What we heard from affected whānau, survivors and witnesses

ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
INTO THE TERRORIST ATTACK
ON CHRISTCHURCH MOSQUES
ON 15 MARCH 2019

TE KŌMIHANA UIUI A TE WHAKAEKE
KAIWHAKATUMA I NGĀ WHARE
KŌRANA O ŌTAUTAHI I TE
15 O POUTŪ-TE-RANGI 2019

26 November 2020

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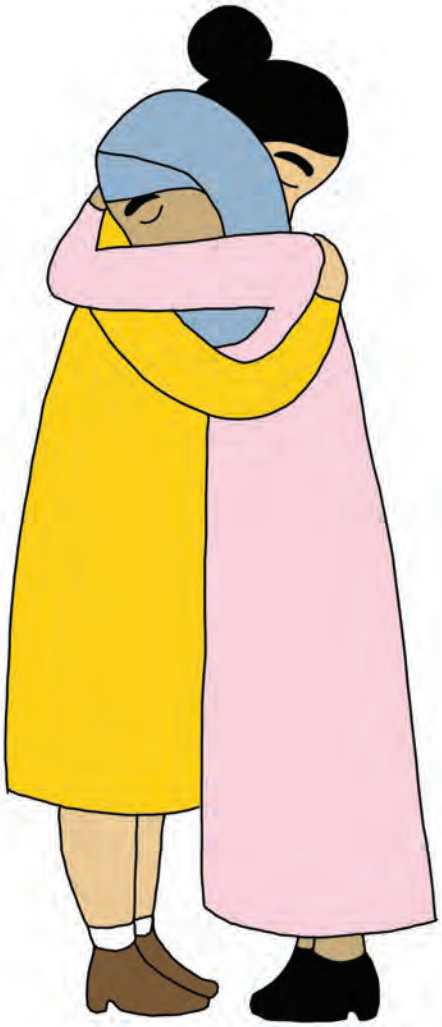

This is your home
and you should have
been safe here

This illustration and text was kindly gifted by artist Ruby Jones.
The Royal Commission deeply appreciates Ruby's talent and generosity.

Foreword from Commissioners

Assalaam alaikum and tēnā koutou.

We want to start by expressing our deepest condolences to whānau of the 51 shuhada, and the survivors and witnesses of the terrorist attack and their whānau. Throughout our inquiry you have been at the centre of our thinking. We knew the importance of this from the beginning, but our understanding and appreciation of what this truly meant has developed as we heard more of your stories, experiences and evidence. You gave us an understanding of the harrowing reality of the terrorist attack and its ongoing effects. The experiences you shared gave us a further impetus to seek answers, to ensure we left no stone unturned, and provide you with assurance that New Zealand's national security system is fit for purpose. Our heartfelt thanks go to you for meeting with us and opening up your hearts and homes to share your stories with us.

Hearing from those most affected by the terrorist attack informed our lines of inquiry and provided valuable insight into the reality of recovering from such a horrific attack. This has deeply moved us, and we believe it has added to the richness of our report.

We also acknowledge those who, for whatever reason, did not or were not able to share their experiences with us, whether because they felt the timing or circumstances were not right for them, or for other reasons. We know that engaging in a formal, time-bound process did not accommodate the needs of all those who may have wished to speak to us. We recognise that the stories, experiences and evidence set out here does not represent all whānau of the 51 shuhada, and the survivors and witnesses of the terrorist attack. We invite readers to open these pages and reflect on the insights we have had the privilege of receiving from some of those most deeply affected by the terrorist attack.

Hon Sir William Young KNZM
Chair

Jacqui Caine
Member

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Chapter 1: Context

1 On 15 March 2019, Masjid an-Nur and the Linwood Islamic Centre in Christchurch were attacked by a right-wing terrorist while worshippers were at prayer. Fifty-one people were killed and another 40 people suffered gunshot injuries.

2 The Government response to the terrorist attack included two significant announcements:

a) An announcement on 21 March 2019 that military style semi-automatics and assault rifles would be banned immediately along with high-capacity magazines. A buy-back scheme would be implemented.

b) An announcement on 25 March 2019 that a Royal Commission of Inquiry would be established to investigate the events leading up to the terrorist attack.

3 On 26 March 2020, an Australian man pleaded guilty to 51 counts of murder, 40 counts of attempted murder and one terrorism charge relating to the terrorist attack. On 27 August 2020, he was sentenced to life imprisonment without parole. On 1 September 2020, the Prime Minister of New Zealand designated this man as a terrorist entity under Section 22 of the Terrorism Suppression Act 2002. A designation under New Zealand legislation freezes the assets of terrorist entities and makes it a criminal offence for anyone else to participate in or support the activities of the designated terrorist entity. We have chosen not to name the terrorist in this document and instead generally refer to him as the "individual".

Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Terrorist Attack on Christchurch Mosques on 15 March 2019

4 The Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Terrorist Attack on Christchurch Mosques on 15 March 2019 (the Royal Commission) was established to investigate the individual's activities before 15 March 2019 and to look into:

a) what Public sector agencies knew about the individual, before 15 March 2019;

b) what Public sector agencies did (if anything) with that knowledge;

c) whether there was anything else Public sector agencies could have done to prevent the terrorist attack; and

d) what else Public sector agencies should do to prevent such terrorist attacks in the future.

5 The Royal Commission must make findings on:

a) whether Public sector agencies had information that could have alerted them to the terrorist attack;

b) how Public sector agencies worked with each other and shared information;

c) whether Public agencies failed to anticipate the attack because of an inappropriate focus of counter-terrorism resources;

d) whether Public sector agencies failed to meet required standards or were in some way at fault; and

e) any other matters necessary to provide a complete report.

6 The Royal Commission must make recommendations on:

a) what improvements should be made to the way Public sector agencies gather, share and analyse information;

b) how Public sector agency systems or operational practices could be improved to prevent future terrorist attacks; and

c) any other matters to provide a complete report.

7 These recommendations could include changes to legislation (except firearms legislation), policy, rules, standards or practices.

Limits to the inquiry

8 The Royal Commission is not allowed to inquire into:

a) the guilt or innocence of any individual who has been, or may be, charged with offences in relation to the terrorist attack;

b) amendments to firearms legislation;

c) activities of organisations outside of the Public sector, such as media platforms; and

d) how Public sector agencies responded to the terrorist attack once it had begun.

Inquiry timeline

9 The Royal Commission started on 10 April 2019 and began receiving evidence on 13 May 2019. Our inquiry had several overlapping phases from establishment to engagement with communities, research and evidence gathering, holding evidential interviews, analysis and deliberations, and report development and presentation.

10 The original reporting date of 10 December 2019 was subsequently extended on two occasions until the final reporting date of 26 November 2020. The extensions were necessary because of:

a) the sheer volume of material we had to assess; and

b) the disruption resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

11 We presented our report to the Governor-General, Dame Patsy Reddy. The Governor-General handed the report to the government for their consideration.

Purpose of this document and our process

12 A vital part of the Royal Commission's process was to engage with whānau of the 51 shuhada (those people who died as martyrs as a result of the terrorist attack), and the survivors and witnesses of the terrorist attack and their whānau. They have been at the heart of our inquiry and our thinking. This Royal Commission of Inquiry was established because of the tragedy of 15 March 2019 that caused immense grief, hurt and loss.

13 This group of people could collectively be referred to as victims, which for some validates the harm they have experienced. Others, however, dislike the term victim. There are also mixed views about survivor. Some of those affected prefer not to be labelled at all. For this document, we use the description "affected whānau, survivors and witnesses" to refer to whānau of the 51 shuhada, and the survivors and witnesses of the terrorist attack and their whānau.

14 The primary focus of this document is to record comprehensively what we heard from affected whānau, survivors and witnesses. Given the significance of what we heard, we felt it important to acknowledge the stories, experiences and evidence of those most affected by the terrorist attack.

15 We wanted to prioritise meeting with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses, if they wanted to meet. We met with wives, husbands, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, aunts, uncles and cousins of the shuhada. Likewise, we met with those who were injured (physically and/or mentally), survivors and witnesses of the terrorist attack and their whānau.

16 When we started our process we did not have a list of all of the affected whānau, survivors and witnesses. Relevant Public sector agencies and community organisations were unable to share what names or contact information they had with us for privacy reasons. To try to reach as many affected whānau, survivors and witnesses as possible, we openly invited those most affected by the attack to meet with us on their terms.

17 We asked local Imams to let people know that they could meet with us if they chose to. To ensure that our invitation made it to as many people as possible, we also reached out to other groups/organisations to help raise awareness of the opportunity to meet with us, including the Christchurch Muslim Liaison Group, our Muslim Community Reference Group members, Victim Support, and the Ministry of Social Development. We extended this invitation on our website, in media releases, to people during meetings, on the phone to 0800-line callers and provided copies of our invitation to place on noticeboards at the masjidain.

18 We were also supported by community-based lawyers JustCommunity, and the community-based advisory service Navigate Your Way Trust, who helped us meet with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses in both small and larger group settings. The support of these organisations provided us with the opportunity to hear from some people we may not have otherwise been able to reach. We are grateful for their support and assistance.

19 We met with people on their own terms at times and, wherever possible, places that were most suitable for them. Some people invited us into their homes, others were more comfortable meeting in a community centre, local café, or hotel or library meeting rooms. All meetings were held in private and we took care to pay particular respect to cultural and religious practices and be mindful of the trauma that many people had suffered.

20 Affected whānau, survivors and witnesses we met with came from more than 22 different countries and speak over 50 different languages. All of this had to be taken into account when reaching out to them.

21 Some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses were ready and willing to meet right away. Others needed more time. We wanted to respect affected whānau, survivors and witnesses who were grieving. We also wanted to appropriately observe Muslim events and practices, including the ‘Iddah grieving period, Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, Dhul Hajjah, Eid al-Adha, Hajj pilgrimage and Muharram.

22 We were learning as we went through this process and did not always get things right. We appreciated receiving feedback when things did not work well, such as not providing an interpreter when it would have enabled someone to engage with us more easily, or that the way a room was set up indicated an imbalance of power. Such feedback helped us to adapt our approach to ensure people felt comfortable engaging with us, and that they were in a safe space in which their voice would be heard. We hope that our intention to engage in an appropriate and safe way was clear, even when we did not get it right.

23 There were a number of things we wanted to achieve in meeting with those most deeply affected by the terrorist attack of 15 March 2019. We wanted people to have an opportunity to share their stories, their evidence, in their own words. We wanted to hear their view on anything that happened in the lead up to the terrorist attack and/or thoughts they had to support our inquiry into how Public sector agencies can prevent such an attack from happening again.

24 Our overall approach was that we were there to listen. Affected whānau, survivors and witnesses led the meetings. People shared stories about the loved ones they had lost, or about their own experiences of the terrorist attack. They asked about the Royal Commission, what it was, how it worked, and what authority it had to make change. Some people we met with were wary of criticising New Zealand Police, the government or Public sector agencies, in part from their experiences with authorities in other countries, and concerns that any criticism could lead to negative outcomes for them. Some felt they were not getting the support they needed from Public sector agencies, so were turning to us for help, for example in finding work or seeking assistance for whānau members to come to New Zealand to provide them with support. Supporting people with such challenges was outside our mandate, but where possible and appropriate we referred people to relevant Public sector agencies or organisations that may be able to assist them in such matters.

25 Some of what we heard in these meetings was outside the scope of our Terms of Reference. However, our Terms of Reference also require us to provide reassurance to the New Zealand public. We therefore think it is important to record the breadth of issues that were significant to affected whānau, survivors and witnesses we met with. This document sets out a summary of a range of experiences and issues along with potential solutions proposed by affected whānau, survivors and witnesses who engaged with us.

26 Our meetings with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses were held in private. That meant the discussions were confidential between those we met with and the Royal Commission. We heard heart-felt thanks, praise and gratitude for the support that has been shown to these affected whānau, survivors and witnesses. But we also felt their deep grief, trauma and distress. We set out these stories and experiences here with the intention of giving them the respect they deserve. We have done so in a general way, more often than not without quoting specific individuals. To protect people's privacy, all quotes have been anonymised. Where there are quotes, they have generally come from a submission that was made to us on behalf of a large group of affected whānau, survivors and witnesses, and represents a range of experiences and views. We recognise, however, that their quotes may not represent all affected whānau, survivors and witnesses.

27 We acknowledge the openness and willingness of affected whānau, survivors and witnesses to talk to us, particularly during a period of such grief. These conversations and submissions have strengthened our process hugely by ensuring we kept the 51 shuhada at the heart of our work, and as such have made our report richer.

28 We have drawn on this material, along with information from meetings, interviews and research, in producing the Royal Commission's report on the terrorist attack on the Masjid an-Nur and Linwood Islamic Centre on 15 March 2019.

What we asked affected whānau, survivors and witnesses

29 We did not have prescribed questions for affected whānau, survivors and witnesses, rather we provided an opportunity for affected whānau, survivors and witnesses to share stories and evidence in their own words and in their own time. We asked questions to prompt discussion, if needed. Questions were tailored to each person's situation and included questions about:

- the impact of the terrorist attack on themselves, whānau and friends;
- their lives in New Zealand before the terrorist attack, including:
  - i) what their overall experience of living in New Zealand has been; and
  - ii) whether they ever felt unsafe before 15 March 2019, and whether they asked for help or raised concerns;
- what the government could have done in the past to help them feel safer, and help other people be more accepting; and
- what the government could do (or do better) in the future to make New Zealand safe for everyone and prevent future terrorist attacks.

Chapter 2: Impact of the terrorist attack

Direct impacts of the terrorist attack

1 Affected whānau, survivors and witnesses who had lost loved ones told us how the terrorist attack had affected them. Survivors who suffered physical injuries as a result of the terrorist attack, including from trying to escape, told us about the often slow progress of their recovery. Some suffered severe injuries, both mental and physical, that will have lifelong impacts.

2 We heard from people who had undergone multiple surgeries as part of their physical recovery but had not fully healed. Some survivors will never regain the full use of limbs. People are living with ongoing pain and numbness from bullet fragments that remain in their bodies. Some survivors require fulltime care and purpose-built facilities in their homes to help them live with their injuries.

> *On that day, I was shot in my right upper leg with the shrapnel travelling to my liver, causing further damage and it is still inside me. I was recently experiencing pain in my stomach ... The surgeons told me the shrapnel has moved from its initial place, to the muscle. They let me know that if it moved towards the stomach, they would have to consider taking [it] out, but at this stage it is safe to be inside [me].*

3 Most survivors could not return to work immediately, and some had to change vocation because of their injuries. While many survivors reported that their employers were supportive, giving them ample time off to recover, some people lost their jobs because they could no longer perform their tasks. A few survivors lost their businesses.

4 We heard from affected whānau about the impacts in the hours and days immediately after the terrorist attack. We were told about the challenges people faced in being able to track down their loved ones.

> *An acquaintance of my parents said that she had seen [my brother] in operating theatre. ...Mum and Dad rushed to the hospital with this news and after waiting outside Al-Noor Mosque for four hours, they then proceeded to wait at the Christchurch Hospital for another six hours. After this, they found out that the person my parents were waiting for, patient number 13, was not at all [my brother]. They were finally told [my brother] was unaccounted for.*

5 Many affected whānau, survivors and witnesses who we met with felt that both the victim identification process and the process for identifying people being treated in hospital caused them additional and unnecessary grief. Some people said they received conflicting and inconsistent information from New Zealand Police and hospital staff in the first 24 hours after the terrorist attack. In one case, a whānau member who had witnessed their loved one being killed was told by New Zealand Police and hospital staff not to lose hope and that their loved one could be being treated in another hospital. This false hope caused considerable additional grief.

6 People we met with were frustrated about how long it took for their deceased loved ones to be moved from the scene, and for their loved ones to be formally identified as deceased. In one case, we were told by a close whānau member of reading about the death of their loved one in a newspaper article without being informed by New Zealand Police beforehand.

7 Some affected whānau were also frustrated that they were not permitted to go inside the New Zealand Police cordon at the scene to search for their loved ones. We were told that some watched the video of the attack live stream by the individual in order to determine whether their loved ones had been killed or whether they might be able to find them at the hospital.

> *Between the lack of information, communication, and access to the mosque and their loved ones, and the refusal by police to allow medical staff to enter the premises for hours, victims are resigned to remembering the incident as a display of callous neglect and carelessness.*

8 People were also frustrated about how long it took for people being treated in hospital to be identified. They questioned whether inexperience and lack of understanding about traditional Muslim naming conventions, and variations in how Muslim names are spelt may have contributed to these delays. This also led to confusion for whānau members who were trying to find their loved ones and understand what had happened to them.

9 Everyone we met with, whether they were affected whānau, a survivor or witness of the terrorist attack, had experienced some form of psychological distress, such as anger, fear, stress, depression, anxiety, paranoia and/or survivor's guilt. Many people had received, or were still receiving, counselling or other psychological support and wanted it to be ongoing support. Some people said their spouses and children had also experienced psychological distress.

10 Many affected whānau, survivors and witnesses we spoke to have difficulty sleeping for reasons that include fears of the dreams they might have or of being vulnerable while they sleep. The experience of seeing people in their last moments of life was haunting. We heard many examples of gruesome nightmares and visions that survivors are experiencing on a regular basis, and were told:

> *... it's better to stay awake, talking to people rather than sleep and have nightmares.*

11 We heard from the parents of children who survived the terrorist attack, often because they were able to escape the masjidain, who have not been the same since. Some children have displayed behavioural changes, do not want to attend school or continue to be traumatised by loud sounds. One parent told us that they felt like they had lost their child, despite their child having physically survived the terrorist attack.

12 Some expressed concern to us about the longer-term effects on children, commenting that they may carry anger about what has happened. We were told that it will be important to engage with Muslim children in Christchurch, providing practical support to them in their longer-term recovery from the terrorist attack.

13 We were told that some witnesses to the terrorist attack who did not suffer physical injuries were not provided with support until third-party advocates stepped in to help. Others who have tried to access support have been told they are not eligible and/or are not classified by Public sector agencies or non-government organisations as victims of the terrorist attack. We heard from a number of people about discrepancies in who qualified for different types of support, an issue that we discuss further below.

Secondary impacts

14 Affected whānau, survivors and witnesses shared with us a range of secondary impacts that have significantly affected their lives. Some people's relationships (with spouses, whānau and friends) had been affected. This resulted from issues such as different views within a whānau about distributing the financial support provided by government or the toll that supporting loved ones was taking. It was common for whānau to come from overseas to support loved ones who had survived the terrorist attack. This could have adverse consequences and we heard that it:

> *... can be detrimental to family members who have successful careers and a stable, flourishing life overseas. In [New Zealand] their qualifications and work experiences will likely not be recognised and in the longer term this places undue stress and pressure on an already vulnerable family unit.*

15 For many of the whānau we met, the husband had been killed or severely injured. For some of the women in these whānau, the consequences went beyond the harrowing emotional impact of the terrorist attack. For many, this meant the loss of the main earner for the whānau. Some women are taking on new roles within the whānau and learning new skills such as driving or financial literacy. Simultaneously, these women are carrying more of the parenting responsibilities, while dealing with their own grief and recovery needs. This limits their time and ability to seek support for themselves and to find paid employment or study.

16 A few people suffered other deaths or illness in their immediate whānau very soon after 15 March 2019, which they attributed to the impacts of the terrorist attack. We heard from a whānau in which two loved ones suffered heart attacks in the months after 15 March 2019, one of which was fatal. In both instances, the whānau attributed the heart attack to the stress caused by the aftermath of the terrorist attack. Another survivor lost her husband as a result of a car accident in the days after 15 March 2019. She spoke of the trauma he had been experiencing because his friends were killed in the terrorist attack, which for him led to sleep deprivation. The resulting exhaustion and tiredness is thought to have contributed to his car accident.

Support from wider New Zealand communities

17 Some people reported feeling encouraged by support from non-Muslim New Zealanders. Many spoke of the goodwill they had seen and/or received from people across the country after the terrorist attack. There was a sense that this presented an opportunity to improve social cohesion, unity and interconnectedness between communities.

18 We heard gratitude for the support shown by friends and neighbours, and one whānau said this provided the encouragement they needed to stay in New Zealand at a time when they were considering moving after the terrorist attack. There was hope that the support shown by New Zealanders would continue, and not be forgotten, as time passed.

Getting the right support from Public sector agencies is challenging

19 Alongside the accounts of gratitude for the general empathy and support from New Zealanders, we heard many frustrations relating to affected whānau, survivors and witnesses' experiences in dealing with Public sector agencies for support. Common themes were a lack of cultural understanding, a perceived lack of effort to improve cultural capability and policies and practices that were not pragmatic enough to support people's recovery needs from this particular, albeit extraordinary, event.

Lack of cultural understanding

20 Many people we heard from noted the general lack of cultural understanding of staff in Public sector agencies about Muslim communities' beliefs and customs.

> *Victim families have been offered services that are transactional, short-term and relatively short-sighted. There has been no deliberate undertaking to understand how the victim community functions, nor to recognise its complexities and the emotional experiences and memory embedded in its story.*

It is absolutely crucial to actively listen to, support and appropriately engage – all three of which are inseparable – with the affected communities to, in turn, be able provide them with appropriate services and support.

Affected whānau member

21 We were told that these gaps were not acknowledged and few, if any, efforts have been made by relevant Public sector agencies to address them.

> *Instead of stepping up to the challenge to improve services and undertake cultural and religious competency training, agencies are either not undertaking any training or relying on people within the Muslim community who have no expertise in the area of ethnic and religious competency training to guide them, in a token gesture to show they are being responsive.*

22 We heard that the services and support being offered by Public sector agencies and non-government organisations often do not appropriately acknowledge the diverse nature of Muslim communities and therefore do not account for different needs. Over 50 countries are represented among those who attend Masjid an-Nur and the Linwood Islamic Centre. There are language and cultural barriers that, we have been told, add to the already complex environment of engaging with Public sector agencies. We heard that:

> *... going on a year post the attacks, families are still waiting for adequate wrap around services that are culturally and linguistically responsive and which fully addresses their complex needs.*

23 Some whānau felt there was an absence of genuine engagement to understand their needs; cultural, physical, psychological wellbeing and otherwise. As a result, they felt the way Public sector agencies provided recovery support was not always best practice and they were left with a perception that the Public sector was discriminating against them.

24 Meetings set up by Public sector agencies sometimes did not have interpreters present or relevant languages were not offered. We were also told that this was the case for some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses when they were interviewed by New Zealand Police during their investigation of the terrorist attack. Affected whānau, survivors and witnesses needed to rely on whānau members to interpret police questions. We were told this exacerbated trauma for affected whānau, survivors and witnesses and their whānau members who were interpreting for them.

25 We were also told the lack of appropriate interpretation compounded the challenges some people faced in understanding what support options were available to them and how to access them. In some cases, it meant that people were relying on whānau members to translate for them what Public sector agencies were saying, and we were told of instances where some felt their whānau member was not impartial or may not have been passing on all relevant information.

26 We also heard from many affected whānau, survivors and witnesses that we met with about the challenges in getting new entry visas or visas extended for whānau members who had come to New Zealand to help them while they were getting their lives back together. For example, women who had lost their husbands and only had whānau based overseas, found

their whānau were generally offered short-term visas to come to New Zealand to support them. This did not align with their longer-term need for support from whānau in their recovery.

27 People were also concerned about the requirement for someone to have been in New Zealand on 15 March 2019 to be eligible for the discretionary visa that the Government had put in place for support people. Some expressed their frustration that allowances were not being made in what were exceptional circumstances.

Policies and practices not pragmatic enough to support recovery needs

28 We have heard much about how Public sector agencies have been engaging with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses. While people commented on the overall generous support from the public and Public sector agencies in the direct aftermath of the terrorist attack, we were also told that Public sector agencies have been uncoordinated and inflexible.

29 In hearing from some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses we learned of experiences in their recovery that have been re-traumatising and/or have caused additional stress. We were told that:

> *...if trauma speaks to one's inability to speak; the inability to articulate, come to terms with, and make sense of loss, then in many ways subsequent experiences with government agencies in the months since the attacks have been for many a concerted process of re-traumatisation, since they have perpetuated the survivors' inability to recover.*

30 We heard that the way Public sector agencies have dealt with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses of the terrorist attack has made people feel disempowered and added to the difficulties they face.

> *Presently, a large number of victims feel aggrieved and hampered by their own individual day to day survival, whether financially or emotionally. This is due to the disempowering way services are being provided and the absence of long-term rebuilding or restoration – an absence of both material support for community rebuilding and of support that addresses the sentiments of the attacker through information or awareness about their faith and community.*

31 We were told that the purpose of victim impact statements was not explained to affected whānau, survivors and witnesses adequately. Many told us that they required language support but the Ministry of Justice courts staff did not provide interpreters to help them through the process in advance of the sentencing. This led to some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses not engaging in the process. One person we spoke to told us that the process initially led them to focus on the negative impacts of the terrorist attack on them, which was not empowering. The statement they eventually made in court was instead an empowering one, which was not based on the standard form provided to them.

32 Some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses were confused about the distinction between victim impact statements and the initial statements that they provided to New Zealand Police during the police investigation of the terrorist attack.

Lack of coordination between Public sector agencies

33 Multiple Public sector agencies are involved in supporting the recovery of those who survived the terrorist attack or who lost loved ones. Affected whānau, survivors and witnesses who had dealt with these agencies, in particular the Accident Compensation Corporation, the Ministry of Social Development, and Victim Support, spoke to us of overlaps in their support and services, as well as gaps, and a lack of coordination between agencies.

> *The lack of care is compounded by a lack of coordination. It is not just one or two meetings, or one or two agencies, but all of them, and at the same time.*

34 This added to the stress felt by affected whānau, survivors and witnesses as they often had to repeat their difficult story numerous times, and some continue to need to do this more than 18 months on from the terrorist attack.

35 Difficulties in dealing with the multiple Public sector agencies were exacerbated by the lack of information sharing between the relevant agencies, and a perceived reluctance to find pragmatic solutions to address the extraordinary needs being presented.

> *Agencies work in silo and refuse to share information with each other, forcing victims to deal with several different people within the same agency. It has become clear that government agencies use the Privacy Act 1993 as a means to not share information with each other.*

36 Some suggested it would have been better for affected whānau, survivors and witnesses to have dealt with a single Public sector agency.

37 We were told that these challenges were often greater for former refugee and migrant whānau, survivors and witnesses.

> *These communities are less able to navigate the current maze of [Public] sector agencies or understand the institutional barriers that exist for individuals engaging with the government, including the plethora of policies they have cited for different entitlements as victims.*

38 Combined with the lack of cultural understanding discussed above, some felt that the support provided was not best-suited to the needs of these former refugee and migrant whānau, survivors and witnesses.

39 A frequently expressed concern was that Public sector agencies and non-government organisations do not have a common definition or eligibility criteria for those who identify as victims, and do not account for cultural dynamics. For example, while the Victims' Rights Act 2002 definition of immediate family includes "other culturally recognised family group",[1] eligibility for support often involved a stricter interpretation of family.

> *The western concept of the nuclear family is accepted by agencies and most do not accept a culturally appropriate and recognised family grouping.*

40 We were told of the impact Public sector agencies' interpretations of family had on people's ability to access government support services, particularly in terms of confusion and inconsistency in support services offered. All of this resulted in medical, psychological and employment issues for some whānau who were already in a vulnerable position before the terrorist attack.

41 We also heard of inconsistent application of the criteria for those who identify as victims. Specifically, we were told that the level of support offered sometimes differs depending on the individual Public sector employee offering it and that some people have received different services while having similar impairments. This has created a perception for some that Public sector agencies and non-government organisations are creating a victim hierarchy or a priority list of victims, in some cases causing grievances and straining relationships.

42 Some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses say there is a disconnect between what Ministers have promised publicly and the reality of how Public sector agency staff are dealing with individual situations. We were told of Public sector agencies promising assistance and then not following through, often without providing sufficient explanation as to why. Requests for assistance were declined at times without affected whānau, survivours and witnesses having an opportunity to supply more information or with no explanation of why the decision to decline was made.

Lack of flexibility in approach

43 While many people expressed gratitude for the support they received, we have heard that in some cases the government support available to those affected by the terrorist attack is not sufficient, or those who are eligible for it are not always made aware of their entitlements. A concern expressed to us was that a Public sector "one size fits all" approach to recovery had been applied and was not sufficient.

> *Although these agencies are well-meaning, victims report a diversity of challenges: financial, medical, physical, emotional and spiritual. … The recurring message in victim reports is that the government is not well-organised to understand and address their needs.*

[1] Section 4, Victims' Rights Act 2002

44 We heard that most of the support being offered by Public sector agencies is focused on short-term assistance, which does not account, in a culturally appropriate way, for the ongoing and long-term needs of the communities deeply affected by the terrorist attack. For example, we were told that recovery needed to include long-term community-building initiatives that will enable these communities to be self-sufficient and not dependent on the government. This could include initiatives such as interest-free loans (that account for religious restrictions on interest) to support their businesses, rather than those businesses needing to rely on short-term financial assistance from Public sector agencies.

45 A few people felt that the Accident Compensation Corporation did not have enough flexibility in its systems for an event such as this, and it was not taking account of the complications caused by firearm injuries, such as retained bullet fragments and nerve damage. For example, one survivor was frustrated by the disconnect between Accident Compensation Corporation expectations and the medical advice they received about their recovery. The survivor felt pressured to return to work by the Accident Compensation Corporation despite medical advice that they were unable to do so.

46 Similar sentiments were shared about other Public sector agencies. For example, some women whose husbands had been the only income earner said they felt pressured by the Ministry of Social Development to place their preschool children in care so they could look for work.

47 We heard of the need for immigration issues to be considered on a case-by-case basis given the complexities associated with the circumstances of each individual whānau. This was particularly an issue for members of the Somali community who had lost loved ones or had survived the terrorist attack. We heard that despite the immigration measures that were put in place to support those most affected by the terrorist attack, Somali whānau faced particular challenges, which they attribute to New Zealand not recognising the Somali passport as a valid travel document (although it is accepted by some Public sector agencies for refugee purposes). This made it difficult for them to receive whānau support from Somalia, and in some cases whānau are still waiting for progress to be made.

48 Some suggested that Immigration New Zealand could create a special entry visa for whānau to travel in and out of New Zealand for support purposes on a medium to long-term basis, to reduce the administrative burdens on grieving people.

49 We were also told of the deficiencies in support available to affected whānau, survivors and witnesses related to the criminal justice system. This was described as the:

> *... deep widespread trauma in being excluded from the criminal process and being unable to have input into or feel any meaningful participation in this process.*

50 We heard of disillusionment and a loss of hope and trust largely due to the lack of acknowledgement of victims in the criminal justice process, and the feeling that they are not being heard. The issues and concerns that affected whānau, survivors and witnesses

have had in this specific case were seen by some to be a demonstration of the issues that victims face more broadly in New Zealand's criminal justice system. There were complaints of a disconnect between the principles of victims' rights as set out in the Victims Code,[2] and victims' experiences of the criminal justice system including re-traumatisation.

51 Some affected whānau, survivours and witnesses told us they felt intimidated when they attended court on one occasion, because a person stood outside the courts expressing white supremacist views as whānau and survivors entered the court.

52 Some people told us that when recovery needs have been considered, Public sector agencies do not account for the recovery needs of those who witnessed the terrorist attack but were not physically injured in any way. We have heard of the post-traumatic stress being suffered by many of these witnesses, and they feel that they are receiving inadequate support as they do not fit the Public sector agencies' definition of victims.

Lack of staff awareness

53 Some people felt there was a lack of sensitivity and awareness from Public sector agencies of those they were meant to be supporting and that they seemed inexperienced in dealing with people coping with trauma. We were told of:

> *... the need for agencies and organisations to be more "aware of the emotional needs" of the victims.*

54 This became apparent to some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses when they met with Public sector agencies and felt staff were not responsive if they or their whānau were visibly overwhelmed. Some people were provided with an overload of information at times when they were not able to process it properly:

> *... where there should be active listening, there is a deluge of information; where there should be advocacy there are endless meetings.*

55 This led some to question whether Public sector agency staff were appropriately trained or supported to deal with traumatised people.

[2] The Victims Code sets out how you can expect to be treated when you are a victim of crime - http://www.victimsinfo.govt.nz/support-and-services/victims-rights/victims-code-full-text-version/.

Chapter 3: Life in New Zealand as a Muslim

1 Most affected whānau, survivors and witnesses we met with moved to New Zealand from overseas. The length of time they have lived here ranges from a few months to decades. For some, this meant their experience of New Zealand was based on a comparison of where they had come from.

> *Many of the victims carry intergenerational trauma, from which they fled to New Zealand and have lost or left their loved ones behind and, relatedly, have reduced or no support systems to mitigate such trauma.*

2 We spoke to some New Zealand-born affected whānau, survivours and witnesses who were raised Muslim and as such did not have a point of comparison for their personal experience. We also spoke to people born in New Zealand who had converted to Islam.

New Zealand is generally viewed positively, but widespread racism, discrimination and Islamophobia exists

3 Most affected whānau, survivors and witnesses said their experiences of New Zealand and New Zealanders before the terrorist attack of 15 March 2019 were generally positive. They said New Zealand felt generally peaceful and safe, and they never thought such a terrorist attack could happen here. They felt that many New Zealanders were very accepting and friendly people. We heard of friendly and welcoming neighbours. We heard accounts of work places that were accommodating of people's religious practices and needs, allowing them to take time off to attend Friday prayers and providing facilities for prayer during working hours.

4 Despite these positive experiences, nearly everyone we met with had personally suffered racist incidents or discrimination or knew of whānau and friends who had. One perspective shared with us was that the 15 March 2019 terrorist attack was:

> *... distinct from that of the mainstream in that the attacks are seen as a culmination of, rather than an exception to, the everyday lives of Muslims.*

5 With the hijab being a visible faith marker, Muslim women often find themselves subjected to racism or discrimination, much more so than men. Many women in hijab to whom we spoke reported experiencing street harassment and some people said they are worried about their whānau and friends who wear hijab. Some women in their hijab said they felt more scared going out on their own. They told us that after the terrorist attack they avoided going to public places and doing things that used to be part of their daily routine, like walking their children to school or going on an evening walk. One woman told us that she now wears a hooded sweatshirt when out in public to hide her hijab.

6 Some parents told us about the bullying or hurtful comments that their children had been subjected to at school or while out in their neighbourhoods. Many people we talked to had been on the receiving end of racist or hateful comments yelled at them by people driving past. Some people put such experiences down to misunderstandings or misperceptions of the Muslim faith, although they nonetheless found them to be hurtful.

7 Some people reported experiencing discrimination at work, or in trying to find a job. People expressed frustration at being unable to find jobs, despite being highly qualified for positions they were applying for. They attributed this to them not having traditional English names. Some who had applied for a significant number of jobs for which they were well-qualified thought that the very limited number of interview offers they received resulted from bias. We heard from one woman who began to receive interview requests only after changing her name for job application purposes to a traditional English name.

8 A few people we met with said they had reported racist incidents to New Zealand Police, but had not felt that this had resulted in a positive outcome. Either the report was not formally recorded, or they felt New Zealand Police were not taking the incident seriously. They did not hear back from New Zealand Police about what had been done in response to their report. For some, this affected their trust in New Zealand Police, creating doubts that New Zealand Police would act when reports were made. Such experiences discouraged people from bringing further concerns to the attention of New Zealand Police. We were told that:

> *... both affected mosques agree that despite multiple reports of suspicious behaviour in and around the mosques, police paid insufficient attention... For people in the community, this is considered a dereliction of the duty to protect, as well as a failure to acknowledge that Muslims are and have been subject to discrimination, scape-goating, as well as far-right extremism and threats by white supremacists, and should therefore have warranted particular care, responsiveness, and vigilance on the part of the police.*

9 In other cases, people said that they did not bother reporting racist incidents because they had seen others in the community do so, with no positive outcome. One person expressed it to us as follows:

> *... right now there is not that communication because we feel like we as a community are second rate. They give us that feeling, and we don't get that trust from the police. There are only so many times you want to go to someone if they give you that feeling of mistrust. There comes a point where you don't even trust them and you feel like there are things happening, what is the point of going to the police? That's when it becomes very dangerous because you know there are things happening but because of that feeling and that mistrust between the police you have the big gap between the authority and you and you're distancing yourself to the people that could actually protect you and prevent it. So how do we build that trust between them and bridge that gap of not feeling like second rate citizens?*

10 Some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses reported that their experiences of New Zealand have changed since 15 March 2019. Although some people said New Zealand still feels safe, others said they feel less safe than they used to. Concerns over safety have led some whānau to feel the need for gated communities, increased safety and surveillance at their residences, and for New Zealand Police to be more active in building genuine relationships with Muslim communities. A few people said they had reported racist incidents to New Zealand Police since the 15 March 2019 terrorist attack and felt that these had been taken seriously.

The effect of bias (unconscious or otherwise), particularly in the media

11 For many affected whānau, survivors and witnesses we heard from, the terrorist attack on 15 March 2019 was not unforeseen. We heard that:

> *... the events of the day were presaged by so many tell-tale signs of its coming, all of which were evident and all of which were ignored by those who had power to act.*

12 We were told that it took place in the context of a society, including Public sector agencies, that frequently misunderstands Muslim communities and cultural diversity more broadly. People felt that an unconscious bias was prevalent in Public sector agencies' dealings with Muslim communities prior to, and after, the terrorist attack.

> *While it may not be obvious to others outside the community, the link between the general discourse of Islamophobia and the specific ways in which the Muslim community is engaged by government agencies is clear in the accounts of victims.*

13 Some people had noticed increasing racist comments on social media over time, particularly in recent years. We heard a general call to take online threats more seriously, and for these to be investigated. We were shown YouTube videos and Facebook pages that were premised on Islamophobic, racist or other hateful sentiments, and were extremely concerning to those reporting them. These videos and pages were all from New Zealand-based people. In some cases, New Zealand Police had been notified of extreme content, but people are seeing little action by social media platforms in terms of removing such content. Some people felt that, in comparison, websites containing Islamist extremist content are more readily taken down.

… we feel like we as a community are second rate. They give us that feeling, and we don't get that trust from [New Zealand] Police. There are only so many times you want to go to someone if they give you that feeling of mistrust.

Affected whānau member

14 Affected whānau, survivors and witnesses shared their belief with us that New Zealand and international television and print media are biased against Muslims. We were told biased reporting appeared to have increased significantly since the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 in the United States of America. Many expressed their frustration at the role of the media in sharing misconceptions about Muslims and Islam, commenting that their reporting has contributed to increased anti-Muslim views in New Zealand and around the world. We were told that:

> *... the media has vilified or demonised Muslims, or at least has condoned such vilification by failure to provide critical counter-narratives, and this has resulted in the day to day racism they experience.*

15 We heard of the real impacts of negative media reports on some people's daily lives, including the misperceptions of Islam coming through in racist taunts that would be shouted at people in the streets. For some in the Christchurch Muslim community, the taunts were exacerbated from 2014 when a media story was published about radical Islam in Christchurch, and allegations were made that someone had been radicalised at a specific masjid in Christchurch. This media story had a significant and ongoing effect on Christchurch Muslim communities, with reports in the years following of ongoing incidents at the masjid, such as intrusion, harassment and burglary. When reflecting on the 2014 media story, one survivor of the terrorist attack spoke of finding themselves increasingly focused on issues of safety and security at the masjid from that point onwards.

16 There was also a sense that the media portrayal of the individual who undertook the 15 March 2019 terrorist attack was biased. Media articles questioned how a "good boy" could have "gone bad"? Affected whānau, survivors and witnesses felt that had it been a Muslim who had committed the terrorist attack, the media would have portrayed the person differently and would be unlikely to focus on them being a good person.

Chapter 4: Questions raised about the individual and what Public sector agencies knew about the terrorist

1 Some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses we met with asked us questions about or shared their views on the individual who carried out the terrorist attack. They believe that the individual visited Masjid an-Nur and the Linwood Islamic Centre before the terrorist attack on 15 March 2019. They described a man, who they believe to have been the individual, engaging in evasive conversation at Masjid an-Nur, including with the Imam, and said that his practices in the masjid, including during prayer time, suggested he was not a regular masjid attendee.

2 Most affected whānau, survivors and witnesses could not comprehend how the individual was able to carry out the extent of preparation and planning activities that he did without being detected. They believe he must have had support from friends or online groups to carry out the terrorist attack. They also believe that more than one person must have been involved in the terrorist attack due to the planning that it would have required, and some people reported hearing the individual talking to others during the terrorist attack.

3 Affected whānau, survivors and witnesses who spoke to us about the individual convicted of the terrorist attack had specific questions they wanted answered through the Royal Commission's report, including:

- Did he have direct or indirect support to carry out the terrorist attack?
- How could he afford to buy all the weapons and equipment needed to carry out the terrorist attack?
- How did he accumulate so much ammunition without drawing the attention of authorities?
- Given the fact that he had visited countries with travel advisory warnings, why was he not checked more thoroughly by immigration on entering New Zealand?
- How did he know the 'perfect time' to enter either Masjid an-Nur or the Linwood Islamic Centre?

4 These and other questions raised by communities about the individual and what Public sector agencies knew about him are answered in our report.

Chapter 5: Solutions proposed by affected whānau, survivors and witnesses

1 Our primary aim of meeting with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses was to listen to them. In addition to sharing their personal experiences and concerns, many also offered us their suggestions of how the issues they raised with us could be addressed.

2 We were told that some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses needed time to heal before they could participate in processes, including the Royal Commission of Inquiry and (what would have been) the trial of the individual. Due to the time-bound nature of such processes, some would not be able to participate, despite this being an empowering part of their personal recovery. One proposal put forward to us suggested the establishment of a long-term restorative justice process that is not time-bound. The process would be co-designed with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses to address their ongoing complex needs. Such a process would provide victims with accountability, healing, an opportunity to voice their experiences and seek vindication. With no time limitation, the process would enable those in need of support to engage at times that work for them and, in this way, empower them in their own recovery.

3 We were told that a coronial inquiry should be held to provide an independent assessment of the response to the terrorist attack including the response of New Zealand Police and hospitals and ensure that all outstanding questions are answered.

4 We heard from some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses, and members of the Muslim Community Reference Group about the importance of transparency from the government and Public sector agencies when it comes to making changes in response to our report and in implementing our recommendations. We were told that it should not be left to communities alone to hold the government and Public sector agencies to account for ensuring that our report is acted on. For example, some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses proposed that there should be a minister responsible for affected whānau, survivors and witnesses of the terrorist attack and the implementation of the Royal Commission's recommendations, similar to the Minister Responsible for Pike River Re-entry, and that all relevant Public sector agencies would report to that Minister.

Increased security at masajid

5 Some people spoke of the need for increased security at Masjid an-Nur and the Linwood Islamic Centre and other Muslim gathering places on an ongoing basis. Security solutions proposed included maintaining a New Zealand Police presence, ensuring entrances of masajid are not exposed, installing security cameras and other security measures. This would need to be resourced by government. It was also suggested to us that security be improved at all religious places of worship, not just masajid.

Embracing human rights, diversity and reducing the impacts of harmful extremism

6 Nearly everyone we met with believed that tackling racism and prejudice would make New Zealand safer and contribute to preventing a terrorist attack in the future. They said that the key to eliminating racism lies in raising awareness throughout New Zealand society.

> *[The] root of this hatred must be shaken. Racism can be eliminated including through the media. Peaceful messages should be delivered.*

7 Some people suggested that New Zealand should have tougher sentences for hate crimes and hate speech. A few people suggested that the definition of hate speech in the Human Rights Act 1993 should be broadened to include hostility against people on religious grounds.

8 People shared with us a range of ideas about how to teach people about diverse cultures and religions, and the importance of diversity in New Zealand society. These ideas included:

- Providing information on how to report racist incidents;
- Anti-racism campaigns;
- Public awareness campaigns on diverse cultures and religions;
- Broadening teacher training and the school curriculum to include education on diverse cultures and religions;
- Inviting masajid across New Zealand to host community events;
- Local authorities sponsoring and organising public events to celebrate certain Muslim events like Eid, as many do for celebrating other cultural events such as Matariki, Chinese New Year and Diwali; and
- Inviting Muslim community leaders to lead a public discourse on Islam and engage in more interfaith dialogue.

[The] root of this hatred must be shaken. Racism can be eliminated including through the media. Peaceful messages should be delivered.

Affected whānau member

Improvements to New Zealand's national security system

9 Some people we met with suggested improvements to New Zealand's national security system. They felt that security agencies should be more proactive. Specifically, they suggested that security agencies should increase monitoring of anti-Muslim, extreme right-wing, and other threats to vulnerable communities on social media, and that they should take online threats more seriously.

> *Misunderstandings and fear about the spiritual purposes and philosophy of the Islamic faith have long been known to exist even in peaceable and cultural diverse societies where Islam is a minority religion. Such misunderstandings, in the hands of white supremacist extremists, formed the ideological basis of the attacks. It is therefore exceptionally critical for such misunderstandings not be allowed to exacerbate the more general issues of the system-centred approach.*

10 Some people recommended more training for staff in the wider New Zealand Intelligence Community to recognise escalating threats sooner.

11 We were told that Public sector agencies should be recruiting and developing appropriate expertise, including cultural expertise, so that they can understand:

- the challenges faced by, and recovery needs or, traumatised people and communities;
- the challenges people working with traumatised people and communities are likely to face and the need to ensure that there is interpretation and translation support available;
- how people who have experienced terrorism are likely to receive and process information;

  > *It is important for supporting agencies to understand that victims can find it difficult to process information when they are feeling emotionally distressed. Trauma can affect information processing in several ways.*

- how to build trust-based, collaborative relationships with vulnerable communities; and

  > *It is absolutely crucial to actively listen to, support and appropriately engage - all three of which are inseparable - with the affected communities to, in turn, be able provide them with appropriate services and support.*

- supporting psychological recovery needs to encompass community engagement activities.

  > *Rather than providing a tokenistic or passive presence, police are called on to become active in building a genuine relationship of care and vigilance with the community, and to be attentive to the community's needs and safety.*

12 We were told about the importance of taking a human-centred (more specifically, a survivor wellbeing-centred) approach to recovery. A critical element of this is that the survivors are provided with the opportunities and space to be heard, and that they are involved in the development of long-term solutions.

> *It is paramount to elevate the voices of victims. Victims have sobering sentiments as well as ideas for solutions to key issues, but struggle to be heard on these ideas.*

13 A human-centred approach, we were told, would focus more on problem solving and finding solutions and is inherently future-focused. The alternative, system-centred approach that affected whānau, survivors and witnesses have experienced has instead been concentrated on reacting to risk or problems rather than the needs of those the system should be supporting.

14 It was also recommended that, as part of their readiness planning, Public sector agencies plan for longer-term recovery needs of communities, and that these plans are flexible and adaptable. For example, the way in which a survivor is defined may need to differ depending on the nature of the event from which communities are recovering. Similarly, different communities often categorise whānau in different ways and this needs to be taken into account.

Chapter 6: Other matters raised by affected whānau, survivors and witnesses

1 The approach we took to meetings with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses, in particular that they led the meetings and discussed what they wanted to with us, meant that we were provided with many peoples' thoughts and views on matters that are outside our Terms of Reference.

2 As noted earlier in this document, our Terms of Reference require us to provide reassurance to the New Zealand public. We therefore think it is important to record the breadth of issues that were significant to the affected whānau, survivors and witnesses with whom we met with.

New Zealand Police response to the terrorist attack

3 We heard from many people about the response to the terrorist attack, including observations on how well responders were equipped to deal with the terrorist attack. This was the single issue most frequently raised in all our meetings with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses.

4 People we met with expressed anger, grief, frustration and concern about how long it took for New Zealand Police to arrive inside Masjid an-Nur and to allow emergency medical services through the New Zealand Police cordon at the scene. Nearly everyone we met with believed that more lives would have been saved if the injured had received medical treatment sooner.

> *There is a sense that, despite the active effort of community members to convey clear and precise instructions to avoid confusion, police demonstrated a striking inability to respond adequately and appropriately.*

5 Many people that we heard from about this were also frustrated that New Zealand Police did not act quickly to protect other masajid and gathering places of the Muslim community. They believe that lives could have been saved at the Linwood Islamic Centre if the New Zealand Police had deployed quickly to that location. We were told that some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses were comparing their experiences to similar situations or experiences of gun violence in countries they had come to New Zealand from, where agencies are described as

> *... vastly more responsive and attentive to the urgency of the situation*.

6 We were told at our 8 November 2020 hui with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses that they still have outstanding questions about the response of New Zealand Police and hospitals to the terrorist attack.

7 Many affected whānau, survivors and witnesses advised that the former Police Commissioner, Mike Bush, had announced an independent review of New Zealand Police response to the terrorist attack. Many affected whānau, survivors and witnesses felt frustrated that the results of the review had not been made public and it should have been by now. Some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses felt that their trust and confidence in New Zealand Police had further diminished as a result. Some affected whānau, survivors and witnesses were suspicious that the review had identified a number of faults that New Zealand Police did not want to be transparent about.

The individual's interaction with criminal justice system

8 Some people we heard from were concerned that the prison conditions in New Zealand were not harsh enough for the individual. A few people suggested that the death penalty would be appropriate punishment for anyone convicted of the terrorist attack.

9 A few people shared concerns and frustration that the individual was able to send correspondence to like-minded people while in prison. They questioned how this could have been allowed to occur and sought accountability from the Department of Corrections. We heard of the need to stop extremists who are in prison from spreading their harmful views.

Appendix: Process for preparing this document

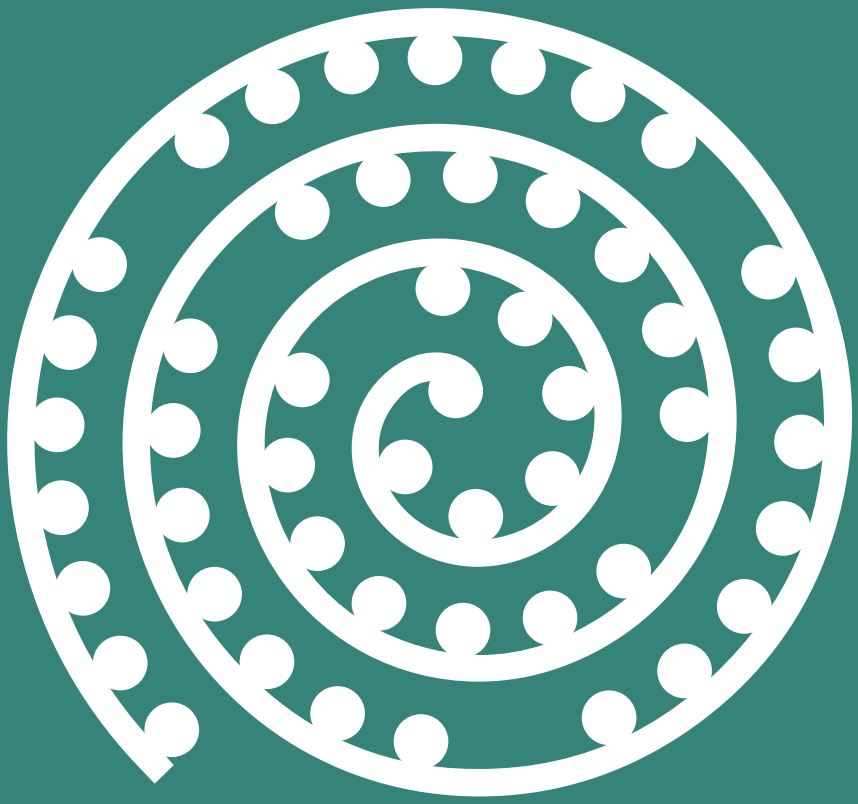
1 We received a substantial amount of material during the engagement process with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses, through meetings, submissions, and other interactions. Meetings with affected whānau, survivors and witnesses were held in private, but the Royal Commission took notes, with the permission of those we met with, to retain a record of what we heard.

2 We collated our notes and the range of other material we received from affected whānau, survivors and witnesses, to identify common themes and topics. This enabled us to document their stories, experiences and evidence here in general terms, rather than quoting exact experiences of specific people, respecting the private nature of our interactions with them. Where quotes are included, we sought and gained permission for their use.

3 This document does not draw any conclusions from, or comment on, the stories, experiences and evidence of those most affected by the terrorist attack. Neither does it prefer one view over another. Rather, the intent of this document is to give dedicated space to the voices of whānau of the 51 shuhada, survivors and witnesses of the terrorist attack and their whānau. These voices deserve to be heard.

Glossary

Term	Definition
hijab	A head covering worn in public by some Muslim women.
intelligence and security agencies	The Government Communications Security Bureau and the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service. This is a statutory term under the Intelligence and Security Act 2017.
masajid	An Arabic term for more than two masjid.
masjid	An Arabic term for a mosque, the Muslim place of worship. In Arabic, masjid literally translates to "place of prostration (in prayer)".
Masjid an-Nur	An Arabic term for the Al Noor Mosque.
masjidain	An Arabic term for two masjid.
shuhada	An Arabic term for the plural "martyr". The term shuhada is used in this document to refer to people who died as martyrs as a result of the terrorist attack on 15 March 2019.
wider New Zealand Intelligence Community	The group of Public sector agencies that collect, assess or otherwise use secret intelligence, and those agencies that collect and/or use classified intelligence for external or domestic policy and operations. Includes agencies in the New Zealand Intelligence Community (the National Security Group of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Government Communications Security Bureau and the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service) and other Public sector agencies such as the Department of Corrections, Immigration New Zealand, Ministry for Primary Industries, New Zealand Customs Service, the New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police.
whānau	Te reo Māori (Māori language) term for family.



Our symbol is inspired by an enduring and perpetual Aotearoa New Zealand icon, the koru.

The unfurling fern frond is representative of peace, tranquillity, growth, positive change and awakening. This dimension of peace is also inherent in the meaning of the living faith of Islam. We draw parallels between this taonga and the journey that New Zealanders have ahead of them to become a safer and more inclusive society.

The koru design with seven groups of seven unfurling fronds also acknowledges that 15 March 2019 was, according to the Islamic lunar calendar, 7 Rajab 1440, that is, the 7th day of the 7th Islamic month.