

## **Townsville Islamic Society**

### **Reports of Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes**

#### **1. 30 year old male**

After landing in Australia, I got a job at a telecommunications company which required a lot of travelling. After undergoing training in Harvey Bay, Queensland, I moved to Port Macquarie in New South Wales. It took me almost two months to find a house. I was first renting for few months and before that I was living in a hotel which was very expensive. I could see clearly on the faces of the property agents that I could not get a house because of my name. It was crystal clear from their behaviour, attitude and arrogance.

Once in Port Macquarie, I secured a holiday accommodation where I was living for a few weeks. The property agent started to tell me that I had to leave. I told her I didn't have anywhere else to stay and asked for her to give me more time to find another place. She didn't agree and one night she came with her bodyguard to kick me out. That day I was cutting onions in the kitchen and came to the door with the knife still in my hand. When they saw me with the knife, they said they were there to only make a request for me to leave.

After all of this, I moved to Townsville where I encountered many ridiculous customers. A few weeks ago, an incident happened where I went to a customer's house for his internet service installation. In the beginning he was polite to me because he could not hire an electrician and he wanted me to go inside the ceiling to run the cable to the socket. It was not my responsibility to run the cable. I took some safety measures and went inside the ceiling. Suddenly my leg tripped and went through the ceiling. I said to him that there was no need to worry and that I would bring my handyman to fix the ceiling. He was so rude and said he wanted me to fix the whole ceiling. He said he would get it fixed and send me the bill. I agreed to pay as it would be a maximum of \$500. After a few days he gave me the bill of almost \$2400. I paid it. I could see his behaviour was clearly because of my skin colour. He was greedy and manipulative. In the bill he had added almost \$176 for cleaning the floor. He said his wife cleaned the floor and I had to pay for it.

#### **2. Scenarios from secondary school boys**

##### **Scenario 1**

A teacher was speaking down to some students because of where they are from. He gave an example of Prince Harry going to Africa and helping their country because the people of that country are poor and not able to help themselves.

##### **Scenario 2**

The same teacher was discouraging students from applying/preceding to tertiary education after school due to their background or English-speaking capabilities.

### Scenario 3

An African child who attends a private school was called [REDACTED] by other students who are Caucasian.

### Scenario 4

Another African student was rejected/refused by Caucasian students to join a basketball game because of his skin colour. One of the boys said "We accept the yellow ones, but you? No."

### **3. 25 year old Somali male**

#### **Uber driver**

#### **Where: Townsville Strand**

#### **When: November 2020**

I was driving two males and they asked where I was from. I told them I was from Somalia. They asked if I was Muslim and I said yes. They then said to me that Muslims cause a lot of problems and they kept swearing and told me I am [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were very rude so I had to stop the car and ask them to leave the car. They left but they tried to fight with me (they were drunk), they then went on to report to Uber and make false accusations that they were not feeling safe or secure with the driver because I asked them to leave the car. Due to the false complaint, Uber removed me from the app and added my name as a bad Uber driver. I tried to report this to Uber but they told me that I did not follow the rules as a driver.

### **4. Where: Across from the Townsville Mosque**

This incident has taken place twice near the Townsville Mosque. It happened after Friday prayer. My friends and I walked out of mosque after prayer. We crossed the road as our cars were parked across the road. As we were talking in our native language, I noticed a man of Australian origin walk past us with his fingers pushed into his ears. After moving about 10 to 15 metres, he turned back towards us, looked at us and yelled at us with mocking voices, making fun of our native language. He then yelled at us with passing remarks such as, we are foreigners and we should go back to our country. He made comments about my faith and abused us. This makes me feel uncomfortable. Also, there is a possibility that if any of my fellow Muslim brothers or sisters are travelling alone, this person could intentionally cause harm due to his racist attitude.

### **5. Anonymous**

We were living at Calamvale, Brisbane, QLD, 4116. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, our next-door neighbour was throwing rubbish on our lawn. We asked her not to do it and she started shouting at us. Due to verbal abuse and racial remarks such as "Leave this place go back to India," I had to call the police. The police advised both parties to suspend communication, however, again in April the neighbour verbally abused us and used racist comments. The police were called but no action was taken against the neighbour for using racist remarks. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of May, the neighbour came to our house with false allegations and started shouting, "It's not India." The police were called and we were just told to go to court. Again, no action was taken by the police. Ultimately, I had to break my lease and move, resulting in a heavy financial burden.

## **6. Scenarios from one family**

### Scenario 1

My kids are bullied at school when they are wearing a head scarf.

### Scenario 2

One day after having dinner at a restaurant, I was paying the bill and my family was waiting outside. A lady approached my young daughter who was 14 at the time and started verbally abusing her. She told her to take off her head scarf and go back to her country. She told her you don't belong here.

### Scenario 3

At the Aitkenvale Library, an elderly lady approached my six months pregnant wife and threatened her. She said that she would run her over with her car if she saw her again. She then drove off at a high speed.

### Scenario 4

I was followed by a car on my way home all the way to my house. The person following me then started verbally abusing me and swearing at me.

### Scenario 5

I was approached by a patient. She asked me where I was from then began questioning me about whether I knew Osama bin Laden. When I told the story to my manager, she was shocked.

### Scenario 6

A lady at my workplace started making comments that I look like a terrorist. She introduced herself to be a reborn Christian.

### Scenario 7

A staff member at my workplace was commenting on and abusing our beloved Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings be Upon Him).

### Scenario 8

I have had to move house twice due to racist comments from my neighbours who were verbally abusing my four and five year old children. They would yell and use abusive language. When I reported it to the police, they said we needed evidence.

### Scenario 9

In a six-unit apartment, a lady came inside my garage without permission and started taking photos of my belongings. She would not allow my wife to use the shared clothesline to hang our wet clothes. When I complained to the real estate, they said they had never had any issues with that resident. I had to move to another house when my lease ended.

## Scenario 10

On a regular basis when I am getting out of my car to enter the mosque, people driving by will honk and give the finger when I am with my wife and children.

### **7. 26 year old female**

A few years ago, I was waiting in line for my drink at [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED] in Townsville. I was with my mother and older sister. All three of us wear a head scarf. I could see that my drink was nearly ready so I approached the counter to take a straw. There was a woman with her young daughter standing beside the counter. As I reached for the straw, she held her daughter protectively and pulled her away from me. She then began verbally abusing me, telling me to go back to where I came from. My mother and sister stepped forward to defend me but she continued to verbally abuse the three of us. There were plenty of people around us, including the [REDACTED] staff, but no one said or did anything. I think of this every time I walk past that [REDACTED] and I am sometimes reluctant to buy a drink from that specific shop.

### **8. Anonymous**

In November 2018, I had a job interview with [REDACTED] for a Christmas casual position. I sent my resume and was among one of the people who was called for an interview. It was a group interview and everything went satisfactorily until one of the team leaders requested if we could talk privately for a minute. Her request was unbelievable and shocking. She said if they offered me a job, they would want me to take off my hijab (head scarf). Honestly, I was not expecting that. I asked if she could please explain to me the reason I would need to do that and she said because the jewellery needs advertisement to get customers' attention. I told her that I had an idea where I could wear my hijab in a turban style so the jewellery could still be seen. That was the end of our conversation for that night. Those of us who were interviewed were told we would receive a call with the outcome. I did not receive a call so I called back to follow up. I was told I had not met the requirements of the job because I did not agree to their terms.

### **9. Anonymous**

A young Muslim man lost his job because the staff members at his workplace were uncomfortable with him praying at work.

### **10. Anonymous**

In early 2021, A young Muslim woman (aged 18/19) was leaving work and walking to her car in the late afternoon. It was still light outside. Three men, seemingly of Indigenous heritage, attacked and mugged her. They stole her bag and pulled off her head scarf. This occurred in the Pimlico region.