



He Whenua Taurikura

New Zealand's Hui on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

NATIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE WORKSHOP SUMMARY

15–16 June 2021

Christchurch Town Hall

Ōtautahi, Christchurch

Hui Background

He Whenua Taurikura 2021 was New Zealand's first hui on countering terrorism and violent extremism.

The name 'He Whenua Taurikura' means 'a country at peace'. The name was presented to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission). We are grateful to the Commission for this name, which encapsulates the aim of the hui.

He Whenua Taurikura responds to Recommendation 16 of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the terrorist attack on Christchurch masjidain: *that the Government... host an annual hui, to bring together relevant central and local government agencies, communities, civil society, the private sector and researchers to create opportunities to build relationships and share understanding of countering violent extremism and terrorism.*

The goals of the hui were to promote public conversation, understanding and research on radicalisation; look at how to challenge hate-motivated extremist ideologies; and cover priorities to address New Zealand's terrorism and violent extremism issues.

Over 340 people attended He Whenua Taurikura 2021 in person. Approximately one third of attendees were from academia, one third were from communities and civil society, and one third were representatives of central and local government. We thank all of those who took the time to attend the hui, and contribute their expertise and lived experiences, with the aim of contributing to a country at peace.

A welcome reception was held for all attendees on 14 June, with a mihi whakatau led by Ngāi Tūāhuriri (Ngāi Tahu) and words of welcome from the Honourable Lianne Dalziel, Mayor of Christchurch, and Professor Cheryl de la Rey, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canterbury. This was followed by the two full days of the hui sessions on 15 and 16 June.

Videos of the sessions were made publicly available live and after the event for those who were unable to attend.

DPMC was the overall lead for the hui, supported by the Visits and Ceremonial Office (VCO) of the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) as the delivery lead.

He Whenua Taurikura will be an annual hui, to be held in future years at a variety of venues across Aotearoa New Zealand.

This workshop summary has been produced by DPMC based on notes taken during the sessions. This record of the session is not intended to fully capture all discussions and statements made by participants.

All statements reflect discussions during the workshop or themes that arose from these, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the New Zealand government or any other organisation.



**DEPARTMENT OF THE
PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET**
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA



National Centre of Excellence Workshop

For the afternoon of the second day of the He Whenua Taurikura hui, participants were able to select between two workshops:

- The first was a scenario-based walk-through exercise on violent extremism in New Zealand and actions that sit with different parties.
- The second was a session on the objectives, operating model, and priorities for the National Centre of Excellence for preventing and countering violent extremism.

This document provides a summary of the workshop on the National Centre of Excellence for preventing and countering violent extremism.

Workshop Background and Purpose

A National Centre of Excellence is being established to bring together research organisations, civil society organisations and government to research preventing and countering violent extremism, with a focus on understanding diversity and promoting social cohesion. This will help inform public discussion and guide the work of policy agencies across government.

The purpose of the workshop was to provide an opportunity for academic, private sector, and civil society organisation researchers and experts to come together to discuss options for the vision, operating model, and role of this national centre. Approximately 110 He Whenua Taurikura hui participants attended the workshop



The objectives of this session were to:

- Discuss the vision and mission of the National Centre of Excellence;
- Identify the goals and range of outputs of the Centre;
- Explore options for the operating model of the Centre; and
- Discuss priority areas of activity for the 2021/22 financial year.



The first part of the workshop focused on discussing the Centre's objectives, deliverables and operating model. The second session looked at what the Centre's work programme and priorities should be for the 2021-22 year. The conversation was rich and free flowing. The following provides a high-level summary capturing some of the key points from the afternoon's discussion.

Session 1: Centre Objectives, Deliverables and Operating Model

A. Centre Objectives: What do we want to achieve? What are the priority goals for year one?

Workshop participants felt that the Centre should:

- Embrace diversity of thought and encourage a broad and pluralistic agenda
- Be grounded in Te Tiriti and Te Ao Māori approaches
- Strive for research excellence and better-informed policy
- Be welcoming of community members with diverse views and experiences and offer tools to enable community-led research
- Have some independence from government

In addition to the draft objectives presented to workshop participants, several attendees suggested that the objectives might include:

- Supporting public dialogue and increasing public understanding of preventing and countering violent extremism
- Providing mechanisms for two-way engagement with communities and civil society, including for input to research and policy development
- Generating research to understand, analyse, and develop practical recommendations for addressing violent extremism
- Creating a New Zealand research base and developing policy solutions for New Zealand problems
- Growing a more extensive and diverse range of researchers working specifically on these issues
- Developing our own Te Tiriti and Te Ao Māori approach to countering terrorism and violent extremism, with human rights and tikanga at its heart
- Creating international best practice in preventing and countering violent extremism



B. Centre Deliverables: What outputs will help us meet our objectives? Where should we place most of our effort?

Workshop participants offered a variety of suggestions for key Centre deliverables, including:

- Delivering a working definition of the Centre's scope and area of focus:
 - Defining the purpose of the Centre
 - Defining what is in and out of scope in terms of the Centre's core research and policy activities (including what is and isn't meant by "violent extremism")
- Completing a 'mapping exercise' to better understand the environment:
 - What research gaps exist? What don't we know?
 - What are the highest priority policy gaps, and what research could be undertaken to support them?
 - What relevant research has been done/is planned/is already funded?
 - Where can we leverage existing research, work programmes and community engagement?
- Creating an evidence base of preventing and countering violent extremism data and information:
 - Incorporating information/data from pre-existing international work and studies to inform near, medium and long-term horizons
 - Enabling access to (and supporting the collection of) New Zealand-specific data for research and analysis
- Translating academic and research outputs quickly for public and policy practitioner consumption
- Bringing together academia, government, and civil society to collectively research and work on issues
- Building the cultural competency of the research community
- Undertaking meta-analyses of factors and triggers leading to terrorism and violent extremism
- Establishing clear, specific goals for the Centre and a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure success
- Creating a database of existing research and scholars to help people connect



C. Centre Operating Model: How should the centre be run?

Participants had a range of views on the Centre's operating model. Suggestions included that the Centre:

- Be a hybrid model (mix of physical and virtual) which includes various universities and research centres, with funding for permanent staff including a Director and administrative support
- Have transparent governance arrangements that reflect New Zealand communities (including civil society, academia, and government) and are grounded in a Te Tiriti and Te Ao Māori approach
- Include participants from a range of organisations outside academia, including civil society organisations and government agencies
- Leverage existing and (where necessary) build relationships with New Zealand universities and research institutes, relevant government ministries and agencies, and with civil society organisations and communities.
- Focus on a variety of activities, including:
 - post-doctoral scholarships
 - podcasts
 - blogs
 - open-access journal
 - seminars/webinars
 - long and short-form research papers
 - secondments
 - annual hui
 - community forums
 - academic policy-focused research
 - community-led research

D. Other comments

Additional comments offered by participants in the first session included:

- A need to think carefully about how research carried out by the Centre will include and give back to the communities that are impacted by terrorism and violent extremism issues
- An emphasis on ensuring that there are viable, long term funding streams with larger allocations (from government and non-government sources)
- A need to overcome the knowledge transfer gap and to find ways for research findings to inform public awareness and government policy making
- Clarity around the processes through which research will interact with and inform policy



Session 2: Centre of Excellence Work Programme 2021-22

E. Overarching Research Themes

Participants offered a range of themes to guide the Centre's research activities in the 2021-22 year. These included:

- A focus on prevention (versus countering) terrorism and violent extremism
- Undertaking a mapping exercise to determine:
 - What research already exists
 - The range of methodologies and approaches
 - What strategies have been proven effective
 - What is the dominant narrative (and what is missing)?
- Understanding emerging trends in terrorism and how international trends influence New Zealand
- Understanding Te Tiriti and Te Ao Māori-led approaches to preventing and countering violent extremism

F. Sub-themes

Within these broad themes, workshop participants suggested the following sub-themes:

- Understanding pathways to radicalisation:
 - Evidence-based research to understand different pathways and why people may be drawn into violent extremism
 - Variables to consider include:
 - 'Fast-acting' and 'slow-burning' factors that could lead to violent extremism
 - Wellbeing
 - Social inequality
 - Mental health
 - Education
 - Human security approaches
- An empirical review of the effectiveness of prevention measures. This would include:
 - Research to assess the effectiveness of international prevention measures to inform a review of New Zealand's counter-terrorism policy and legislation
 - A review of the effectiveness of international disengagement, de-radicalisation and reintegration programmes (again with an eye to informing New Zealand policy approaches)
 - Considering how to embed Te Ao Māori and restorative justice approaches into New Zealand's counter-terrorism measures
- Understanding and tackling white identity extremism views and narratives
- Creating a better understanding of hate incidents in New Zealand
- Understanding the role of mis-/disinformation in preventing and countering violent extremism



G. Centre Priority Activities 2021-22: What should we do in 2021-22 to promote work on, and attract attention to, these themes?

Some of the Centre activities participants suggested included:

- Determining the scope of the Centre's activities
- Creating a framing for the Centre (vision, purpose, etc) based on Te Tiriti and Te Ao Māori
- Data collection and analysis:
 - Producing/collating a centralised data and information base on preventing and countering violent extremism
 - Data collection on hate incidents
 - Establishing a local database of expertise
 - Ensuring this information is accessible to researchers and the public
- Identifying and establishing a variety of channels for disseminating information to different audiences (government and communities). Some options include:
 - Holding seminars, panels and workshops to build a bridge between academia and the public
 - Creating a website for information dissemination as well as promoting collaboration and collective inputs
 - Establishing a working paper series
 - Creating a podcast and/or blogs
 - Establishing an open source journal or utilising an existing multi-disciplinary journal
- Defining indicators of success for the Centre's objectives
- Funding MA and PhD scholarships
- Providing opportunities for researchers to speak to communities about their research and findings
- Developing principles and an ethical code for Centre researchers
- Providing capability and skills training for the media
- Creating tools for education in schools
- Training with organisations (including police and intelligence agencies) on breaking down barriers to reporting hate incidents as well as on the use of terminology

DPMC would like to thank all participants for their participation in this design workshop. We will be in contact with those attendees who expressed interest in remaining engaged on this programme of work.

