



Government of  
**Western Australia**

# **Summary of the Western Australian Government's response to racism, including antisemitism and Islamophobia**

# WA Government initiatives

The WA Government’s initiatives outlined in this document highlight the work that has been undertaken and currently underway in combatting antisemitism, Islamophobia and anti-racism more broadly. The initiatives noted address the focus areas of:

- Strengthening legislative, policy and institutional frameworks
- Prevention, safety and security
- Education and capability building
- Community engagement and participation.

## Strengthening legislative, policy and institutional frameworks

### Hate Crime Unit established (completed)

In April 2025, to improve reporting and enforcement of hate crime laws, a specialised Hate Crime Unit was established within the WA Police Force. A Hate Crime Policy has been developed and approved for publishing.

### Enhancements to police training on hate crimes (completed)

A mandatory learning module has been developed to improve frontline police understanding of hate crime legislation, with additional guidance on prohibited symbols provided through training platforms.

### Enhancements to hate crime reporting (ongoing)

The WA Police Force has implemented several initiatives to improve the reporting and response to hate crimes, including:

- Establishing a governance reporting framework to ensure all incidents involving hate-related behaviour are reported, reviewed, and, where necessary, investigated.
- Enhancing police staff training to accurately identify, report, and respond to hate crimes.
- Improving the recording and data analysis of reported hate crimes and related incidents.
- Holding regular meetings with police and government representatives to address issues impacting the safety and security of all religious and faith groups.
- Engaging with communities to build trust and address underreporting, particularly among CaLD communities where awareness of reporting pathways may be limited.

### Existing sanctions for hate-related offences (ongoing)

The WA Government enforces strong penalties for hate crimes, including the following:

- Persons convicted of inciting racial hatred face up to 14 years imprisonment under Chapter XI of the WA Criminal Code.
- Possession of written or pictorial material that is threatening or abusive with the intent to display the material to harass a racial group carries a maximum penalty of imprisonment for five years.
- Displaying Nazi symbols (including by graffiti) and performing the Nazi salute is punishable by up to five years imprisonment.

### **Recent amendments relating to hate-related offences (ongoing)**

In June 2025, the Criminal Code Amendment (Post and Boast) Bill was introduced in response to recent national and international hate crime incidents. This bill will make it an offence to disseminate material which depicts an act that constitutes offences related to the display of Nazi symbols, racist harassment and incitement to racial hatred.

### **Legislative policies and frameworks that address systemic racism and discrimination (ongoing)**

The WA Government administers and implements the following policies and frameworks that address racism and discrimination, with a focus on creating safe, harmonious and inclusive communities.

#### *WA Charter of Multiculturalism (2004)*

*The WA Charter of Multiculturalism* states a multicultural policy position that is inclusive and embraces all Western Australians. Founded on 4 principles – civic values, fairness, equality and participation – it emphasises the importance of mutual respect, individual freedom and dignity, substantive equality and a commitment to shared values.

#### *WA Multicultural Policy Framework (2020)*

The WA Government administers and implements the WA Multicultural Policy Framework (the Framework), which guides WA public sector agencies in supporting equitable participation of Western Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds in all aspects of civic, social, economic and cultural life. The Framework is being implemented across 64 WA public sector agencies and includes strategies that support anti-racism and anti-discrimination initiatives, with agencies reporting annually on their actions.

#### *WA Language Services Policy (2020)*

*The WA Language Services Policy* ensures equitable access to WA Government services by providing high-quality interpreting and multilingual communication for people with limited English proficiency, including those from CaLD backgrounds, Aboriginal communities, and individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

#### *Policy Framework for Substantive Equality (2021)*

*The Policy Framework for Substantive Equality* aims to achieve substantive equality by eliminating systemic discrimination in the provision of WA public sector services and promoting sensitivity to the different needs of client groups.

#### *Equal Opportunity Act (1984)*

The *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* protects people from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation in key areas of public life (like work, education, housing) based on attributes such as sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status and family responsibility.

### **Multicultural legislation development (in progress)**

The WA Government is developing a proposed Multicultural Act which, if enacted, will formally legislate Western Australia's commitment to inclusion of people from cultural, linguistic or religious backgrounds and address systemic racism through relevant government obligations.

### **Review of terrorism-related legislation (in progress)**

The WA Police Force has reviewed the Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act, with plans to review the Terrorism (Extraordinary Powers) Act in 2026, noting the recent release of the WA Government Countering Violent Extremism Strategy 2026-28. Accordingly, the sunset dates of the Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act 2006 and the Terrorism (Extraordinary Powers) Act 2005 were recently extended to 19 December 2027, to allow recommendations from the reviews to be considered and amendments to be put to Parliament in 2026 or 2027.

**Equal Opportunity Act 1984 reform (in progress)**

Reforms to the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* are underway and will strengthen protections for the community including in relation to antisemitism and Islamophobia.

**Review of existing anti-racism measures and opportunities to enhance (in progress)**

The WA Government, through Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport – Office of Multicultural Interests (CITS' OMI) and in collaboration with other WA public sector agencies, is reviewing current protections and preventative measures against racism in WA. The review seeks to identify key focus areas of action and identify recommendations for WA public sector implementation to enhance and strengthen the WA Government's response to racism.

**Planned initiatives relating to hate-related offences (in progress)**

Proposed amendments to the Public Order in Streets Act 1984 and the Criminal Code are in development for consideration by Cabinet. The proposed bill will amend laws around public protest to enhance public safety and prevent vilification, prohibit wearing a face covering in public where it is likely to cause fear or intimidation and without reasonable excuse, and create an offence for displaying prohibited organisation symbols in public without reasonable excuse.

**Enhancing effectiveness of hate crime legislation (in progress)**

To further enhance the effectiveness of hate crime legislation, the following actions are underway:

- The WA Police Force provided submissions relating to proposed hate crimes reforms to the Department of Justice (DoJ) and will continue to progress effective implementation of legislation.
- Consideration is being given to legislative reform aimed at police powers to mitigate risks in public places, particularly concerning public events.
- Amendments to the 'Move On Order' scheme have been proposed to address intimidating protest activity.

**Prevention, safety and security****CaLD Community Capital Works Fund (completed)**

Since 2020, the WA Government has provided \$21,752,547 of funding through the CaLD Community Capital Works Fund to support infrastructure upgrades at CaLD community facilities. Some of this funding has been used to strengthen safety and security enhancements at Jewish and Islamic facilities.

**Operation Dalewood – response to Bondi Beach Terror Attack (ongoing)**

Following the Bondi Beach Terror attack, the WA Police Force initiated Operation Dalewood, led by the State Security Investigation Group with dedicated Hate Crime Unit staff to provide an enhanced level of security to the Jewish community of Western Australia. This has included:

- Monitoring of online platforms.
- Intelligence reviews of religious extremists and cross-checking firearm licence holders.
- Increased police presence at synagogues, schools, and Jewish events and covert monitoring operations.
- Investigation and prosecution of hate-motivated offences.
- Leveraging established relationships with the Jewish Community Security Group (JCSG), leaders and community to implement timely reporting framework for matters impacting sense of safety.

**Policing online hate speech (ongoing)**

The WA Government, through the WA Police Force's Hate Crime Unit, collaborates with cybercrime specialists to address online hate speech and extremist content targeting religious groups.

**Enhancing security and safety at places of worship (ongoing)**

The WA Government has assisted Jewish and Islamic organisations in securing Australian Government funding to enhance security and safety at places of worship.

The WA Police Force's Religious and NGO Security and Crime Prevention grants have enabled facilitation of security upgrades at places of worship, including JCSG.

**Monitoring online systems (ongoing)**

WA Government agencies implement online security monitoring systems that block access to recognised websites that contravene Code of Conduct and ICT Acceptable Use Policy which include, but are not limited to, discrimination, explicit violence, extremist groups, terrorism and hate material.

**Victim referral pathways and specialist cultural support referrals (ongoing)**

Victims of racial or religious abuse have access to the WA Police Force's victim support pathways and referrals to advocacy organisations, and the Cultural Diversity Team within Communities' Specialist Child Protection Unit provides advice and support to Child Safety Practitioners where there are concerns that a family may be impacted by racism, including antisemitism or Islamophobia.

**Education and capability building****Updates to police staff training (completed)**

The following enhancements were made to the WA Police Force's Diversity and Inclusion training package completed by recruits:

- Incorporation of WA Police Force Hate Crime Policy.
- Inclusion of clear definitions relating to 'Hate Crime' and 'Hate Incident'.
- Inclusion of indicators of hate motivation (language, symbols, social media, repeat victimisation, targeting places of worship).
- Updates to operational accountabilities and procedures (recording, tagging Body Worn Video footage, State Security Intelligence Group and Community Engagement roles).
- Emphasis on training about bias (conscious and unconscious, confirmation bias, stereotyping, heuristics).
- Expansion on ethical and professional conduct with culturally diverse communities, including religious diversity and substantive equality principles.

**Meeting with Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia (completed)**

Following the release of the *National Response to Islamophobia Report*, the WA Police Force Operations Support Portfolio leadership convened a high-level meeting with Dr Aftab Malik, Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia. Key matters discussed included the report's recommendations, the establishment of a Hate Crime Task Force, and the scheduling of regular meetings following endorsement by the Race Discrimination Commissioner.

**Media training workshops for CaLD community leaders (completed)**

Media training has been delivered to WA's CaLD community leaders, emphasising the importance of effective engagement with the media. The training includes comprehensive guidance on understanding the Australian media landscape, pitching stories to the media, handling difficult questions and improving media performance.

**Anti-racism research (in progress)**

CITS' OMI undertook a research program to explore the drivers and facilitators of racism in WA and potential levers to address this behaviour. A comprehensive research program has been undertaken to inform the design of a broad behaviour-change campaign. OMI is also collaborating with Curtin University to support research into anti-racism in education settings to identify effective interventions and

strengthen anti-racist culture in schools. This research will inform evidence-based strategies and resources tailored to Western Australian education contexts.

**Anti-racism resources for schools (in progress)**

In September 2025, new resources were developed to help schools create safe and inclusive learning environments. These include guidance on teaching controversial issues, advice for school leaders, an Anti-Racism Planning Tool, and curriculum-aligned multicultural learning sequences for Years 5–10.

Forty-eight new lesson plans were introduced, many using examples of antisemitism and Islamophobia, alongside existing content that builds understanding of the Holocaust and antisemitism. Use of these resources will extend to non-government schools in 2026, supported by teacher training.

**Department of Education engagement with Jewish community (in progress)**

DoE has established strong relationships with the Jewish Community Council of WA (JCCWA), HIWA, Jewish families within the school community and the broader Jewish community. Senior DoE staff regularly engage in relation to community concerns and consult on relevant initiatives. These include:

- Engaging with HIWA to deliver training to metro and regional staff managing antisemitism-related complaints.
- Working with HIWA to develop fit for purpose antisemitism teaching resources for all WA teachers and providing guidance to education policy officers on the implementation of, and response to, incidents of antisemitism in WA public schools.
- Consulting with JCCWA and HIWA on definitions of acts of hate, offensive acts, and free speech, with the intent to embed this information into additional resources for schools, including professional learning and teaching materials.

**National Antisemitism Education Taskforce (in progress)**

DoE is a member of the National Antisemitism Education Taskforce, established by the Australian Government, to drive implementation of measures announced in response to the Special Envoy’s Plan to Combat Antisemitism Report.

**Equal Opportunity training for impacted communities (in progress)**

The Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) has formalised a partnership with the Multicultural Services Centre of WA (MSCWA) to deliver 20 Equal Opportunity workshops as part of the Safe and Respected Project, running from August 2025 to March 2027. This project aims to raise awareness of Equal Opportunity principles, rights, and responsibilities among CaLD communities in WA, including Jewish and Muslim communities.

**Community engagement and participation**

**Supporting community expression and connectedness (ongoing)**

Recognising the vital role of sporting, arts and cultural activities in building intercultural understanding, the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS) provides inclusive participation-focused funding programs to support a range of initiatives that promote wellbeing through sporting, cultural and creative engagement across the state. These initiatives aim to foster community cohesion and build inclusive, connected communities through active participation.

**Harmony Week (ongoing)**

Harmony Week is a longstanding WA Government initiative promoting cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. Held annually from 15 to 21 March, it culminates on the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The program encourages inclusive community engagement through events and activities, meaningful dialogue and mutual respect.

**Engaging with impacted faith leaders (ongoing)**

Following the Bondi Beach Terror incident, relevant WA Government agencies, including CITS' OMI and the WA Police Force, together with the Australian Government including the Australian Federal Police and the Department of Home Affairs, undertook joint stakeholder engagement activities to better understand concerns and respond to the safety and security needs of Jewish and Muslim communities.

**Ministerial Multicultural Advisory Council (ongoing)**

This Council, consisting of community leaders from CaLD backgrounds, provides the WA Government with advice on relevant policies, issues and needs of the community that address systemic racism and discrimination.

**Multifaith forums (ongoing)**

The WA Government undertakes regular engagement with faith leaders and communities, including convening multifaith forums to strengthen relationships and promote dialogue. These forums provide opportunities for leaders to engage with key figures, such as the Race Discrimination Commissioner.

**Engagement with Jewish and Muslim community leaders (ongoing)**

Through advisory groups set up by the Cultural Engagement and Events Division, the WA Police Force engages with Jewish, Muslim, and other CaLD and faith community groups to provide reassurance and address fears of harm or targeting, connecting leaders to State and Commonwealth partners as required.

**Funding for Jewish community-based initiatives (in progress)**

Since 2020, the WA Government has provided \$2,126,036 in funding to Jewish communities to build capacity, meet community needs and preserve language and culture.

**Funding for Muslim community-based initiatives (in progress)**

Since 2020, the WA Government has provided \$2,344,298 in funding to Muslim communities to build capacity, meet community needs and preserve language and culture.

**Multifaith space guidelines (in progress)**

To support students within the school setting who observe different faiths, including Judaism and Islam, the DoE Multifaith Space Guidelines will provide practical direction to principals on managing requests from parents and students.

This document has been collated and published by the Office of Multicultural Interests on behalf of the WA Government.

For more information please contact:

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