



**Australian National Imams Council**

**مجلس الأئمة الفدرالي الأسترالي**

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## **MEDIA STATEMENT:**

### **ANIC ANGERED BY DETENTION OF SENIOR IMAM AT SYDNEY AIRPORT**

His Eminence, the Grand Mufti of Australia, Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohammad and the Australian National Imams Council wishes to express its anger at an incident that occurred yesterday where a senior member of the ANIC Executive was detained by Customs at Sydney's airport. As a result of the two and a half hours detention for an alleged "routine baggage search" the respected Imam missed his flight and was unable to travel along with his group of Australian pilgrims on their way to perform the Hajj. The Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islamic ritual worship which more than 2000 Australians undertake each year. The Imam was eventually released without charge but was unable to secure another booking at the time.

The manner in which the detention occurred was extremely unprofessional and exposed severe shortcomings with the process currently in place at Sydney's airport. ANIC is aware of a number of similar cases where innocent travelers have been unnecessarily inconvenienced and penalized financially having to foot the bill for all additional costs.

"It is totally unacceptable for any Australian citizen let alone a senior member of ANIC to be subjected to this seemingly random yet profiled manner causing severe stress and unwanted inconvenience," said Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohammad.

Customs must as a matter of urgency review its processes to ensure that law abiding citizens are not placed in a position of unnecessary inconvenience and financial hardship.

ANIC is currently exploring all options including legal action to redress this serious problem.

End.

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ANIC consists of more than 250 Imams across Australia representing their respective communities.

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