



3 June 2022

Tēnā koutou and welcome to the sixth edition of Kāpuia Pānui for 2022.

Agency updates on the RCOI Response Work Programme

1. Centre of Excellence co-directors and masters scholarships

The Prime Minister and Minister Little today made announcements on **He Whenua Taurikura is New Zealand's National Centre of Research Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism**. He Whenua Taurikura translates to 'a country at peace'. The Centre has been established in response to recommendation 14 of the Royal Commission of Inquiry report into the terrorist attack on Christchurch masjidain to "establish a programme to fund independent New Zealand-specific research on the causes of, and measures to prevent, violent extremism and terrorism". It will bring together research organisations and institutes, civil society organisations, and government to research preventing and countering violent extremism, with a focus on understanding diversity and promoting social cohesion. Its work will inform public discussion on preventing and countering violent extremism and will guide policy work across government. Hosted by Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Wellington. The Centre will have a very specific Aotearoa New Zealand focus and along with countering terrorism and violent extremism, will focus on wider understanding of diversity and promoting social cohesion.

He Whenua Taurikura is led by Co-Directors Professor Joanna Kidman and Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley:

- Professor Joanna Kidman - Professor of Māori Education, Victoria University of Wellington (VUW). Joanna is a sociologist with affiliations to Ngāti Maniapoto and Ngāti Raukawa. Her work spans indigenous sociology, Māori youth, higher education, decolonisation studies and comparative education. Joanna will be appointed on a three-year term.
- Distinguished Professor Emeritus Paul Spoonley – An Honorary Research Associate, Massey University, until 2019 Paul was the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Massey University. He retired from the university in April 2021. He has researched and written on social cohesion and diversity, racism, Pākehā identity, demographic change, the far

right, white supremacy and anti-semitism, immigration policy and settlement. Paul will be appointed as an interim Co-Director for up to a year, to work alongside Joanna in establishing the Centre. A longer-term Co-Director will be sought during this period.

Eleven Master's Scholarship Recipients 2021/22 were also announced. Scholarships were being offered of at least \$15,000 each to master's students researching ways of countering and preventing terrorism, including issues like social cohesion and social equality.

Information about He Whenua Taurikura and the scholarship recipients can be found <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/political/468441/centre-of-excellence-for-countering-violent-extremism-launched> and [He Whenua Taurikura | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet \(DPMC\)](#).

Other information

2. Police pick Objective to build firearms registry

New Zealand Police have approved a new end-to-end regulation of the registration and licensing for firearms. This includes the establishment of a new Arms Information System to support the effective regulation of New Zealand's licensed firearms community (approximately 250,000 licence holders). The Arms Information System will be a secure digital platform that will manage the information related to arms (firearms, parts, ammunition and other restricted weapons), firearms licensing, and any activities associated with the possession and use of firearms. It is intended to give Police a clear picture of all firearms transactions in New Zealand and, over time, of all the legally owned firearms in New Zealand.

NZ Police have selected Australian company Objective Corporation to develop the firearms registry. You can read Objective's full media release here: [Objective selected for New Zealand Police firearms legislative reform | Objective Corporation](#)

Previously when announcing that the **firearms registry** will be set up from June 2023, the Minister of Police stated that the register will: *"track how many firearms are in legal circulation, who holds them, who is selling them, and who is buying them. Once it's established every licence holder will need to keep updating the registry as they buy or sell guns. They will have just over five years to register all their guns. The registry allows us to link firearms to licence holders, return stolen firearms to the legitimate owner, and hold licence holders to account for the safe storage and possession of firearms."*

3. Operation Deans Awards

On 24 May, Police began honouring staff, Muslim community members, civilians and other organisations involved in the response to the 2019 Christchurch terror attacks through its Operation Deans Awards.

A private ceremony attended by the Police Commissioner Andrew Coster, Police Minister Hon Poto Williams, Canterbury District Commander Superintendent John Price, Christchurch Mayor Lianne Dalziel, Ngāi Tahu and senior members of the Muslim community was held to honour those who displayed exceptional courage, skill, leadership and humanity on March 15 as well as the weeks and months that followed.

Those honoured at the ceremony included Al Noor Mosque Imam and Kāpuia member Gamal Fouda.

4. Prime Minister's Harvard commencement speech

On 27 May, the Prime Minister gave a keynote address at Harvard University. The PM spoke about March 15 and stated that the RCOI found that the terrorist was radicalised online through mis/disinformation. She also talked about the work of the Christchurch Call Initiative in bringing together governments, civil society and tech companies to find solutions to the issues of violent extremism online. The PM called for social media companies and online providers to uphold their basic terms of service and recognise the role they play in shaping the online environment and the need for a shared approach to responsible algorithms to stop people being radicalised. You can read her full speech by clicking this [link](#).

In the community

7. Dates of significance

- Monday 20 June will mark World Refugee Day and New Zealand Volunteer week.
- Friday 24 June – New Zealand will celebrate Matariki (Māori New Year) with a public holiday for the first time this year.

Noho ora mai

The Kāpuia Secretariat