner, which delivers the Adult Cyber Abuse and Cyberbullying Scheme to address and remove online material intended to cause serious harm. This includes Islamophobic material.

Furthermore, the Australian Government has committed to legislating a 'digital duty of care' to improve online safety for all Australians. On 14 April 2026, the government published its response to the Independent Review of the *Online Safety Act 2021* (Cth). The response reiterated the government's commitment to legislate a digital duty of care and confirmed its intention to implement or further consider 64 of the review's 67 recommendations. The government has also co-signed an Online Safety and Security Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, including a commitment to regulate harmful and illegal content.

2. Protection and support

The Australian Government is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing and dignity of Australia's Muslim community and fostering environments where every individual is respected, supported and valued. Muslim communities, like all Australian communities, have the right to feel safe and to go about their lives without experiencing racism or discrimination. As the Special Envoy identified, experiences of 'othering' for Muslim communities have implications for individuals, including impacting mental health, employment and social exclusion. Muslim women are particularly impacted, noting they experience disproportionate rates of Islamophobia.

To complement broader efforts to address the drivers of Islamophobia, the government will provide direct support to those who have experienced Islamophobia by improving the cultural safety of mental health services. This will include the development of best-practice guidance, tools and advice to strengthen service capability and ensure appropriate and culturally safe support. Strengthening capacity, leadership and advocacy in Muslim community organisations will also help reinforce wellbeing and resilience, including through supporting community-led solutions to build belonging and agency.

The Special Envoy has recommended funding support to improve targeted mental health services and grant funding to strengthen social cohesion.

To empower Muslim Australian communities to thrive, the government is announcing targeted funding for Primary Health Networks to support Muslim community organisations to assist with wellbeing and resilience initiatives in response to rising Islamophobia. The government will also support the Special Envoy to work with agencies to create an Islamophobia-related trauma protocol in mental health services.

Through the Multicultural Grants Program, the government is also announcing new grant opportunities to promote wellbeing, leadership and capability among Muslims and Muslim organisations:

- supporting culturally appropriate mental health and wellbeing services and family and community outreach
- supporting the development of leadership and advocacy skills in Muslim organisations and communities
- funding to support economic participation and leadership for Muslim women
- direct support for youth development and capacity building.

These new measures build on an ambitious program of funding and actions already underway to support Muslim communities.

Safety, security and inclusion

The Australian Government has delivered targeted funding to bolster the safety and security of Muslim institutions and to foster greater understanding and inclusion of Muslims and Islam. This has included funding of $41.9 million across initiatives to improve security at Muslim faith-based places, foster social cohesion and meet the needs of Australian Palestinian, Muslim and Arab communities through the Community and Cohesion Support Program.

The government is also delivering Australia's first longitudinal study of Islamophobia and its social, economic, educational and mental health impact through an Australian Research Council Project to inform evidence-based policy responses to Islamophobia. The government will consider how findings from this project can be analysed, including consideration of gendered impacts.

3. Building social cohesion

A cohesive society is fundamental to Australia's strength and resilience. Australia's multiculturalism is one of our strengths – our diversity exemplifies how a nation can be enriched by people of different faiths, backgrounds and cultures coming together. Active citizenship, and intercultural and interfaith collaboration, can deepen belonging and strengthen the ability of Muslim communities to participate fully in Australian life, while practising their faith freely and safely. Supporting opportunities for interfaith and intercultural connections across Australian life – including sport, cultural activities and media – will help build social cohesion and understanding.

To foster social cohesion and promote greater understanding of Muslim Australian communities, the Australian Government will deliver funding through the Multicultural Grants Program – focused on community, culture and social cohesion. This will include:

- funding to support the delivery of sporting events that strengthen engagement, inclusion and community connection
- support for Muslim organisations to deliver events that foster cross-cultural engagement.

These investments form part of a broader package of funding, programs and actions that complement existing government efforts to reinforce social cohesion and community connections.

Building bridges through community sport

Sport holds a unique place in Australian society. It provides a shared space for cross-cultural interaction and can play a powerful role in fostering understanding. The Special Envoy recommended that the government invest more funding in community-level sporting initiatives and organisations. To date, the Australian Government is investing $15 million to deliver the Aspire Sports Centre as the new, permanent home for the Bachar Houli Foundation and the fast-growing Islamic College of Sport.

Conversely, racism in sport can be damaging to social cohesion and individuals' broader sense of belonging in our communities. The government is committed to action to reduce and prevent racism in sport, including investing more than $36.3 million to tackle abuse, bullying, discrimination and sexual misconduct through Sport Integrity Australia.

The government is also amplifying the message that racism has no place in Australian sport or society through engagement between Sport Integrity Australia and the Australian Human Rights Commission on the *There is nothing casual about racism* campaign.

Through the Australian Sports Commission, the government also delivers the free online course Dealing with the Moment – Anti-Racism in Community Sport, which delivers actionable guidance for volunteers on how to intervene and support individuals facing racism, including Islamophobia, in real time.

Office for Multicultural Affairs

The Office for Multicultural Affairs was established in June 2025 in the Department of Home Affairs to more closely align the policies and programs that help to unite and strengthen Australia. The government is investing a further $2.6 million over 4 years from 2026–27 into the Office, to deliver measures to combat Islamophobia.

The Office drives a national approach to a multicultural Australia, with a vision for a country where all people, regardless of their cultural and linguistic background, should have the opportunity to contribute meaningfully and belong. The Office brings together Australia's settlement program, language services, multicultural grants program and other functions to drive efforts to ensure that all Australians have an equal opportunity to fully participate in Australian life.

Office for Social Cohesion

The Office for Social Cohesion was established in September 2024 in the Department of Home Affairs to strengthen social cohesion and democratic resilience in Australia by driving greater national collaboration, leading whole-of-government engagement and partnering with key stakeholders across all sectors of society.

The Office acts as a central strategic capability within the Commonwealth, bringing together insights from across government and civil society to support responses to social cohesion and democratic resilience challenges. The Office builds upon the important work of the Strengthening Democracy Taskforce flowing from its July 2024 report *Strengthening Australian democracy: A practical agenda for democratic resilience* (PDF 11.2 MB), recognising the distinctive strength of social cohesion in Australia.

Support for mental health

Islamophobia has devastating consequences on mental health, including psychological distress, low self-esteem, depression and anxiety. The Australian Government has taken decisive action to respond to the Special Envoy's calls to advance mental health support for victims of Islamophobia and to drive cultural change across the health and mental wellbeing sector.

The Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma and targeted Primary Health Networks are being supported with an additional $6 million to provide mental health and wellbeing supports. Further, the government, through the Health Ministers Meeting, will raise the need for the independent regulator – Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and the National Boards – to consider any additional actions that may be necessary to protect individuals, both as patients and providers, from instances of Islamophobia in the health system.

The government is also prioritising support services that are culturally appropriate and safe for the community through the Witness to War and Violence phone line, which is staffed by bicultural workers that can provide in-language assistance and advocacy. The Innovative Models of Care Program is also trialling new ways of providing culturally appropriate primary care for diverse communities in rural and remote locations. The government has further embedded cultural safety, responsiveness and anti-racism initiatives across all allied-health workplaces and service environments within the health and aged care system.

Addressing barriers to employment and workplace discrimination

Too many people face barriers to employment due to their religion, culture or ethnicity, or face discrimination in the workplace because of these core aspects of their identity. The Special Envoy has called for clear standards to prevent discrimination against Muslim employees, and the government will continue to drive policy reform to set a benchmark for equity and respect across all sectors.

To address these barriers, the government is undertaking a range of initiatives that include conducting and delivering findings from the Creative Workplaces Survey in 2026. This survey was undertaken to provide a national understanding of workers' experience in Australia's creative industries. The government is also implementing the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations to ensure every learner, regardless of background, has the opportunity to participate fully in vocational education and training.

Within the Australian Public Service (APS), educational resources such as *Many Stories, One APS* and the MOSAIC (Multicultural Organisation – Staff Awareness, Innovation and Capability) program suite have been developed to strengthen the cultural capability of public servants to address Islamophobia in the workplace. Every Australian Government agency is also equipped with tools to uphold anti-discrimination standards, including section 3 of the APS Values and Code of Conduct in practice, directing agency heads and employees to treat everyone with respect and dignity.

To build on this, the APS is seeking to better understand the religious dimensions of its workforce compared with the Australian population, by linking employment data to the Person Level Integrated Data Asset held by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and tracking and reporting on progress under the 2024 APS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Employment Strategy and Action Plan.

4. Accountability and responsibility

The onus for confronting Islamophobia should not be placed on those who are victims of anti-Muslim hate. To confront Islamophobia, the Australian Government is committing to actions that will strengthen accountability and reinforce a shared sense of responsibility across communities, institutions and leadership to confront racism, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment. The government is committed to policy frameworks and workplace standards that uphold the rights of Muslim Australians to fully participate and thrive.

Reinforcing this, the Australian Government is announcing its commitment to:

- expand the Australian Federal Police Community Liaison teams, including the establishment of a communications portal, to strengthen trust and engagement with communities affected by hate crime and provide more direct support to Muslim communities experiencing Islamophobia. The portal will provide community-wide access to targeted, time-sensitive information on emerging community and thematic crime issues, including Islamophobic hate, and improve awareness of existing reporting mechanisms. The expanded Community Liaison teams will support sustained two-way engagement with Muslim communities, helping to build confidence in law enforcement, improve information sharing and encourage the reporting of Islamophobic crimes
- finalise the establishment of the Australian Federal Police Social Cohesion Consultative Board to strengthen trust, accountability and community-informed responses to hate crime and social cohesion challenges, including Islamophobia. Since the Australian Federal Police Commissioner's announcement of the board in October 2025, its remit, and the expertise required of its members, has expanded beyond what was originally anticipated to support more holistic and effective responses to social cohesion challenges, including Islamophobic hate crime. The board will bring together community leaders, young people and non-government organisations to ensure action is informed by consultation with communities most affected by these crimes.

These measures will build on an ongoing agenda to hold those who spread hate and division accountable. For example, the Special Envoy recommended the review of legislative protections for Muslim Australians – the Australian Government will continue to ensure legislation settings remain fit for purpose and provide effective protections for all Australians, including Muslim communities.

In February 2026, the Standing Council of Attorneys-General also considered coordinated national responses to combat Islamophobia, including approaches to address vilification – particularly Islamophobia and antisemitism – to keep communities safe. Legislative frameworks across the Commonwealth and states and territories remain under ongoing consideration.

Working with international partners to combat Islamophobia

The Special Envoy has proposed that the Australian Government effectively communicate Australia's combatting Islamophobia initiatives internationally and facilitate the exchange of global best practice. Australia continues to clearly articulate national strategies that unequivocally condemn Islamophobia and advocate for freedom of religion through inclusive dialogue, including with Muslim-majority nations.

Australia's efforts to combat Islamophobia on the international stage include recognising the International Day to Combat Islamophobia every year on 15 March. To mark this occasion in 2026, Australia delivered a statement at the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations High-Level Event.

Another example of international efforts is Australia's membership of the Article 18 Alliance (International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance) and its regular senior officials' dialogues across Muslim-majority countries, along with ministerial visits to key partners. The Special Envoy also engages with international counterparts to exchange global best practice on combatting Islamophobia, including with other countries' envoys and anti-Muslim hate coordinators.

Upholding standards for parliamentarians

The Special Envoy recommended behavioural codes of conduct for Australian parliamentarians. As elected representatives of the Australian people, parliamentarians have an obligation to uphold the highest ethical standards in carrying out official duties. In line with the Special Envoy's recommendations, the Australian Government supports the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service to enhance the Professional Development Program for parliamentarians and their staff. This is in addition to the endorsement of a Behaviour Code for Australian Parliamentarians in 2024 and a Behaviour Code for staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (Cth).

These codes and standards recognise that parliamentarians and their staff have a shared responsibility to ensure that Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces meet the highest standards of integrity, dignity, safety and mutual respect. The Independent Parliamentary Standards Commission is also empowered to investigate reports of conduct that are alleged to breach the Behaviour Codes and Standards.

Preventing, investigating and responding to hate crimes

Strong hate crime laws and protections are vital to protect communities, uphold social harmony and send a strong message that intolerance – including Islamophobia – will never be accepted in Australia. The Australian Government has taken strong action to protect communities facing discrimination and hatred by:

- providing public access to clear information[2] outlining the operation and implications of Commonwealth anti-discrimination and criminal laws
- strengthening the capability and capacity of the Australian Federal Police by expanding its National Security Investigations teams, enabling them to respond to and disrupt threats to Australia's social cohesion, including hate crimes.

Increasing reporting and awareness

Studies suggest that the reporting of hate incidents by Muslim community members is low and there is limited awareness by community members of avenues for reporting.[3] The Australian Government is working to encourage reporting to enable better understanding of the incidence of Islamophobic hate crimes and how we can address them. To this end, the government is strengthening Australia's national capability to identify, track and respond to hate crimes, including Islamophobia, through the National Hate Crimes Database, the first phase of which was launched on 23 December 2025. The government has committed $9 million in the 2026–27 Budget to continue and accelerate the implementation of the database.

The Department of Home Affairs' Addressing hate webpage provides information on avenues to report hate crimes and incidents and includes victim support resources. The Australian Federal Police's Hate crime webpage assists victims and outlines avenues for witnesses to report alleged hate crimes.

1. Aftab Malik, Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, transcript of Press Conference, 12 September 2025, accessed 15 June 2026.
2. Attorney-General's Department, 'Prohibited hate symbols offences', 4 October 2024, accessed 28 January 2026; Attorney-General's Department, 'Commonwealth hate crime offences', 24 February 2025, accessed 28 January 2026.
3. Susan Carland et al., *Islamophobia in Australia: Report V*, Islamophobia Register Australia, 2025, accessed 28 January 2026.

Conclusion

Australia's strength is found in our shared commitment to fairness, respect and inclusion. Islamophobia – like all other forms of racism, hatred and discrimination – has no place in modern Australia. Through a whole-of-government effort, the Australian Government is acting to prevent harm, provide direct support to those affected, and build a more cohesive society in which every person can live, learn, work and worship free from fear. Addressing racism in all forms, including Islamophobia, is a joint responsibility of government, institutions and civil society.

This response brings together concrete new actions across the government that respond to the recommendations of the Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia. These measures are underpinned by genuine partnership with Muslim communities and informed by evidence, accountability and transparency.

The government will continue to identify opportunities to address Islamophobia, hatred and anti-Muslim sentiment, including by leveraging the outcomes and lessons of existing programs of work. Importantly, the outcomes of the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion will be used to inform workplans to strengthen social cohesion and address Islamophobia.

The government's message is clear – it will stand with the Muslim community against hate. Together with the Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, communities, states and territories, and civil society, the government will work towards building a safe and united Australia.