

**Submission
No 60**

MEASURES TO PROHIBIT SLOGANS THAT INCITE HATRED

Organisation: Community Industry Group

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January 2026



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Community Industry Group acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land, and their Elders past, present and future. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture, the world's oldest living culture, and the contribution they make to the life of this region and our country. We acknowledge that we live and work on Aboriginal land and recognise the strength, resilience and capacity of Aboriginal people.

Executive Summary

As the peak body for not-for-profit community services across southern NSW, Community Industry Group (CI Group) is concerned about social harmony and community cohesion in NSW and is therefore pleased to present this submission in response to the inquiry into “Measures to prohibit slogans that incite hatred”.

CI Group's position is that social harmony and community cohesion will not be advanced through the banning of phrases and slogans. We perceive that the banning of specific slogans such as “globalise the intifada” will create a new and heavy burden for Government as community members report more and more phrases which they find affronting.

Freedom of speech is one of the foundational principles of democratic society. By banning individual phrases or words, we not only risk descending into an Orwellian type of ‘newspeak’, but may also condemn Government to a frustrating ‘whack-a-mole’ situation where new phrases or slogans constantly arise and need to be dealt with as quickly as old ones are banned.

Community Industry Group recognises the need to protect communities from hatred, intimidation and violence. Notwithstanding the outcome of the current [Review of criminal law protections against the incitement of hatred](#) which is still to release its report, existing laws provide the community with suitable protections against hate speech and incitement of violence.

CI Group strongly recommends that the NSW Government take a more proactive community development approach to build community cohesion and connectivity, rather than a punitive censorship approach. This includes providing funding for community education programs and grassroots community building initiatives.

CI Group makes the following recommendations

1. Avoid a knee-jerk reaction and await the imminent outcome of the current review by the Honourable John Sackar AM KC which is examining whether current laws adequately protect vulnerable people and groups from hate speech.
2. Adopt a Community Development approach to community safety.
3. Invest in local, place-based community development initiatives through a recurrent funding programs targeted to not-for-profit organisations which are embedded in their community.
4. Fund community organisations which know, and are known by, their local communities to deliver activities which build empowered, inclusive and connected communities.
5. Augment community development initiatives by raising awareness through positive state-wide campaigns.

About Community Industry Group

Community Industry Group is the peak body for not-for-profit community/human service providers across southern NSW. For more than 30 years, CI Group has taken a leadership role in advocating for inclusive, evidence-based and community-informed approaches to service delivery. We support community organisations, promote expertise and innovation in community development, foster industry development and advocate for social justice.

Our work is driven by a commitment to social justice and to ensuring positive outcomes for the human services sector and for local communities. Our members include a wide range of providers delivering homelessness supports, family and domestic violence services, child and family supports, youth services, aged care, disability services and generalist community centres.

Response

Community Industry Group recognises the need to protect communities from hatred, intimidation and violence. However, we recognise that existing laws already provide the community with suitable protections against hate speech and incitement of violence.

Pursuing a strategy of singling out specific phrases or slogans such as "globalise the intifada" will ultimately become unproductive. Slogans and phrases can and will multiply more rapidly than a legislative response will ever be able to keep pace with. The list of banned phrases will grow exponentially, and it will be highly impractical from a law enforcement perspective to have an ever-increasing list of slogans that are prohibited in NSW.

Good leadership can draw attention to slogans of concern, and encourage the community not to use them. This has been evidenced by the NSW Premier who has recently drawn attention to concerns with the phrase "globalise the intifada". Through his leadership, this is now recognised as a phrase that may lead to incitement of hatred and may threaten community safety, and its use has thus been discouraged.

CI Group recommends this type of positive and proactive approach from people in leadership roles which, combined with community development activities to build community cohesion and inclusion, will effectively inform the community and empower community members to curb the use of such phrases.

Suitability of existing laws and offences

Existing laws are already in place to provide the community with suitable protections against hate speech and incitement of violence.

The NSW system operates now with both civil remedies (through the Anti-Discrimination Act) and criminal penalties (through the Crimes Act), with the criminal provisions reserved for serious forms of conduct involving threats, violence, or intentional incitement to hatred that causes fear for safety.

We recommend awaiting the imminent outcome of the current review being conducted by former NSW Supreme Court Justice, the Honourable John Sackar AM KC, to examine whether current laws

adequately protect vulnerable people and groups from hate speech. The report was due to be received by NSW Attorney General Michael Daley November 2025, and should negate the need for rushed measures.

Adopt a Community Development approach to community safety

Community Industry Group recommends that the priority currently is to focus on investment in community development activities that support greater social cohesion, reduce the likelihood of and fear of violence and work to effectively protect citizens and communities from hatred, intimidation and violence.

A top-down punitive approach will not work, Community cohesion, understanding, and inclusivity can only be built through grass-roots initiatives which are flexible and responsive to the needs of individual communities. A community development approach can achieve this.

NSW Government investment in community development has reduced over the past several decades, resulting in the breakdown of social cohesion and the isolation of many sections of the community.

In the past, the NSW Government funded community development and community strengthening activities through the Community Services Grants Program (CSGP), later known as Community Builders. These were recurrent grants to local government and not-for-profit organisations including Neighbourhood and Community Centres which delivered generalist community development activities to create stronger, more connected and inclusive communities.

In addition, Government provided opportunity for non-recurrent funding grants which supported one-off activities, pilot programs, research, and many other valuable community development opportunities.

Over the years, previous providers of the Community Builders recurrent program were transitioned into the Targeted Early Intervention Program (TEIP) and became focused on specific community cohorts. One-off grants ceased to be made available under Community Builders.

Currently, the NSW Government offers time-limited grants through the Community Building Partnership program, but this is no longer targeted to community development activities but to infrastructure and equipment.

CI Group strongly recommends the NSW Government invests in local, place-based community development initiatives with a recurrent funding program targeted to not-for-profit organisations which are place-based and embedded in their community. This will enable community organisations which know, and are known by, their local communities to deliver activities which build empowered, inclusive and connected communities.

This positive approach will reduce hate speech and the use of slogans which incite hatred by building greater understanding of cultural, social and individual differences, and encouraging community cohesion.

State-wide campaigns and awareness

Government can augment community development initiatives by raising awareness through positive state-wide campaigns. For example:

- Build a sense of inclusion and pride in diversity with multi-platform public education campaigns featuring diverse NSW voices across TV, radio, social media, and public transit.
- Partner with major sporting codes (NRL, AFL, Cricket, SLSC, Netball etc) on public campaigns. Given their reach in NSW they could deliver anti-racism messaging at matches, promote player ambassadors etc.
- Resources for schools on NSW's multicultural history and the contributions of migrant communities have made to the state.
- Training programs for frontline workers (e.g. retail, hospitality, transport) on how to respond to racial harassment and how to support victims.

Community safety and response mechanisms

In addition to the current laws and police responses, implement a range of community safety and response initiatives such as

- Resources for communities on how to respond to racial harassment, report racial incidents and support victims. The resources must be available in a range of community languages.
- Skilled rapid response teams that can deploy to areas experiencing racial tension, providing mediation and support rather than taking punitive action.
- Safe reporting apps or hotlines specifically for racial abuse, connected to support services.
- Bystander intervention training programs.

Youth-focused initiatives

Stop racism and hatred before it starts with initiatives aimed at young people such as:

- School exchange programs between schools with different demographic profiles (e.g. supported visits between different religious schools).
- Youth leadership programs bringing together young people from across NSW's diverse communities.
- Sports and arts programs intentionally and supportively mixing participants from different backgrounds.
- Digital literacy programs helping young people counter online hate and build cross-cultural connections online.

Institutional and structural approaches

- Free anti-racism training resources for the community. Such training could be mandated for certain professions (e.g. teachers, police, healthcare workers, public servants).
- Community reference groups advising government on policies affecting specific communities.
- Independent oversight mechanisms for investigating racial discrimination complaints.
- Support for community-led safety initiatives rather than top-down approaches.

Healing and resilience programs

- Culturally appropriate mental health support services for individuals and communities experiencing racial vilification and trauma.
- Community healing circles and restorative justice programs for perpetrators of hate-speech crimes.
- Safe spaces in libraries, community centres, and cultural organizations.
- Peer support networks connecting people who've experienced racial violence.

Media and narrative change

- Media partnerships promoting positive narratives about diversity to counteract the impact of news stories about hate speech and racially motivated violence.
- Support for diverse voices in NSW media and creative industries.
- Fact-checking initiatives to combat racial misinformation.
- Training for journalists on responsible reporting about racial issues and diverse communities.

Economic inclusion

- Programs supporting businesses owned by people from marginalized racial backgrounds.
- Employment pathways programs connecting diverse job seekers with opportunities.
- Supplier diversity initiatives in government procurement.

Concluding Remarks

Community Industry Group strongly recommend against going down the rabbit hole of identifying slogans and phrases for prohibition that may incite hatred.

A far better investment of state resources at this time is to focus all attention on building community cohesion through some or all the approaches presented above. This will protect communities from hatred, intimidation and violence and will support social harmony and community cohesion.

Community Industry Group would welcome the opportunity to address the Committee on Law and Safety on this issue.

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