

# Developing a Social Cohesion Rubric

*A public method for reading what an inquiry chooses to publish*

**Working transcript** Lawrence Lyons · Claude (Cowork) — 28 August 2026

**First application** Submissions to the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion — a preliminary scan of the published corpus, a reading of the titles authors gave their own documents, and a test of one submission against evidence for and against it

**Corpus** 55 published submissions + 14 exhibit documents + the Interim Report and seven Letters Patent

---

**Why a rubric, and why a public one.** Governments and inquiries publish a fraction of what they receive, and rarely explain how that fraction was chosen. A published set can therefore appear to speak for a public that was never heard, and no reader outside the process can tell the difference. This instrument is being built so that anyone can examine what a published set contains, what it omits, and how its arguments are structured — on a method stated in advance, without needing to trust whoever applies it. Nothing in it is specific to terrorism or to this inquiry; the same instrument should work on any contested public question.

**Note on status.** This is a working transcript, not a finding. The scans described below are machine-derived leads with their confounds stated; the title-genre and pro/con sections were read rather than counted. Nothing here has yet been coded against the rubric, and the sampling caveat applies throughout — the 55 published submissions are roughly 0.3% of the 20,000+ received, and they were selected by the Commission, not sampled. That selection is itself the point: it is exactly the condition the instrument is designed to make legible.

## CLAUDE — PRELIMINARY SCAN

You've got the lot — all 55 published submissions, plus the 14 exhibits and the letters patent. 69 documents, roughly 400,000 words, all extracted to text on your Mac. Four files were duplicate downloads (the "(1)" copies), identical, so I ignored them.

I've mapped every submission to an author and a bloc in `analysis/manifest.csv`, and written the scan to `analysis/PRELIM_SCAN_2026-08-28.md`. Blocs: 20 Jewish communal/Zionist, 7 Jewish dissenting, 8 Muslim/Palestinian, 5 legal, 9 academic, 3 political, 3 unaligned individuals.

**Important:** nothing below is a finding. I have not read a single document end to end. These are machine patterns, and I've put the confound next to each one because most of them will not survive coding.

---

### 1. The naming asymmetry — the strongest signal

Counting how many other named actors each submission mentions: dissenting Jewish submissions average 6.9, Muslim/Palestinian 5.9, Jewish communal 2.6 — and eight of the twenty communal submissions name no other actor at all. The dissenting and Palestinian submissions argue *with* named opponents. Most communal submissions argue *about* a condition.

That maps straight onto your D1. But the communal bloc contains many short personal testimonies, and genre may explain the whole thing. It has to be re-run controlling for length and document type before it means anything.

### 2. The method-critical one: accusation and acknowledgement look identical to a machine

I counted sentences pairing an out-group with harm language, then read samples. The AJA's contain both accusation ("hate preachers... glorify terrorism") and real solidarity (Jewish groups marked the Christchurch anniversary each

year). APAN's contain both accusation and a genuine concession — that Jewish people everywhere are "entitled to live in safety and free from hate."

No keyword can separate those. Item 2.4 has to be human-coded, and the decision rule written down *before* either of us reads, or we'll just recover our own priors and call it data. This is the thing I'd most want to settle before step 2.

### 3. Nobody owns the IHRA fight

It's contested inside every bloc, not between them. Heaviest engagement is the Jewish Council of Australia (127 mentions) and APAN (111) — but the two most critical treatments are Henry Ergas and Robert van Krieken, neither of whom is in the Palestinian bloc. The Law Council mentions it four times and takes no position.

### 4. Three vocabularies, not two — and this is the interesting one

Criminal-law language per 10,000 words: legal bloc 34.9, political 21.1, Jewish communal 7.8, Muslim/Palestinian 5.5, Jewish dissenting 3.0. Free-speech language runs the other way: MP 7.4, legal 7.6, communal 1.3.

The lawyers and politicians reach for criminal law. The advocacy blocs *on both sides* reach for speech and institutions. That cuts clean across the antisemitism/anti-Zionism axis, which makes it the most promising thing in here for a cohesion argument — and it's the one I'd least have predicted.

### 5. Shared reference points

ABC/SBS named in 25 documents, the Antisemitism Envoy in 24, ECAJ 21, the Jewish Council 16, the Human Rights Commission 15. ECAJ and the JCA are the two poles nearly everyone orients to. The Islamophobia Envoy is named 7 times against the Antisemitism Envoy's 24 — worth checking, not asserting.

### 6. The bridging documents can't test the rubric

As I flagged yesterday — they'll score high on D1 and D2 by construction. Keep them as the high-cohesion end of the scale.

---

Two things for the conversation, and I'd rather you decide both than have me pick.

**Scope.** You now have 55, not 10. Coding all of them properly is a large job and it changes the reliability step — six documents double-coded out of 55 is a thinner warrant than six out of ten. Do we hold the line at the ten test documents, or widen?

**The order of operations.** My instinct is that lead 2 has to be resolved first — the 2.4 decision rule agreed and written before either of us opens a document. Everything else is downstream of whether that item can be coded reliably. But that's a call about how much rigour is worth the time, and it's yours.

#### LAWRIE

Thank you Claude, well done. Perhaps there is a clue in titles that authors and co-authors give their submissions, did you notice that aspect?

#### CLAUDE — TITLE GENRE

I hadn't, and it's the better question. Titles are the one thing every author chose deliberately and nobody chose defensively — they're written before the arguing starts. I've read the first page of all 55 and written it up in `analysis/TITLE_GENRE_NOTE.md`.

Four genres, and the distribution is lopsided.

**Procedural** — about 45 of 55. "Submission to the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion." The title names the act, not the argument. Used by nearly everyone on every side: ANIC, the Law Council, the Zionist Council of NSW, the Jewish Council of Australia, Free Palestine Melbourne, Chabad of Bondi, Dreyfus, Rutland.

**Thesis** — five or six. The title states the conclusion before you've read a word. "*Anti-Zionism is antisemitism.*" "*Antisemitism is an Australian problem, not just a Jewish problem.*" "*It is clear what is happening, and action needs to follow.*" "*Not In Our Name: Jewish Australians Speak Out.*" "*Reframing an Ancient Hatred.*"

**Analytic** — exactly four. The title names a *question*. "On the Definition of 'Antisemitism'". "Vagueness, the IHRA Definition and the Concept of Antisemitism". "Legal reasoning regarding the definition of antisemitism". "Groupism, Antisemitism and Citizenship in a Multicultural Democracy".

**Appellative** — a handful. APAN opens with a Mahmoud Darwish poem, *Think of Others*. The ZFA calls its submission "Reflections on the Lived Experience of Leading a Jewish Organisation."

---

Three things fall out of that.

**The four analytic titles are the four most definitionally serious documents in the corpus, and they don't share a political position.** Tapper and his co-authors defend the IHRA definition. Ergas dismantles it. Van Krieken attacks it from the sociology of law. Levey reframes the question altogether. Three of the four are broadly sympathetic to the communal account of antisemitism and still arrive at opposite conclusions about the instrument. If that survives coding it's a direct result for D4: *how* a submission reasons isn't predicted by *which side* it's on.

**Every thesis title comes from an advocacy body or an unaligned individual.** None from an academic, none from a lawyer, none from the interfaith bloc. And they appear on both sides — "Anti-Zionism is antisemitism" and "Not In Our Name" are the identical rhetorical move pointed in opposite directions. That symmetry of form across opposed content is precisely what your paired-quotation display wants.

**On your actual question — co-authors.** The two most-authored documents are Tapper/Harrison/Rosenfeld/Gare/Head, five of them, and Greenslade & Briskman. The five-author document has the most restrained title in the entire corpus. The hypothesis writes itself: a title several people must agree on drifts toward naming a question, because a claim has to be negotiated and a question doesn't. I like it — but *n* is two. It cannot be tested on this corpus, and I'd rather we state it as a hypothesis and leave it than dress it up.

---

One more thing came out of the same read, and it may matter more than the titles.

About a third of submissions open by warranting their right to be heard. Most are inherited ("the child of Holocaust survivors") or positional ("as the Chairman", "as the Member for Caulfield"). But a small group does the opposite — sets the institutional role *aside*:

- Crutchfield KC opens: "*Neither I nor my family is Jewish.*"
- Daniel Aghion KC, President of ECAJ, writes "*in my personal capacity as an Australian Jew.*"
- Yasmine Johnson: "*I am a Jewish student and one of the national coordinators of Students for Palestine.*"

That is your proposition 1 — ascribed role set down, declared identity picked up — appearing in the corpus without anyone having been asked about it. Two of them declare an identity that cuts against their own alignment. It's the closest contact I've found between this material and your framework, and it's also small enough that over-reading it would be the easiest mistake available.

A correction I owe you. I had Ohad Kozminsky in the Jewish communal bloc. He's the Jewish Council of Australia's Community Engagement Director — the dissenting bloc. I took that from an inherited author list rather than from the document. Fixed, but it means every bloc assignment that came from that list rather than from the paper needs the same check before any of this is coded.

#### LAWRIE

I suspected the error and identified a pattern that I find challenging to define; however, let's look at this with a deeper analysis later. I would like you to now consider my submission, Hidden Shield, noting that I am biased in supporting it as the author. I would like you to identify content that would seem to support it and content that would push back against it. Perhaps four pros and cons, in the data, thank you. Take your time.

#### CLAUDE — HIDDEN SHIELD TESTED AGAINST THE CORPUS

I read your submission properly, then went looking. Everything below is anchored to a quotation — written up in full at `analysis/HS_PRO_CON_FROM_CORPUS.md`.

#### Four supports

**1. You are not alone in the corpus.** The Australian Jewish Association's **Recommendation 7 is "Allow Armed Guards at High-Risk Community Events"** — that governments "review whether licensed security personnel protecting events assessed as facing a credible terrorism risk should have access to enhanced protective capabilities, including the ability to carry firearms." Their Recommendation 8 states your thesis almost word for word: governments "should avoid using antisemitic incidents or terrorist attacks as justification for unrelated firearms restrictions... After the Bondi attack, there was a rush to implement tighter firearms laws."

**2. The Commission's own Interim Report establishes your gap.** "NSW law does not permit CSG NSW personnel to carry firearms at events in public places." And Dover Heights Shule "supplemented CSG NSW guards with **unarmed** private security guards." Your counter-terrorism funding claim also checks out against the primary source — the Commission observed the CT proportion "significantly declined across the NIC over the period from 2020 to 2025." Cite the report directly; it's stronger than your paraphrase.

**3. The volunteer form is already proven — in this community, at this attack.** The Interim Report records Hatzolah's volunteer emergency medical unit on site, CSG volunteers, Community Health Support, and volunteer surf lifesavers who "without being tasked or requested" evacuated and triaged. The Commission accepts that "volunteers play critical roles, both formally and spontaneously, in emergency management."

Hatzolah is your institutional template exactly: community-sourced, trained to standard, volunteer, integrated with emergency services, trusted by police. Your submission never mentions it. That's the strongest available argument you aren't making — that you're extending a form this community already trusts, not inventing one.

**4. The demand is documented and crosses the Jewish divide.** Southern Sydney Synagogue: members "would not attend unless there is a visible security presence." The AJDS — a dissenting organisation — raises security funding more than any other document in the corpus. Though note carefully: this establishes demand for *protection*, not for *armed* protection. Don't let the second ride on the first.

#### Four challenges

**1. The current runs hard the other way, and it's led from inside the community.** Mark Dreyfus gives a whole section to Firearms Reform: "*community safety and social cohesion are inseparable. That is why I pursued the*

*National Firearms Register, a reform that is directly relevant to the work of this Commission."* And National Cabinet met the day after Bondi and agreed a renegotiated National Firearms Agreement was needed.

To that reader, your phrase "symbolic prohibition" describes his life's work. It will not persuade him, and it may cost you the hearing before your safeguards are read.

**2. The attacked congregation argues against the hardening logic.** Chabad of Bondi: *"Safety is not security: an inversion the Commission should record."* — *"The response must support the conditions of Jewish safety, not only the apparatus of Jewish security."* — security funding should be *"a necessary bridge to safety, but not as a permanent substitute for it."*

This is the most damaging thing in the corpus, and it's damaging because of who says it. In their terms Hidden Shield is more apparatus. There's no arguing around it. The honest move is to accept the frame and position the scheme explicitly as bridge rather than destination — with a stated sunset — which your Implementation Pathway nearly does but never says.

**3. Concealment collides with the demand people actually expressed.** The corpus says congregants want *visible* security. Your mechanism is the opposite: concealed carry, protectors "indistinguishable from the community," deterrence by guardian uncertainty. Uncertainty may deter an attacker while doing nothing for the grandmother deciding whether to attend. Your submission treats deterrence and reassurance as one benefit; the corpus shows they're two needs, and this design serves one.

**4. Securitisation is argued to cause the harm — by the government's own Envoy.** Aftab Malik: hyper-securitisation over 25 years has "not made Australia safer from terrorism, and the social cohesion costs they have generated have created the broader environment in which all forms of identity-based hate, **including anti-Semitism**, have escalated." The Jewish Council converges from elsewhere: "Counter-terrorism measures and enhanced security cannot protect Jews from abuse, discrimination and widely dispersed antisemitic attitudes."

That lands squarely on the cohesion half of the Commission's title — and on your Oath Framework. The Islamic oath invites Muslim volunteers into an armed scheme born of an antisemitic attack, addressed to communities Malik's evidence says already experience counter-terrorism structures as suspicion. Your interfaith framing is offered as the answer to division; on this evidence it could be received as the mechanism of it. I'd want that tested with Muslim organisations before it's defended in public.

---

One structural fact sits under all eight. **No submission in the corpus proposes recruiting retired police or veterans for community protection** — I searched, there are none. Only two of fifty-five engage the firearms question substantively at all: Dreyfus to restrict, AJA to loosen.

You're on empty ground. That's genuinely novel before this inquiry, and it also means no constituency, no coalition, and nobody the Commission can turn to for corroboration. AJA is your only foothold, and AJA is a contested voice within the Jewish community rather than a consensus one.

Which makes the live question not whether the argument is sound, but who else will say it.

#### LAWRIE

Thank you, Claude, this is an important conversation as we can formulate the next step in refining the social cohesion rubric applicable not just for this topic. Can you please create a pdf of our conversation Prompt and Reply starting at "You've got the lot" and ending here.

---

END OF TRANSCRIPT