FEEDBACK REPORT

HUI ON
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK ON PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM
&
VIOLENT EXTREMISM INDICATORS
11 JUNE 2022

ORGANISED BY
FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS OF NEW ZEALAND (FIANZ),

WITH SUPPORT FROM
THE DEPARTMENT OF PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET (DPMC)

WWW.FIANZ.COM

Contents

❝1.00 Preamble

On 11 June, 2022, The Federation of Islamic Associations of NZ (FIANZ), organised a hui in association with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). The hui was held in Wellington. 83 Muslim leaders and community advocates from all over NZ including tanagata whenua, academics, youth, whanau of the shuhada and victims attended the hui. Also attending were senior government officials from the DPMC, the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) and the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (MEC).

The following report is a summary of the feedback from the participants.

FIANZ would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Government officials for their presentations and the subsequent discussion sessions. We also would like to acknowledge the keen participation of all the community members and their contribution towards the success of the hui.

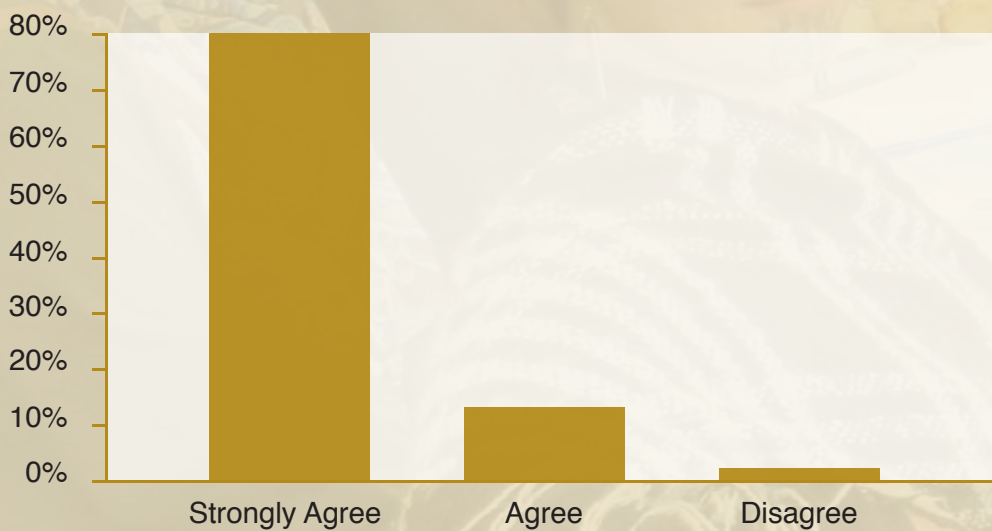Abdur Razzaq
Chairperson FIANZ RCOI
28 June , 2022

The programme schedule

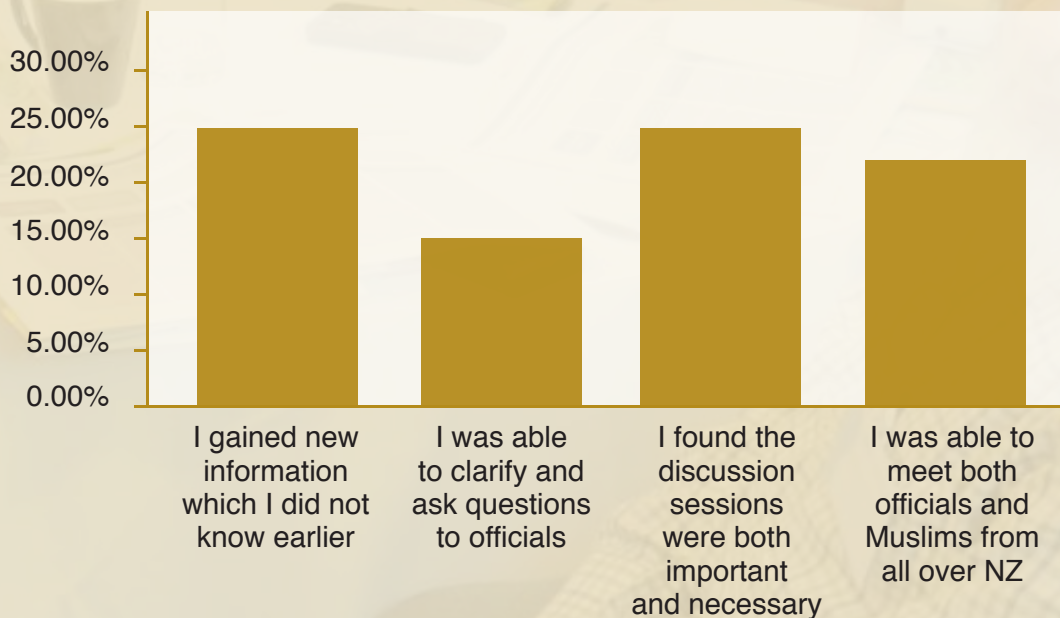|	
Focus Area 1- National Security, CT & PCVE	DPMC
Focus Area 2: Introduction to the PCVE Strategic Framework – where we are, what we're doing today, the next few months – includes time for questions	DPMC
Focus Area 3: Vision, approach and principles	DPMC
Focus Area 4: The outcomes of the Strategic Framework - introduction	DPMC
Introduction to outcomes 1 to 5	DPMC
TABLE SESSION: Discussion at tables on each of the 5 draft outcomes for the Strategic Framework	
NZSIS Session: Draft of Indicators of Violent Extremism	NZSIS

"2.00 Overall Response to the Hui

Following the hui, the participants completed an on-line survey. 60% of the full-day participants completed the survey and the following are some of the responses.

2.01 Question: Was Attending the Hui Beneficial to You?

2.02 Question: In what way was the hui beneficial to you?

I gained new information which I did not know earlier	~25%
I was able to clarify and ask questions to officials	~15%
I found the discussion sessions were both important and necessary	~25%
I was able to meet both officials and Muslims from all over NZ	~22%

"3.00 Feedback on the PCVE Strategic Framework

3.1 SOME GENERIC ISSUES

Based on the responses from the participants, a number of common generic issues were noted. These include:

i) Need for Balanced Narrative

- The background reading provided by DPMC on CVE (the very first page of the strategy) referenced Muslim names and Muslim groups, in a context when right wing violent extremism worldwide has been statistically more prevalent since 2017 onwards.

- The background reading should have an honest historical account, including the colonial terrorism against tangata whenua, including the most recent 2007 Urewera Raids against Tūhoe in 2007.

- All Referenced documents need to be identity neutral.

ii) Need for Follow-Up After Hui

- The DPMC have organised a number of hui in the past and the Muslim community have participated in many of them. Unfortunately there has been negligible feedback on developments. This communication has to improve

- Many issues regarding PCVE have been raised in past hui, yet there do not seem to be any changes arising from these previous discussions. The issue is whether the current contribution will also become just "notes on paper".

iii) Diversity of Officials

- Decision makers and the senior leadership at DPMC need to be more ethnically diverse. (There was ethnic diversity of DPMC officials present at the hui, but the issue is that overall in the machinery of Government, diversity was lacking, especially at the senior leadership level.)

- Whilst there has been recruitment of graduates, the community have no data on the background of the graduates and their faith-based diversity.

- There is a similar lack of information regarding the diversity of the background of the recent scholarship recipients.

iv) Appreciation

- There was appreciation that the senior DPMC officials were present, and that the Acting Chief Executive also attended despite having just arrived from Australia the night before.

- There was also a strong appreciation that this hui was different to previous ones, in that the Muslim community was "managing the agenda and narrative". This is an important approach to engagement and community consultation
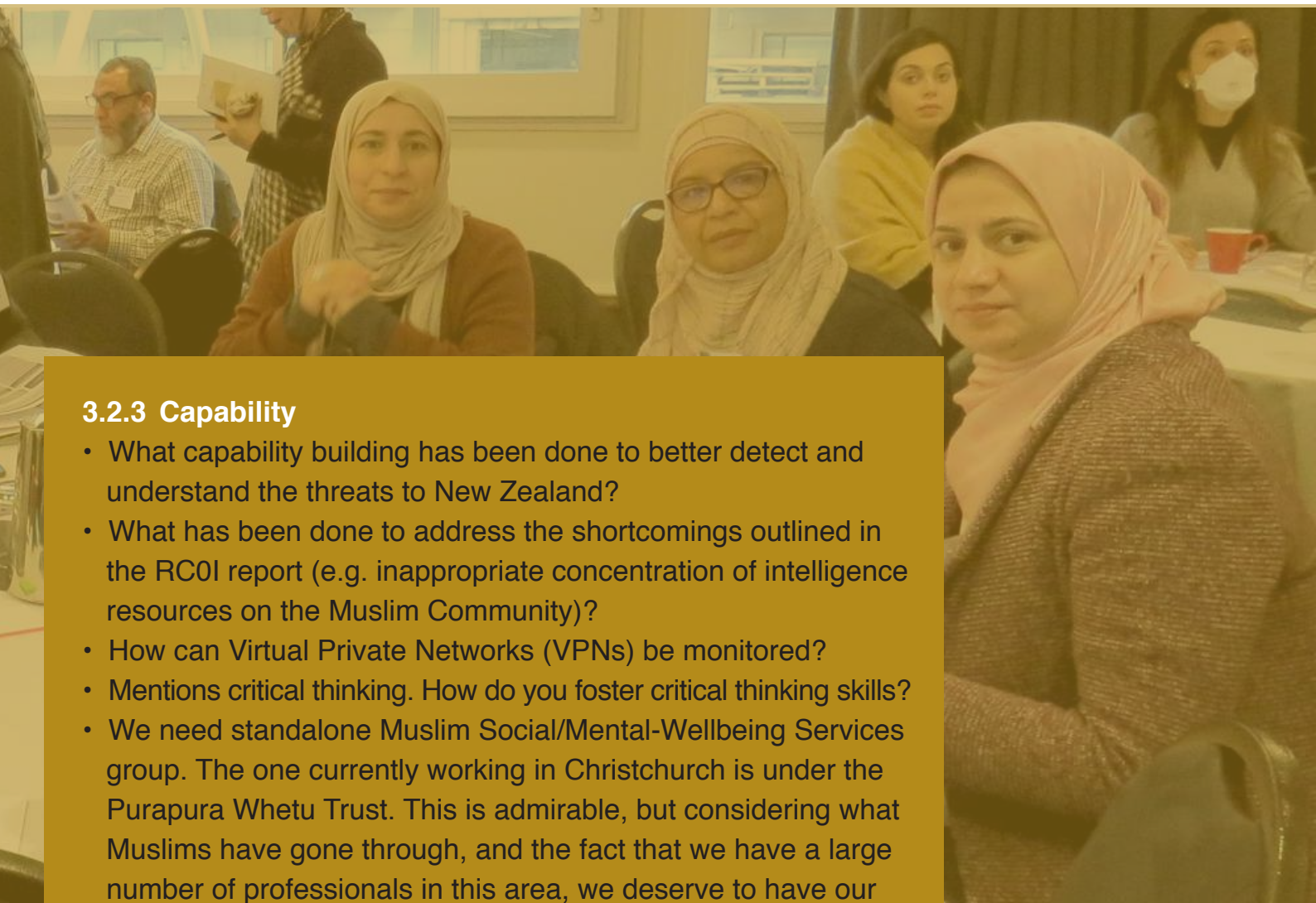
3.2 SPECIFIC ISSUES RAISED

3.2.1 Methodology

- No methodology exists to feed into the strategy framework which will help to achieve the desired outcomes (5). This is like an engine which is built but without an adequate fuel supply to enable it to be fully functional.

- Statements of intention/values/parameters need to be translated into functional terms and no modus for this has been stated.

- What methods shall be used to detect threats in a neutral manner, without bias? This has to be clearly specified and not left to generic statements such as "anti-bias training will be offered". Specificity of the method should help alleviate misunderstanding.

- Efficacy metrics need to be included into the framework to ensure both that it is 'fit for purpose' and/or what changes need to be made. This formative evaluation approach is necessary as part of the framework methodology.

- Moderation is required for social media platforms. This needs to be part of the methodology.

- Certain 'outcomes' are not in fact outcomes. Outcomes need to be positive (no deficit language).

- Given research on the shortcomings of the "see something say something" programme, how can the New Zealand public have confidence that the information they receive is:

    A. Neutral (does not target individual communities like the Muslim Community)
    B. Accurate
    C. Well-informed
    D. Up-to-date / relevant

3.2.2 Focus

- The strategy is focused on prevention, which is excellent, but trigger points with prevention barriers are missing.

- The proactive approach is largely based on safeguards before top events occur. There are different threat levels labeled with colour coding (page 8 of the strategy booklet) with no matrix or KPI to trigger an action plan to deal with the challenge.

- No mention of the processes such as prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping in the mentioned factors behind radicalization and violence. Based on research, prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping are the backbone processes of "poor social inclusion" and "limited sense of belonging and meaning in lives". This relates to the first sentence in Outcome 2 where "mixed collection of harmful attitudes" is mentioned.

- The RCOI has identified shortcomings and these have to be included into the prevention strategy. Key to ensuring this happens is to incorporate the RCOI cov erage matrix in this framework background document.

- It is not just about keeping NZ safe, but also those who are particularly vulnerable. A wide and generic approach will not suffice when certain communities have legiti mate concerns regarding their vulnerability.

- The focus has to note the distinction between individuals and communities in terms of PCVE. This is essential so as not to 'other' or further marginalise communities.

- Prevention and CT programmes are still targeting faith-based and ethnic communities, especially Muslim communities and not RWE/WS.

- Prevention programmes and frameworks appear Eurocentric and do not work for communities.

- When community programmes of rehabilitation are proposed, they are ignored.

- Legislation, such as the counter-terrorism act, still aim to disenfranchise and securitise ethnic, migrant and faith-based communities, especially the Muslim Community.

- CT frameworks, legislation and programmes need to be inclusive with direct input from community.

- It is critical that we have an informed Government for effective public conversations.

- Hindutva / RSS ideology is missing from the content of countering messages of hate.

- How does the National Strategy take into account the broader context that leads to violent extremism? E.g. imperialism and foreign policy.

- The frameworks and documents mention a "victim-centric approach". This is important but the lessons from March 15 are different. The response to March 15, 2019, has left the victims in vulnerable positions. (Victims of March 15 are still struggling, and there needs to be more support for recovery.)

3.2.3 Capability
- What capability building has been done to better detect and understand the threats to New Zealand?
- What has been done to address the shortcomings outlined in the RC0I report (e.g. inappropriate concentration of intelligence resources on the Muslim Community)?
- How can Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) be monitored?
- Mentions critical thinking. How do you foster critical thinking skills?
- We need standalone Muslim Social/Mental-Wellbeing Services group. The one currently working in Christchurch is under the Purapura Whetu Trust. This is admirable, but considering what Muslims have gone through, and the fact that we have a large number of professionals in this area, we deserve to have our own national Services group
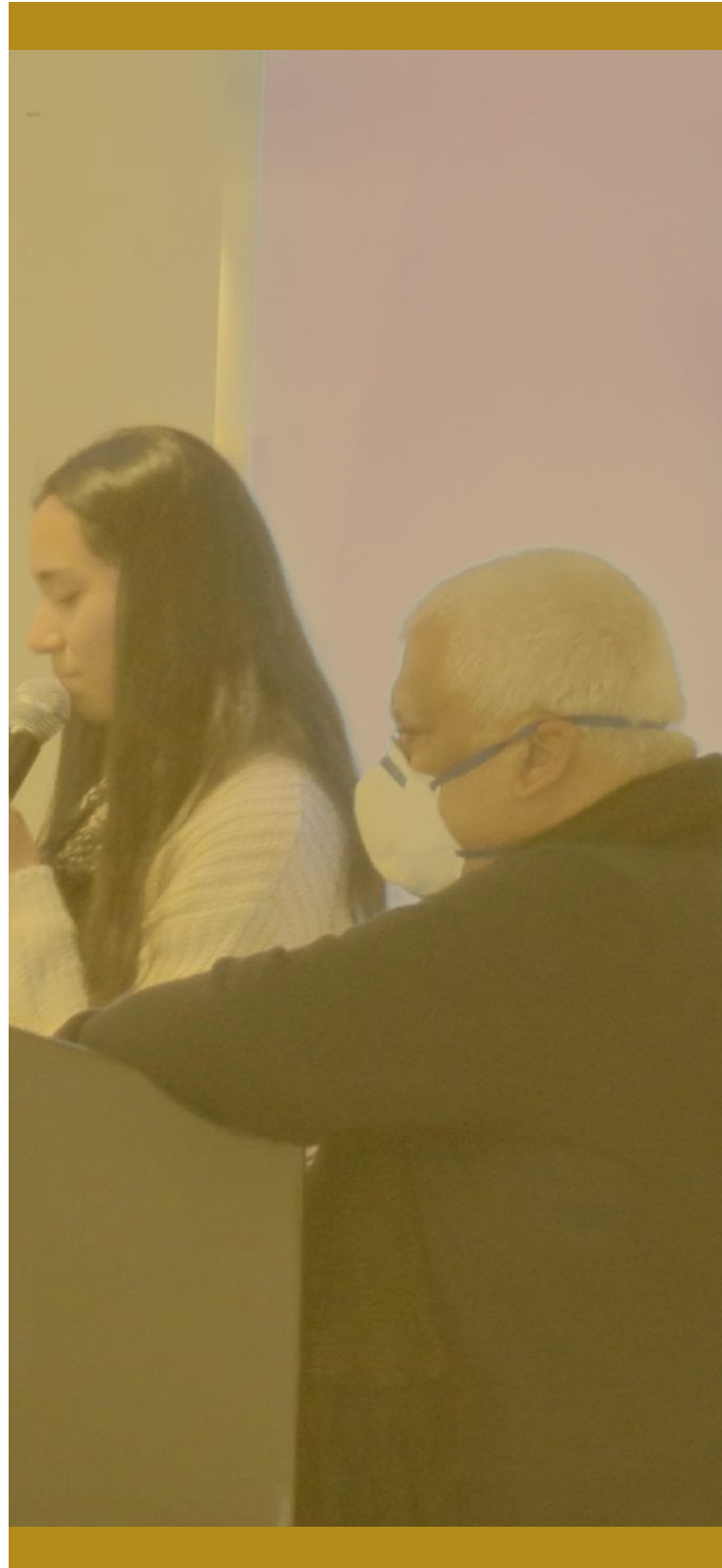
3.2.4 Re-Targeting

- What assurances can be given that the PCVE will not re-target the Muslim Community? There has been a breakdown of trust and emphasis has to be placed on building genuine long-term relationships.

- How can the Muslim Community and other communities have trust that the security agencies will work in their best interests to keep them safe?

- Partnerships are indeed 'key' but the current situation is that the Muslim Community feels it is being used and the relationship is decidedly one-way.

- There is concern about how the Community and the families will be expected to be involved in the wrap around approach. Will they be stigmatised, will they be outed by the media? Will there be material resources and support to help communities address individuals in need?

- People are already 'chrraracterised'. Pigeon-holing to preconceived notions is very counterproductive.

- Need for an agreed working definition of Islamophobia (as there is one for anti-Semitism) that should be included in policy making and institutions.

- The role of media in targeting is well known and the media have to be challenged.

- There are certain things Muslims don't identify with that are being said to represent Islam. The Taliban ban on the education of girls, for example. In Islam, education is compulsory from the lap of the Mother to the grave.

3.2.5 Resource

- In a partnership, both partners need to be adequately resourced. The reality seems to be that whilst the Muslim Community are being "consulted", it is the agencies and consultants who are receiving the resources . As such, there is some feeling that Muslims are being used rather than resourced.

- Resources are needed for developing 'digital citizenship' not just digital literacy.

- There is an over-reliance on international partners. These international partners have let NZ's CT efforts down in the past. Why have we not moved away from our reliance on overseas partners and their frameworks (which are specific to their own unique context)?

- When it comes to violent extremist ideologies, it needs to be emphasized that based on research (https://www.usmanafzali.com/publications/2780) Muslims have historically been the least liked group in NZ from 2012-2018. The warmth towards them have increased steadily within these years but was still the lowest compared to all other ethnic/religious groups.

3.2.6 Integration

- Integration among organisations (building interfaces across Police, SIS, Cabinet etc.) was not evident. This will help to deal with the violent extremism challenge against other races including Muslims. Improvement is a journey whose destiny is matched to a sense of purpose

- The frame of wrap around and restorative reconciliation, etc does not all align with the immigration laws around the deporting of suspects, nor does it align at all with the NZ criminal justice system. How is this going to work? An integrated approach is required.

- Have gaps in information sharing across the public sector been addressed? Where is the DPMC report on this or is it a work in progress?

- The RCOI report outlines the lack of coherence and coordination within the public service, especially intelligence agencies, to coordinate CT efforts. What has been done to address this?

- NZ National Security Systems (NSS) are not coordinated, practised or responsive as claimed by the document. RCI has outlined the need for a new agency (NISA) to address these shortcomings.

3.2.7 Clarity

- Concerns about the usage of terms and language. For instance, within the scope on 'terrorism', white supremacists are not named yet ISIL, etc are specifically mentioned.

- How terrorism is defined needs to be historically acceptable, given colonisation terrorism, etc.

- The role of language is a determinant in the process of radicalisation. It is natural to develop negative attitudes towards people when the narrative is negative.

- Definitional clarity of radicalisation is required as much as knowing who is defining such.

- What is meant by a 'progressive society'? Who defines it?

- Some raised objection to the notion that "there must always be space for radical ideas in the democratic and progressive society" since such notion may make violence the norm . Also, begs the question: where do we draw the line? In other words, what form of radical ideas is acceptable in a democratic society?

- Eurocentric perspectives needs to be balanced with the optics of different faiths and cultures. Prudent language usage is essential.

- Language and terminology appropriate to other faiths and cultures need to be included where appropriate.

- False narratives have to be exposed. For instance ISIS, ISIL and their nexus to Islam as claimed by the media, are not accepted by Muslims. They have killed more Muslims than any other group of people.

- There is no mention of anti-Pasifika attitudes.

- Do privacy laws in NZ allow monitoring online content and interactions of users?

❝ 4.00 The Way Forward- Strategic Framework

4.1 Following the first hui on 11 June, we are expecting that DPMC will send us the draft report on the Framework. We would like to review the draft and provide a response. We would also like to have acknowledgement of the role of the Muslim community in the development of the Framework. At issue are four considerations:

i) Follow-Up: The community would like an assurance that their views are incorporated in the Framework and that there will be specific follow-up initiatives.

ii) Whole of Government Approach: The PCVE needs a whole-of-Government approach. We would like to establish that all relevant agencies have also adopted the Framework into their modus with respect to the relevant RCOI Recommendations.

iii) Efficacy Metrics: At the time of the development of the Framework, it is necessary to also have some understanding of the proposed evaluation of the Strategy. It is important to define what the efficacy metrics will be and who will be undertaking this.

iv) Transparency : Having all of the above information on the DPMC websites and in emails to key stakeholders would mitigate any concerns about a lack of transparency.

| 11 June Hui | → | Draft - Final Framework by DPMC | → | Stakeholders' comments on the Draft | → | DPMC incorporates any changes | → | FINAL REPORT |

All Relevant Agencies Adopt

Clear Efficacy Metrics

Transparency

" 5.00 Session on NZSIS Indicators of Violent Extremism

The NZSIS presented the draft Indicators on Violent Extremism. The participants were given the purpose and follow-up with respect to the indicators.

To our knowledge this was the first time that the NZSIS senior leadership directly addressed the Muslim community and this led to a robust discussion on a number of key issues.

A specific report on this will be compiled in due course.

A particular highlight was the opportunity to seek clarification on a number of matters related to March 15 and its antecedents.

The Federation of
Islamic Associations
of New Zealand (Inc.)

اتحاد الجمعيات الإسلامية النيوزيلندية

SINCE 1979