

LEAH communiqué

12 August 2025

Purpose

The purpose of this communiqué is to support Local Escalation and Help (LEAH) community leaders to disseminate LEAH meeting discussion points and Victorian Government updates through their networks.

The communiqué will be circulated to the LEAH group as soon as practicable following each LEAH meeting. Please note that the communiqué will not capture daily updates and will be subject to input and approval from relevant areas across government.

We encourage LEAH members to share information from this communiqué with their networks as relevant, however, request that wording is not altered.

LEAH meeting overview - July 2025

- LEAH comprises representatives from the Jewish community, state government and local councils, providing a direct line of communication on antisemitism.
- The group is chaired by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.
- The LEAH meeting on 17 July 2025 was attended by representatives from the Jewish Community Council of Victoria, Community Security Group Victoria, Zionism Victoria, Rabbinical Council of Victoria, Jewish Museum of Australia and Australia Israel & Jewish Affairs Council.
- LEAH heard from Victoria Police and raised ongoing fears for the safety and wellbeing of Jewish Victorians. The group also discussed the importance of fostering community strengths and harnessing community resilience.
- A key action from this meeting is to share LEAH discussions and what is being done by government and police with the community.

Key updates

Update	Details
Anti-Hate Taskforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On 7 July 2025 the Premier announced the establishment of a new Anti-Hate Taskforce to coordinate efforts to address hate.• The Taskforce met on 8 July 2025 and heard from Jewish leaders and the Victoria Police Chief Commissioner on readiness to implement criminal components of the <i>Justice Legislation Amendment (Anti-Vilification and Social Cohesion) Act 2025</i>.• The Taskforce will meet regularly and consist initially of the Premier, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Police,

Victoria Police and the Lord Mayor of Melbourne – with membership to expand over time.

- See www.premier.vic.gov.au/anti-hate-taskforce-just-one-part-our-action-plan

Stronger anti-vilification laws will soon come into force

- New anti-vilification laws passed in April 2025. The laws will better protect Victorians from vilification by:
 - improving how serious vilification criminal offences operate, including by introducing 2 offences with lower thresholds and higher maximum penalties, and
 - improving how civil protections operate, including by introducing a new harm-based protection.
- The criminal offences in the Act are due to commence on 20 September 2025, and the civil protections on 30 June 2026.
- Vilification is more commonly known as hate speech but could also be a broader range of acts or behaviour.
- See www.premier.vic.gov.au/protecting-more-victorians-hate

Protest reforms

- On 8 July 2025, the Premier announced that a number of ‘tough new laws’ targeted at ‘stamping out extreme, dangerous and radical public demonstrations’ would be introduced into Parliament as soon as possible.

Adass Israel synagogue arson attack – 6 December 2024

- On 30 July 2025, the Victorian Joint Counter Terrorism Team (JCTT) arrested a 21-year-old Werribee man who is alleged to be one of the three individuals who broke into the Adass Israel Synagogue and set a fire on 6 December 2024.
- Police are investigating whether offshore criminals may have worked with Victorian associates.
- The JCTT charged another person on 16 July 2025 for allegedly stealing a communal crime car, which is alleged to have been used to drive to the synagogue.
- The JCTT comprises of Victoria Police, the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.
- See www.police.vic.gov.au/victorian-jctt-charge-man-over-alleged-role-melbourne-synagogue-arson-attack.

Israeli restaurant (Miznon) protest violence – 4 July 2025

- Victoria Police has identified several offenders related to the incident. Three individuals are facing charges of assault, affray, riotous behaviour and criminal damage.

East Melbourne synagogue arson attack – 4 July 2025

- Victoria Police’s Counter Terrorism Security Investigation Unit arrested and charged a 34-year-old New South Wales man, Angelo Loras, with arson, property damage, and reckless conduct endangering life. Investigations are ongoing.

Lovitt Technologies Australia – 5 July 2025

- The JCTT is investigating this matter.
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