

Muslim Community Reference Group Hui 3

Record and summary of meeting

Date and time of meeting	10 October 2019
Location	Ngā Hau e Wha National Marae, Christchurch
Attendees	Muslim Community Reference Group members Commissioners Sir William Young and Jacqui Caine Benesia Smith, Executive Director Chris Mene, Facilitator Secretariat staff
Apologies	Akram Kawa, Aliya Denziesen, Javed Dadabhai, Sahra Ahmed, Shagaf Khan, Shahed Abu Jwaied, Sheikh Mohammad Amir Aya Al-Umari attended the Pōwhiri and Session 1

The purpose of these notes is to provide a record of the meeting, to provide background for those who were unable to attend and to capture actions arising from the hui.

Pōwhiri

The mana whenua (host people) welcomed the manuhiri (visitors) into the Whare Iti (small meeting house) – Te Aritaua Pitama at 9.20am. Alamein Connell was the kaikaranga (caller) for the mana whenua (host people) and Mere Balsom kaikaranga (caller) for the manuhiri (visitors).

Henare Edwards spoke for the mana whenua (host people) and Tyrone Smith for the manuhiri (visitors). We then greeted Henare and Alamein with hongis (press noses) and harirū (handshakes). We then all moved into morning tea in the whare kai (food hall). We then moved back to Te Aritaua Pitama.

Session 1: Opening remarks and whakawhanaungatanga (introductions)

Dr Maysoon Salama performed a du'a.

Sir William Young opened the hui with reflections on some of the things the Royal Commission has been told during engagements to date with affected families, community groups, State sector agencies and experts. Sir William's reflections included:

- New Zealand's understanding of diversity and inclusion is only skin deep – there is much work to be done to support a deeper understanding of what diversity and inclusion means in practice;
- diverse communities experience challenges in dealing with government agencies;
- extremism is a very complex issue, and there are gaps in understanding the dynamics and effects of extremism;
- many forms of extremism are not violent or illegal, but are still hugely harmful; and
- even in overseas countries with the best capability and systems in place, terrorist attacks have occurred, and still will.

Whakawhanaungatanga were delivered by two new Muslim Community Reference Group members, and new secretariat staff.

Jacqui Caine talked about the public submission process. Almost 1100 submissions were received. Of those, 29 were from members of the Muslim community, including six from groups, and 11 from affected families or survivors. Approximately 800 submissions talked about firearms, and most of these came from an organised campaign. The submissions raised a number of common themes that were discussed.

Chris Mene invited Reference Group members to reflect on Sir William's and Jacqui's opening remarks in small groups at tables and make comments or ask questions.

Session 2: Further discussion on Royal Commission process

Benesia Smith then provided further information about the Royal Commission's process. Benesia addressed some of the questions raised by Reference Group members during Hui 2. Key points included:

- there are four phases of the Royal Commission's work:
 - **Phase One** (April-July 2019) was the set-up phase, which included some initial meet and greet meetings
 - **Phase Two** started in August 2019 and will continue for some time – it includes community engagement, information and evidence gathering, and synthesising and testing what the Royal Commission is being told
 - **Phase Three** will be where the Royal Commission analyses what it has been told, deliberates, and develops draft findings and recommendations –
 - **Phase Four** will be finalising the report for publication and delivering the report to the Governor-General
- the next few months will be an intensive period of community engagement, and the Royal Commission wants to continue to work closely with the Muslim Community Reference Group on this.

Benesia answered a number of questions raised during her presentation.

Midday prayer and lunch

We had a break for Zuhr Salat (midday prayer) and moved into the whare kai (food hall) for lunch.

Session 3 – Update on community engagement

The Royal Commission provided an update on its community engagement approach, including what engagement has been undertaken to date. The Royal Commission had heard

very clearly from the Reference Group Members that they want to participate either leading or supporting community engagement, and that they were concerned that the Royal Commission does not have the connections and cultural competency that Reference Group Members do. The next phase of community engagement will be the Muslim Community Reference Group and the Royal Commission working together to use their collective resources.

Chris Mene led a facilitated session where small groups at tables identified priority communities and groups for engagement, with reference to a list of groups and communities that Members had previously suggested. The ideas and priorities were shared with the whole group. Reference Group Members were invited to choose one engagement idea that they could take responsibility for, and complete worksheets to identify what support they would need from the Royal Commission.

Session 4 – Terms of Reference

The Royal Commission referred to the updated draft Terms of Reference for the Muslim Community Reference Group.

Members broke into small groups at tables to discuss and provide feedback on the draft Terms of Reference. Each table then discussed their feedback.

The Royal Commission agreed to update the document to reflect the feedback and send a final version for approval prior to the next hui.

Next hui and closing comments

The next hui will be held on 7 November 2019 in Christchurch.

The meeting closed at 4.00pm.