

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

ANIC President's Report 2024-2025:

Imam Shadi Alsuleiman

All praise is due to Allah, and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah.

Assalamu Alaikom Wa Rahmatu Allahe Barakatuh,,

The 2024–2025 year was one of both profound challenges and significant progress for ANIC and the Australian Muslim community. Amid the ongoing genocide in Gaza and a rise in Islamophobia, ANIC has worked tirelessly to preserve the Islamic identity and integrity of Muslims, advocate for justice, protect religious freedoms, and support Muslim communities across Australia.

Key achievements this year include the formal establishment of the Council of Imams Tasmania, completing ANIC's national representation across all states and territories, and the launch of vital initiatives such as the Action Against Islamophobia programme, expanded Islamic education services (AIES), and strengthened Islamic finance and halal certification structures.

We enhanced ANIC's governance by adopting new financial and recruitment policies, reinforcing transparency and accountability at every level. Engagement with government, media, and faith groups amplified our collective voice, while our social media presence grew beyond 80,000 followers, ensuring timely communication with the community.

Looking ahead, ANIC remains committed to uniting Imams, community leaders and Islamic organisations nationwide, advocating for the rights of Australian Muslims, empowering the next generation through education and mentorship, and building sustainable institutions that will preserve the Islamic identity for generations to come.





Key Highlights 2024–2025

Unity & Leadership

At our national meeting, we reminded ourselves that regardless of whether we hold national or state roles, we are one organisation and one community. This spirit of unity guided our work. The formal establishment of the Council of Imams Tasmania was a milestone; having ANIC Councils in all states gives a voice to Imams from all states and reflects the inclusive nature of ANIC.

Our engagement extended beyond our own community. Through the Australian Religious and Faith Communities Network, we partnered with leaders of other faiths to advocate for religious freedom and values-based education. Internationally, we strengthened ties with scholars and councils through the Global Imams and Scholars Council (GISC), and established partnerships and MOUs with prominent Islamic organisations in Muslim countries, fostering the exchange of experiences and mutual learning.

Advocacy & Representation

Advocating Justice for Palestine

ANIC persistently advocates against the genocide and occupation in Palestine by the Israeli occupying regime. We have consistently called for urgent sanctions, increased humanitarian aid, and for Australia to officially recognise the atrocities in Gaza as genocide, alongside the overdue recognition of the State of Palestine. Our efforts have ensured that the Palestinian cause remains prominent in public discourse and have urged Australia to adopt a principled and just stance.

Combating Islamophobia, anti-Muslim hate and Hate Speech

We continued to combat Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate through the **Action Against Islamophobia (AAI)** initiative. Funding from Multicultural NSW supports education and awareness projects, helping victims find confidential support and referrals. We also supported the newly appointed Islamophobia Envoy's report, which offers targeted recommendations to tackle anti-Muslim hate across Australia. In addition, we advocated for and secured \$27 million in government funding for the Security Uplifts for Muslim Communities in Australia Program, ensuring greater protection and safety for our community.

Engagement with Government and Media

ANIC engaged directly with political leaders, government departments, and media organisations to promote fair reporting and push for policies that protect religious freedoms. Our submissions argued for religion to be recognised as a protected attribute in anti-discrimination laws and for stronger hate-speech protections. We voiced concerns about biased media coverage and advocated for journalists to respect Islamic values.





Community Building & Programmes

Education and Scripture Programs

Australian Islamic Education Services (AIES) expanded scripture teaching in public schools and trained more volunteers. New programmes in the ACT, Queensland and Western Australia, as well as the introduction of Juma'a prayers in schools, underscore our commitment to Islamic education.

Women's Advisory Council (AWAC)

ANIC's Women's Advisory Council brought together 22 prominent Muslim women from across the country, providing a formal platform to discuss issues facing Muslim women. Their first morning tea hosted over 40 community leaders, and the Council is drafting a document on the foundations of a strong Muslim family in Australia.

ANIC Halal Authority and Islamic Finance

- **ANIC Halal Authority:** Our Halal Authority continued to professionalise and expand, gaining credibility in local and international markets. We engaged with regulators and industry players to ensure high standards and transparency.
- **ANIC Islamic Finance Advisory (AIFA):** AIFA has approved multiple Shariah-compliant financial products and appointed a qualified Shariah adviser to oversee approvals, supporting Muslims seeking ethical financial solutions.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

In response to the trauma caused by the genocide in Gaza and local hate incidents, we hosted mental health workshops and partnered with experts to provide support. We emphasised that spiritual well-being must be paired with mental health care.

Action Against Islamophobia (AAI)

AAI local forums in Sydney, Queensland, and Melbourne offered safe spaces for community members to share experiences and receive guidance. Feedback from these sessions continues to shape AAI's approach, ensuring our responses are attuned to community needs.

Preservation of Islamic Identity

Preserving the mainstream understanding of Islam and the Islamic identity is central to ANIC's mission. Our vision is not only to nurture a vibrant Muslim community today, but to safeguard Islam and Muslims for generations to come. This long-term commitment shapes the initiatives we undertake:

- **Youth and Identity:** The Preservation of the Islamic Identity Youth Forum, hosted by the Council of Imams NSW, provided young Muslims with a rational, relevant platform to strengthen their faith and confidence. By engaging youth aged 14–25, we prepare the next generation to carry Islam forward with knowledge and pride. This project is growing across the country.





- **Ramadan and Eid Unity:** We initiated a three-phase programme to unify Imams on determining the start and end of Ramadan and the Eid festivals. The goal is to narrow differences and foster respectful understanding. Ensuring consistent observance across communities will help future generations feel part of a unified Ummah.
- **Ideal Muslim Family:** The Women's Advisory Council is drafting a document outlining the characteristics of an ideal Muslim family in Australia. This document emphasises Islamic values, mutual respect, and community responsibility and aims to guide families across generations in living a balanced Islamic lifestyle.
- **Islamic Education:** Through AIES, we increased scripture programmes and expanded to more states, ensuring our children understand Islam's fundamentals from a young age. Juma'a prayer and Islamic classes in public schools reinforce identity in a supportive environment.
- **Institutional Strength:** We are building resilient institutions, such as the Muslim Community Fund, ANIC Charity Trust, and AIFA, that will support Islamic education, legal advocacy, and ethical finance for future generations.
- **Advocacy against Islamophobia:** Standing up against hate crimes and discrimination not only protects the community but also affirms our right to practice Islam openly and proudly. This creates a safer, more inclusive environment for Muslims who will come after us.

Strategic Growth and Governance

ANIC focused on strengthening its governance framework to ensure transparency, accountability, and effective decision-making within the Executive Committee. Over the past year, several key policies were developed and formally adopted by the ANIC Executive Committee. These include new financial policies, a draft Recruitment and Employment Policy, and other governance documents designed to guide operations and strengthen organisational integrity. Clear processes were also established to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of Safety & Security Grants, while maintaining strict compliance with regulatory requirements. These initiatives reinforce ANIC's commitment to strong governance, sustainable growth, and safeguarding community trust through clear policies and well-defined procedures.

A Year of Engagement Across Australia

Over the past year, I travelled to every state in Australia to deepen relationships and understand the unique needs of our communities. These visits enabled me to meet Imams and community leaders firsthand, listen to their challenges, and build bridges of cooperation between ANIC and local Muslim communities. By engaging directly at mosques, Islamic centres, and community meetings, we strengthened partnerships, fostered unity, and aligned our efforts with the aspirations of Muslims across the country.

Future Vision and Conclusion

Our vision is to ensure that **Islam thrives in Australia for generations to come**. We strive to preserve mainstream understanding of Islam and the Islamic identity, represent the interests of





Australian Muslims, and unite our leaders under one banner.

Priorities for the coming year include:

1. **Strengthening unity** among Imams, community leaders and Islamic organisations across Australia.
2. **Ensuring the preservation of Islamic identity** through education, family guidance, consensus on religious observances, and environmental and ethical leadership.
3. **Continuing robust advocacy** on international and domestic issues affecting Muslims.
4. **Expanding youth-focused programmes** and mentorship initiatives, preparing the next generation to lead.
5. **Developing resources** to counter digital Islamophobia and promote safe online spaces.
6. **Maintaining transparency** and strengthening governance, policies and procedures so that ANIC remains a trusted institution.
7. **To address shared concerns, build stronger partnerships with other faith communities, global networks, and like-minded International Islamic organisations.**
8. **Investing in long-term institutions and leadership programmes that will preserve our faith and community for decades to come.**

Acknowledgements and Gratitude

I express my sincere gratitude to:

- **The ANIC Executive Committee**, whose collaboration and trust made our achievements possible.
- **State Imams Councils and member Imams**, for their dedication and service.
- **The ANIC Advisory Committee**, whose tireless volunteer efforts provide invaluable guidance and expertise across our programmes. Your advice has been instrumental in shaping ANIC's strategic direction.
- **Our volunteers and partner organisations** for their ongoing support.
- **Community leaders, Imams, and scholars** in every state, who graciously hosted me during my travels and shared their perspectives to strengthen our collective work.

May Allah reward your efforts, guide us to serve with sincerity and wisdom, and continue to unite us in serving Islam and the Australian Muslim community.

Imam Shadi Alsuleiman

President

Australian National Imams Council

Date: 12 October 2025

