

Statement

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Monday, 7 July 2025

ANTI-HATE TASKFORCE JUST ONE PART OF OUR ACTION PLAN

I thank Victoria Police for their swift work to apprehend and charge the alleged perpetrator of the sickening crime at the East Melbourne synagogue.

I visited the synagogue today to meet its Rabbi and Shule President.

We spoke about how the congregation is feeling following this anti-Semitic attack.

I pledged to Rabbi Gutnick that our Government will provide funding for mental health support to the congregation – particularly for the children who were inside the building when the fire was lit.

Our Government is proud to support this historic Shule at the heart of Melbourne.

In December, we provided the East Melbourne Hebrew Congregation \$80,000 in funding for security infrastructure.

Places of worship like this synagogue are a part of our fabric as a society.

We will protect them with everything we've got.

We have a strong action plan – and it's underway.

Earlier this year, we passed the landmark Anti-Vilification and Social Cohesion Bill – strengthening our laws to protect Victorians from hate.

We also established the Local Escalation and Help (LEAH) group to support the Jewish Community at a local level, with links directly into Government.

We commissioned the Lekakis Review into our multicultural sector, to ensure our multicultural policies, institutions and personnel are equipped to reject division and stop hate.

Government will soon receive Mr Lekakis' report following his extensive consultation with community groups.

It is anticipated this report will make recommendations about our proposal for a social cohesion pledge that organisations will be required to sign before receiving Government funding.

We also announced a raft of tough new laws to stamp out extreme, dangerous and radical public demonstrations – including bans applying to face coverings, attachment devices and terrorist symbols.

Legislation is being drafted alongside community and expert consultation, and will be introduced to Parliament as soon as possible.

Today, I can announce a further step.

I will convene a new Anti-Hate Taskforce between Governments and Victoria Police.

Where LEAH focuses on problem-solving at a local community level, the Anti-Hate Taskforce will look at the bigger picture across our city and state.

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It will have its first meeting this week where I will be updated on:

- how Victoria Police plans to operationalise the criminal components of the Anti-Vilification and Social Cohesion Act
- progress and updates from the LEAH meetings occurring within the Jewish Community
- the progress of community consultation and development of legislation for increased police powers to stamp out extreme and violent protest

I will also invite representatives of Melbourne's Jewish Community to participate in this meeting, so their voice is heard from the outset.

The taskforce will meet regularly and consist initially of representatives of Government including myself and the Minister for Police, Victoria Police and the Lord Mayor of Melbourne – with membership to expand over time.

Hate doesn't belong in Victoria.

It has no place outside synagogues or inside restaurants.

We have a strong action plan and we're implementing it piece by piece.

We back our police, we're giving them more powers – and we won't rest until every Victorian feels safe to be who they are.