

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

المجلس الإسلامي لأستراليا
THE ISLAMIC COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Information Update for WA Muslim Community.

18th September 2013

Criminal Investigation (Identifying People) Amendment Bill 2013

I am pleased to report that a meeting was held today at State Parliament regarding amendments to the proposed Identifying People Bill.

The meeting was attended by:

- Government Parliamentarians Hon Liz Behjat (MLC)
- Hon Peter Katsambanis (MLC).
- Simon Matthew (Police Legislation Section)
- Gary Hamley (Police Minister's Department)
- Phillipa Perry (Police Minister's Department)
- Dr Rateb Jneid, (Islamic Council WA Inc.,
- Br Umar Abdullah, (Al Hidayah School); and
- Br Aziz Khan (Muslim Legal Network Inc.[WA])

Today's consultation was a follow up to last week's high level Muslim and Sikh delegates' meeting of 10th September attended by Minister of Police Hon Liz Harvey (MLA) and Assistant Commissioner of Police Cmdr Chris Dawson.

On the 10 September both communities presented to the State government its fervent opposition to the Bill's wording of: "Head" and "Headwear" in the original draft which was from a religious stand point highly controversial for our members who wear a religious headdress. Our recommendation to the government is to change the words: "Headwear" to "Face covering" and change word "Head" to "Face". The Government agreed last week to this change because the unamended Bill presented potential challenges and could have undermined the intent of the crime investigation legislation.

Today the government presented us a brief re-draft of the proposed legislation that rewords the contentious words just as our religious leaders and members of the community requested. The changes have been made to the Parliamentary Notice Paper so the matter will now come for debate in the next sitting of Parliament in October. It is likely the Bill will be passed as law. We were assured that Police training will correspond with this legislative change with policy guidelines that will respect personal dignity and religious sensitivities of our community.

Insha-Allah, to draw our community's attention an information session will be organised by Islamic Council of WA with WA Police Service when the new law becomes operational.

I sincerely thank the Muslim public, our community elders, Imams, advocates and the State Government for its common sense approach in resolving this vital matter of concern.

Wassalam Alaikom

Dr Rateb Jneid
President- Islamic Council of WA

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