

# *Operation Deans*

## ***Evidential Overview*** ***15 March 2019***



***Canterbury CIB***

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## 1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 The 15 March 2019 attacks at Masjid an-Nur on Deans Avenue and the Linwood Islamic Centre on Linwood Avenue in Christchurch (**terrorist attacks**) were the single largest terrorist incident and mass homicide that New Zealand has experienced, involving the largest response operation ever undertaken by the New Zealand Police. Within the space of 19 minutes, 51 people from our community had been murdered and 40 others had gunshot injuries. Many more were otherwise injured and affected. Many of the survivors were left with life threatening injuries. In that same timespan Police had located and arrested the offender Brenton Harrison Tarrant (hereafter referred to as **the individual**).
- 1.2 This evidential overview (**Overview**) summarises the key evidential points from the investigation and provides a chronology of events. It is focused, in particular, on the time the individual first opened fire through to his arrest. The purpose of providing these key events and timings is to identify any outstanding issues the interested parties may have that fall within the jurisdiction of the Coroner. The issues identified will inform the Coroner's decision on the holding of an inquiry into the deaths of those killed in the terrorist attacks.
- 1.3 The Overview details what the Police investigation showed regarding the individual's movements on 15 March 2019, and the evidential basis confirming timings, location, and the response of the Police and the Ambulance service in particular. At **Appendix A** is a timeline of events on 15 March 2019 and at **Appendix B** is a map showing the movements of the individual that day. At Heading 9, the Overview sets out the types of information that can be made available on request to next of kin about the deceased victims of the terrorist attacks.

### Hearings and findings in other proceedings

- 1.4 On 27 August 2020, the individual was sentenced by the High Court in Christchurch to life imprisonment without parole on each of the 51 charges of murder.<sup>1</sup> He was further sentenced to life imprisonment for engaging in a terrorist act, and to concurrent terms of 12 years' imprisonment for 40 charges of attempted murder. An agreed Summary of Facts forms the basis of that sentence. A copy of the agreed Summary of Facts is at **Appendix C**. The facts in the agreed Summary of Facts have, accordingly, already been proven. The purpose of this Overview is not to further address those facts.
- 1.5 On 26 November 2020, the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the terrorist attacks provided its report to the Governor-General containing 44 recommendations on a number of topics, focused on whether there was an ability to prevent the terrorist attacks as set out in its Terms of Reference (**Royal Commission's Report**).<sup>2</sup> On 8 December 2020, the Royal Commission's Report was made available to the public. The matters addressed in the Royal Commission's Report are not the focus of this Overview.

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<sup>1</sup> *R v Tarrant* [2020] NZHC 2192.

<sup>2</sup> The Royal Commission's Report, Executive Summary, at [4].

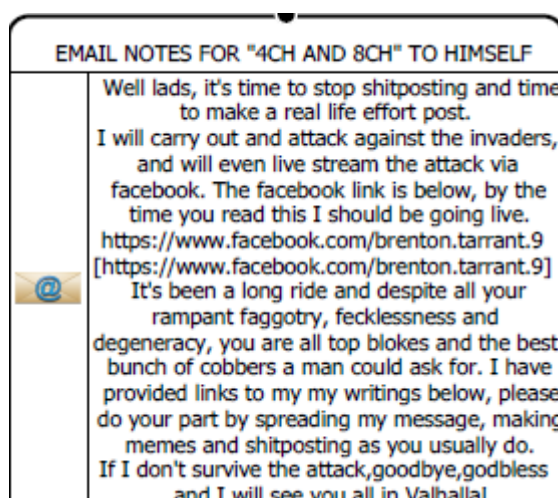
## Core Timings

- 1.6 There are some core timings of events on 15 March 2019 that it is useful to summarise at the outset. They are:
- At 1.40 pm: The first shots were fired at Masjid an-Nur;
  - At 1:45:58 pm: The individual left Masjid an-Nur;
  - At 1:46 pm: Police officers arrived at the surrounding area of Masjid an-Nur;
  - At 1.51 pm: Police are outside Masjid an-Nur;
  - At 1.52 pm: The individual arrived at the Linwood Islamic Centre;
  - At 1:54:48pm Police entered Masjid an-Nur
  - Approx. 1.55 pm: The individual left the Linwood Islamic Centre;
  - At 1.57 pm: A Police pursuit of the individual was initiated;
  - At 1.59 pm: Police units arrived at the Linwood Islamic Centre;
  - Also at 1.59 pm: The individual was arrested and subsequently interviewed and charged.

## 2 THE INDIVIDUAL'S MOVEMENTS ON 15 MARCH 2019 PRIOR TO THE TERRORIST ATTACKS

### Actions prior to travelling to Christchurch

- 2.1 At 12.31 am on 15 March 2019 the individual emailed links to his own email account with the subject line of the email "For Twitter".<sup>3</sup> He also emailed himself notes with the heading *4CH and 8CH*.



*Excerpt from the individual's email account*

- 2.2 At 12.38 am the individual saved copies of his manifesto "*The Great Replacement*" onto a USB flash drive.<sup>4</sup> At 12.46 am he emailed a copy of a message intended for his mother to be sent prior to the attack. The subject line in the email is "*To Mum*".
- 2.3 At 12.52 am the individual emailed a copy of a message intended for his sister to be sent prior to the attack. The subject line of the email is "*To Lauren*".

### **Travel to Christchurch**

- 2.4 The individual can be seen on CCTV footage leaving Dunedin, driving northbound on Portsmouth Street, Dunedin, at 8.30 am and is seen again travelling northbound at 8.34 am on Crawford Street, Dunedin in his gold Subaru Outback.<sup>5</sup>
- 2.5 At 8.42 am he can be seen driving northbound on Great King Street, Dunedin.<sup>6</sup>
- 2.6 At 9.52 am the individual stopped at the Z Energy Service Station, Oamaru. Associated CCTV shows him purchasing coffee and food there, leaving at 10.03 am.<sup>7</sup>
- 2.7 At 9.53 am he can be seen driving northbound on Severn Street past Cross Street, Oamaru.<sup>8</sup>



**CCTV images of the individual's vehicle leaving Dunedin – 15 March 2019**

- 2.8 At 10.05 am CCTV captures the individual driving northbound on Thames Street passing Coquet Street, Oamaru.<sup>9</sup>

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4 Document 2319.

5 Document 2310 and CCTV.

6 Documents 2876 and 3119.

7 Documents 546 and 2739.

8 Document 2310 and CCTV.

9 Document 2310.

- 2.9 At 11.04 am he is seen driving northbound past Z Energy in Caroline Bay, Timaru.<sup>10</sup>
- 2.10 At 11.08 am the individual's vehicle can be seen in CCTV images driving northbound past Sefton Street, Timaru and then at 11.10 am still driving northbound past Newman Street, Timaru.<sup>11</sup>



*CCTV images capturing the individual moving through Timaru – 15 March 2019*

- 2.11 At 11.21 am the individual can be seen on the Challenge Service Station CCTV imagery at Winchester and at 12.01 pm he can be seen driving northbound past Agnes Street, Ashburton.<sup>12</sup>
- 2.12 At 12.06 pm CCTV shows him driving northbound past Moore Street, Ashburton.<sup>13</sup>



*CCTV Images of the individual moving through Ashburton – 15 March 2019*

- 2.13 At 12.27 pm the individual's vehicle is captured on CCTV driving onto the Rakaia Bridge.<sup>14</sup>



<sup>10</sup> Documents 895, 6415, 120021 and 12004.  
<sup>11</sup> Document 3073.  
<sup>12</sup> Document 3073.  
<sup>13</sup> Document 3073.  
<sup>14</sup> Document 3073.



- 2.14 At 1.11 pm CCTV shows the individual's vehicle in the Christchurch area, driving around Sockburn roundabout and exiting onto Blenheim Road. Again at 1.17 pm he is captured on CCTV driving eastbound on Blenheim Road, passing Matipo Street.<sup>15</sup>



*The individual's vehicle travelling through the Blenheim Road / Matipo Street Intersection – 15 March 2019*

- 2.15 At 1.19 pm the individual can be seen turning from Blenheim Road left into Mandeville Street.
- 2.16 At 1.20 pm he was captured on CCTV passing 14A Leslie Hills Drive and then turning around at the Belgotex building.<sup>16</sup>



*The individual's vehicle movements into Leslie Hills drive – 15 March 2019*

### **Communications activity once in Christchurch**

- 2.17 At 1.26 pm the individual was in a carpark near Masjid an-Nur in Leslie Hills Drive. At that time he posted links to his manifesto "*The Great Replacement*" on his Twitter account '*Brenton Tarrant*'.
- 2.18 At 1.26 pm he posted a status update on his Facebook profile with seven links to websites that contain copies of the manifesto "*The Great Replacement*".<sup>17</sup>
- 2.19 At 1.28 pm an account belonging to the individual posted to a website "*8chan*" with links to his manifesto "*The Great Replacement*" and the link to the live feed video on his Facebook account.

<sup>15</sup> Document 3073.

<sup>16</sup> Documents 2360 and 2449.

<sup>17</sup> Documents 203, 5655 and 5964.

- 2.20 At 1.31 pm he messaged his mother on Facebook Messenger, detailing his plans and how to respond to the media and Police inquiries. At 1.32 pm he messaged his sister on Facebook Messenger, detailing his plans and how to respond to media and Police inquiries.<sup>18</sup>
- 2.21 The individual's sister told Police that when she saw the content of the message from the individual she panicked at what she read. She tried to call her partner (who did not answer), then called the individual's phone and left a message telling him not to do it and to call her back. She left work and on her way home she learnt from her partner of an attack on a mosque in Christchurch. She spoke to her mother and telephoned Police in Australia who arranged to interview her.
- 2.22 The individual's mother told Police that on receipt of the message from the individual she was at work, teaching, and didn't know what to do as she had students in her class. She waited until the end of the class before ringing her daughter, who told her of the shootings in Christchurch. She went home where she did a web search and saw reports of the attacks. She then went to the Maclean Police Station in Australia due to suspicions that the individual may have been involved in the shootings.
- 2.23 At 1.33 pm an email was received by Parliament and international and domestic news agencies from the individual's email address in which he made threats to attack Christchurch.
- 2.24 The content of the email states, "*I am the partisan that committed the assault*" and attached a 74-page manifesto setting out his intended actions and beliefs. This also had links to web pages where his content could be downloaded.
- 2.25 The documents he attached made reference to attacking masjid in Dunedin, Christchurch, Linwood and Ashburton and the email was sent from the account bTarrant333@hotmail.com<sup>19</sup>

### **Go Pro Footage**

- 2.26 At 1.33 pm the individual started his recording on his GoPro camera at Leslie Hills Drive. He shared the live feed on 'Brenton.Tarrant.9' Facebook account; this streamed from his helmet mounted GoPro in real time.<sup>20</sup>
- 2.27 The Go Pro footage from the terrorist attacks and the individual's manifesto have subsequently been classified as objectionable publications under the Films, Videos, and Publications Classifications Act 1993.
- 2.28 The individual's GoPro footage as he prepared at Leslie Hills Drive showed the location of his vehicle, weaponry and his torso vest and leg area as well as six large (30-40 round) ammunition magazines containing numerous rounds of ammunition, all of which are black and have white writing on them. These are clearly visible in the passenger seat of his Subaru vehicle in the footage.

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<sup>18</sup> Document 203.

<sup>19</sup> Documents 0091, 2003, 2134 and 2432.

<sup>20</sup> Documents 5394 and 4389.

## Travel to Masjid an-Nur

- 2.29 At 1.34 pm the individual drove his vehicle exiting the carpark at Leslie Hills Drive and then turned from Leslie Hills Drive into Mandeville Street.<sup>21</sup> Shortly after he passed the Placemakers on Mandeville Street.
- 2.30 At 1.35 pm he was at the corner of Blenheim Road and Mandeville Street. At 1.35 pm he turned from Blenheim Road into Deans Avenue and at 1.36 pm he stopped on the side of the road on Deans Avenue.<sup>22</sup>



*The individual's vehicle driving from Blenheim Rd into Deans Avenue – 15 March 2019*

- 2.31 The individual's GoPro footage showed him stopped on Deans Avenue; here he directly addressed the camera.
- 2.32 At 1.38 pm the individual passed Mayfair Street driving along Deans Avenue and then can be seen driving across the frontage of Masjid an-Nur before he turned left down the driveway adjacent to the masjid and turned around.<sup>23</sup>



*The individual's vehicle driving past Masjid an-Nur – 15 March 2019*

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<sup>21</sup> Document 2007.  
<sup>22</sup> Document 2007.  
<sup>23</sup> Document 6247.



### **Approach to Masjid an-Nur**

- 2.33 At 1.39 pm the individual parked at the end of the driveway adjacent to Masjid an-Nur, got out of the vehicle, armed himself with two firearms and walked towards the masjid.<sup>24</sup>

### **Parliamentary Services notify Police of email**

- 2.34 At 1.40 pm Parliamentary Services called the Police Communications room advising Police of the email they had received.<sup>25</sup>

## **3 ATTACK AT MASJID AN-NUR**

### **First shots fired**

- 3.1 At 1.40 pm the individual fired his first shots at Masjid an-Nur and entered the masjid, committing multiple murder and the attempted murder of the worshippers present for Friday prayers. The time is taken from the CCTV footage showing his entrance to the masjid.

### **Police 111 calls**

- 3.2 At 1.41 pm a member of the public near Masjid an-Nur made the first 111 emergency call to Police.<sup>26</sup>
- 3.3 At this time the first event was created in the Police database where the caller described people running away from the masjid and gunshots heard from a semi-automatic weapon. Police deployed from Christchurch Central Police Station as a result of that entry into the database.
- 3.4 The Central Police Station is 3.2 km from Masjid an-Nur.
- 3.5 At 1.42 pm three further calls were received by Police. In those calls, witnesses described hearing multiple gunshots from a semi-automatic weapon. At 1.42 pm Police dispatchers reported a 'Priority 1 Firearms Event' of machine gunfire at Masjid an-Nur with several Police units responding directly to that location.
- 3.6 Within 25 minutes of the first 111 call the Police Communications Centre received 68 calls from members of the public.

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<sup>24</sup> Document 6247.

<sup>25</sup> Document 2134.

<sup>26</sup> Documents 3470 and 3471.

3.7 Those calls, combined with information broadcast on the Police radio and claims from the individual when arrested, led to Police needing to assess and respond to the following threats:

- Reports of shooting events at Masjid an-Nur and in Deans Avenue
- Reports of shooting events at the Linwood Islamic Centre
- Reports of shots being fired at Christchurch Hospital
- Suspected improvised explosive devices at Masjid an-Nur
- Suspected improvised explosive devices in the individual's vehicle
- Claims from the individual that multiple gunmen were involved

### **Establishment of a safe forward point**

3.8 At 1.43 pm Police Communications advised attending staff of a safe forward point on the corner of Moorhouse Avenue and Deans Avenue.

3.9 A safe forward point is a commonly employed Police 'best practice' procedure where a location is identified that is close to a particular threat, but with sufficient distance to enable Police to equip themselves with whatever equipment is required to meet the threat and approach in a planned manner.

### **The individual exits and then re-enters Masjid an-Nur**

3.10 The Go Pro footage shows the individual exiting the main gate of Masjid an-Nur onto Deans Avenue at 1:42:32 pm and firing multiple shots in a southerly and northerly direction at escaping worshippers before returning to his vehicle and rearming with another weapon (an AR-15).

3.11 The footage then shows the individual running to the southern gate and firing multiple shots towards the masjid's western (rear) boundary wall at escaping worshippers, shooting two people dead and wounding another.

3.12 At 1:43:55 pm the individual re-entered Masjid an-Nur, firing more shots, before exiting again at 1.45 pm. At this time, he sighted several victims escaping and fired his weapon in their direction, killing one female victim and wounding another.<sup>27</sup> He returned to his vehicle before leaving Deans Avenue at 1.46 pm.

### **Departure from Masjid an-Nur**

3.13 At 1.46 pm CCTV footage shows the individual's vehicle drive past houses on Deans Avenue towards Riccarton Road.<sup>28</sup> Here he fired his Ranger 870 pump action shotgun through his windshield at persons on Deans Avenue.

3.14 The individual's Go Pro footage shows him firing through his windshield and passenger window at victims on Deans Avenue between Masjid an-Nur and Riccarton Road.

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<sup>27</sup> Document 2007.

<sup>28</sup> Documents 3042 and 2917.

- 3.15 At 1:46:58 pm his vehicle is seen on CCTV driving through the intersection and swerving around a bus at Deans Avenue and Riccarton Road.<sup>29</sup>



*CCTV footage showing the individual avoiding a public bus at the corner of Riccarton Road and Deans Avenue. The first arriving Police (Armed Offender's Squad members) can also be seen in the red car parked on the southern roadside of Riccarton Road. No vehicle description had been supplied at this point.*

### **Police arrival to the surrounding area**

- 3.16 At 1.46 pm the first Police vehicle arrived with two Armed Offender's Squad members, parking in the safe forward point. They were unable to see the offender's vehicle due to the bus and, at that time, no description of the offending vehicle had been provided.
- 3.17 The two Armed Offender's Squad members confirmed over the radio they were making an approach to Masjid an-Nur at 1.46pm.



*Two Police staff can be seen approaching the scene (corner Riccarton Road and Deans Avenue). Still image taken from Bus CCTV footage – 15 March 2019.*

### **The individual's movements towards the Linwood Islamic Centre**

- 3.18 At 1.47 pm the individual's vehicle can be seen driving through a red light at the intersection of Harper Avenue and Fendalton Road.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Document 3073.

<sup>30</sup> Document 3073.

- 3.19 At 1.48 pm his vehicle can be seen on CCTV footage driving through Harper Avenue / Bealey Avenue intersection, travelling in an easterly direction.<sup>31</sup> Sirens from the first Police vehicles on their way to Masjid an-Nur can be heard in the livestream video as the individual was driving toward the Linwood Islamic Centre. The Linwood Islamic Centre is approximately 6 km from Masjid an-Nur. The journey was made by the individual at high speed (at times up to 130 km per hour).

### **Continued Police arrival to surrounding area**

- 3.20 Also at 1.48 pm the first Police arrived at Argyle on the Park Motel. One Police member stopped to assist a male with gunshot wounds while the other proceeded towards Masjid an-Nur and held position at the pedestrian gate to the masjid until the Armed Offender's Squad and Special Tactics Group officers arrived a short time later.<sup>32</sup> These are the same Police officers that can be seen in the image at paragraph 3.17 above.
- 3.21 The first call for the ambulance for a status 1 gunshot victim was made at 1.48pm.<sup>33</sup>



*The individual's vehicle initially through Harper / Bealey Avenues and then Bealey Avenue / Papanui Road intersections. Stills taken from CCTV footage.*

- 3.22 At 1.49 pm a four-man Armed Offender's Squad contact team was deployed from the Christchurch Central Police Station and at the same time units commenced diverting traffic from Riccarton Road.<sup>34</sup>

### **Police identification of the individual's vehicle**

- 3.23 Also at 1.49 pm the individual's vehicle registration number (*KSH90*) was called over the Police radio for the first time after being given to attending Police at Masjid an-Nur by a member of the public. The vehicle description was confirmed through the Police Communications Centre.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Document 3073.

<sup>32</sup> Documents 3022 and 3601.

<sup>33</sup> Document 2132.

<sup>34</sup> Document 2132.

<sup>35</sup> Documents 2554 and 2132.

## The individual's approach to the Linwood Islamic Centre

- 3.24 At 1.50 pm the individual can be seen on CCTV travelling on Bealey Avenue and then Fitzgerald Avenue, turning left into Avonside Drive from Fitzgerald Avenue.<sup>36</sup>



*Still images taken from CCTV showing the individual travelling from Bealey Avenue into Fitzgerald Avenue and then into Avonside Road.*

- 3.25 At that time and location the individual raised his shotgun at the driver of a vehicle on Avonside Drive and pulled the trigger, but the firearm failed to fire. He actioned the weapon (feeding a round into the firing chamber) and again pulled the trigger and again the weapon failed to fire.
- 3.26 At that time the vehicles were approximately 3-4 metres apart and mobile. The individual then continued driving at speed down Avonside Drive towards Linwood Avenue, discarding his shotgun, picking up the AR-15 and placing it ready across his lap.
- 3.27 At 1.52 pm the individual can be seen in CCTV footage heading southbound passing Worcester Street on Linwood Avenue.<sup>37</sup>

## 4 ATTACK AT THE LINWOOD ISLAMIC CENTRE

### The individual's arrival at the Linwood Islamic Centre

- 4.1 At 1.52 pm the individual arrived at the Linwood Islamic Centre and parked in the driveway. At 1.52 pm he exited his vehicle.

### Ongoing Police communications

- 4.2 At 1.52 pm Police confirmed the intersection of Deans Avenue and Riccarton Road was closed to southbound traffic.
- 4.3 At 1:52:51 pm there was a call to the Police Communications Centre describing a vehicle with gunshots through the windscreen driving eastbound on Bealey Avenue towards Fitzgerald Avenue. The vehicle was described as a gold Subaru station wagon with three gunshots through the window, male driver, 35 years, possibly wearing a blue top.

<sup>36</sup> Documents 3073, 5394 and 4389.

<sup>37</sup> Documents 3073 and CCTV.



### **Police entrance to Masjid an-Nur**

- 4.4 At 1.52 pm the first Police Officer arrived at the front entrance of Masjid an-Nur and at 1.53 pm Armed Offender's Squad permission was given for a four man contact team to clear Masjid an-Nur.

### **The individual's actions at the Linwood Islamic Centre**

- 4.5 Once at the Linwood Islamic Centre the individual exited his vehicle and used his lever action rifle to murder three family members as they prepared to enter the masjid. He then murdered another worshipper through the window into the masjid.
- 4.6 At 1.53 pm he ran back to his Subaru and was chased by a Linwood Islamic Centre attendee. Once there he retrieved his AR-15.
- 4.7 He uplifted the Ruger AR-15 rifle and fired three shots at his pursuer, causing them to run for their safety. He then continued to walk down the driveway back towards the masjid at 1.54 pm.<sup>38</sup>
- 4.8 At the main doorway he identified worshippers inside and fired several shots into the masjid before entering the masjid briefly. There he used the semi-automatic AR-15 to murder victims worshipping inside.

### **Further Police arrive at Masjid an-Nur**

- 4.9 At 1.53 pm a contact team of a further five Armed Offender's Squad members arrived at Masjid an-Nur and deployed.

### **Police reports from Masjid an-Nur**

- 4.10 At 1.54 pm Police on the scene at Masjid an-Nur advised there were multiple injured persons outside and inside the masjid and requested ambulance attendance.

### **The individual's exit from the Linwood Islamic Centre**

- 4.11 At 1.55 pm the individual is seen in his Go Pro footage running down the driveway to his vehicle, re-entering his vehicle and leaving the Linwood Islamic Centre; again being pursued by the same person who had chased him earlier.

## Police pursuit

- 4.12 At 1.57 pm Police initiated a pursuit of the offending vehicle along Brougham Street near Waltham Road, heading westbound.<sup>39</sup>



*CCTV images of the Police initiating a pursuit with the individual*

- 4.13 At 1.58 pm Police confirmed over the radio they were in pursuit of a gold Subaru passing through Colombo Street.<sup>40</sup>
- 4.14 At 1.59 pm Police forced the individual off the road during pursuit where he was subsequently detained and arrested.<sup>41</sup>



*CCTV Image showing the individual's vehicle being forced off the road by Police*

## Police arrive at the Linwood Islamic Centre

- 4.15 At 1.56 pm the Police communications room received the first call regarding shots being fired on Linwood Avenue.
- 4.16 At 1.59 pm CCTV shows Police cars driving on Linwood Avenue arriving at the Linwood Islamic Centre.<sup>42</sup>

## Arrest of the individual

- 4.17 At 2.00 pm the arrest procedure was carried out and the individual was apprehended along with firearms. Possible improvised explosive devices in the rear of his car were identified.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Documents 2132, 2554, 3073, 1473 and 1475.

<sup>40</sup> Documents 2132, 2554, 1473 and 1475.

<sup>41</sup> Document 3073.

<sup>42</sup> Document 2236.

<sup>43</sup> Documents 2132 and 2554.

### **Further Ambulance call-out**

- 4.18 At 2.00 pm the Armed Offender's Squad again reported multiple people needed ambulance care at Masjid an-Nur.

### **Police reports from the Linwood Islamic Centre**

- 4.19 At 2.02 pm Police confirmed at least three fatalities at the Linwood Islamic Centre and ambulances were requested. Police ensured the offender had left the immediate area and confirmed the male offender description matched that of the person apprehended in the pursuit.

### **Police reports regarding the individual's vehicle**

- 4.20 At 2.03 pm Police confirmed the vehicle in Brougham Street had items believed to be explosives in it.

### **Further police reports from the Linwood Islamic Centre**

- 4.21 At 2.04 pm Police advised that one firearm was located at the Linwood Islamic Centre and at least six fatalities. They requested more units and an ambulance at that location.

### **Police follow-up on reports of shooting at hospital**

- 4.22 At 2.06 pm Police confirmed with Christchurch Public Hospital staff there had been no shots fired at the hospital. This was in response to information coming over the Police radio of possible shots at that location.

### **Police response to claims by the individual and items in his vehicle**

- 4.23 At the time of his arrest, the individual reported that 50 others were involved in the terrorist attacks around the world, all with tactical knowledge and "*at least six*" of those were active in Christchurch that day (five others).<sup>44</sup> A short time later this was amended to state there "*could be nine shooters*" and then a short time after that he said, "*there are nine shooters, I'm the tenth*".
- 4.24 These statements required Police to react to several reports around Christchurch at that time concerning suspicious behavior until it was identified through investigation of the individual's home address and online activity sometime later that he was a sole offender acting alone.
- 4.25 Located in the rear of the individual's vehicle were four large petrol containers with devices attached which appeared to be improvised explosive devices. The effect of this was that a large area was cleared and members of the public evacuated until this area was cleared by NZ Defence Force staff. Fire and Emergency New Zealand (**FENZ**) were also notified, and attended, as is standard practice when dealing with potential explosive devices.
- 4.26 This caused several Police resources to be deployed around the city for a significant period.

- 4.27 By approximately 3.20 pm the individual's Dunedin address had been identified and confirmed.
- 4.28 By 4.30 pm Armed Offender's Squad members had surrounded the address. Entry was made into his address and that address was held for a full search that was completed on 16 March 2019.

## **5 INITIAL RESPONDERS AND THEIR ROLES: POLICE AND AMBULANCE SERVICES**

- 5.1 Immediately after the attack at Masjid an-Nur, members of the public assisted those shot on Deans Avenue, with one witness placing three victims in his private motor vehicle and driving them directly to Christchurch Hospital at the same time as Police arrived on scene.<sup>45</sup>
- 5.2 The first responders at the masjidain consisted of a mix of uniform Police staff and highly trained members of the Armed Offender's Squad and the Special Tactics Group. These specialist officers initially took control of the first aid and triage process at the masjidain once it had been confirmed the offender was no longer present and the risks had been assessed and were being managed.
- 5.3 The Police Armed Offender's Squad is maintained in each Policing District in New Zealand. They provide the tactical response to people who are, or are believed to be, armed and a danger to themselves and the public.
- 5.4 The Police Special Tactics Group provide assistance with escalating Armed Offender situations needing greater tactical resources or situations that are beyond the capability or capacity of the Armed Offender's Squad. They are also responsible for the tactical intervention in incidents involving terrorism, hostage rescue and other duties requiring the Special Tactics Group's tactical skills and expertise. To become a member of the Special Tactics Group, you first must be a member of the Armed Offender's Squad.
- 5.5 Both these groups are highly trained and receive regular training more advanced than the regular Police Constable.

### **Medical training of the Armed Offender's Squad and the Special Tactics Group**

- 5.6 The basic first aid course completed by all sworn members of the Police is expanded upon to become a qualified Armed Offender's Squad medic.
- 5.7 All Armed Offender's Squad medics receive advanced training alongside hospital emergency workers with a focus on:
- Recognising symptoms
  - Signs of hypovolemic shock (shock from severe dehydration or blood loss)
  - Recognising the signs of symptoms of tension pneumothorax (a complication from a collapsed lung)
  - Preparing and administering chest seals

- Reacting to chest gunshot wound injuries
  - Taking blood pressure, pulse, respiration rate and basic pain levels when the situation dictates.
- 5.8 Armed Offender's Squad medics are also trained in administering pain relief and have been trained in triage in mass casualty events and the treatment and management of broken bones.
- 5.9 Special Tactics Group medics are qualified in all aspects of an Armed Offender's Squad medic. Additionally, they undertake training alongside Ambulance crew with more in-depth training on baseline signs, pain relief, advanced training in triage and mass casualty response, along with administering saline via intravenous drip and understanding prolonged field care.
- 5.10 In addition, Special Tactics Group medics also receive training in the management of minor traumatic brain injuries, hypothermia prevention and blast injuries.
- 5.11 The Special Tactics Group trauma medic course provides an advanced combination of first aid and the use of medical equipment, involving training in responding to certain injuries, stopping or preventing certain medical events and using certain medicines and equipment. This includes training on:
- Massive hemorrhaging
  - Use of tourniquets, wound and gauze packing with Israeli field dressings
  - Airways – use of the head tilt / chin lift / body position / airway
  - Respirations – bag / valve / mask / chest seals
  - Circulation
  - Head injury – managing head injuries
  - Hypothermia
  - Use of oral pain relief
- 5.12 Special Tactics Group medics are required to be annually certified and receive refresher training annually.
- 5.13 Special Tactics Group medics also attempt to complete 40 hours of ride-along training with St John Ambulance certified paramedics. This allows real time training and observation as well as hands-on medical treatment of some patients in real life situations to gain invaluable experience.
- 5.14 At both scenes the initial responders consisted of Armed Offender's Squad, Special Tactics Group and uniform first responders. A specialist training course was being held in Christchurch that day and a number of national and international Police from that course deployed to the masjidain to provide assistance.
- 5.15 At the time of initial attendance there were a mass of reports over the Police radio that contained conflicting information leading to the belief that the offender had returned to Masjid an-Nur, when in fact this was explained by the delay in the livestreaming video.



- 5.16 This resulted in further clearances being required by attending Police of Masjid an-Nur before they could enter.

## **6 INITIAL RESPONDERS – MASJID AN-NUR**

### **Police (including the Armed Offender's Squad and the Special Tactic's Group)**

- 6.1 Paragraph 3.17 above shows the first two Police Officers to arrive at the surrounding area of Masjid an-Nur. One officer provided first aid to a gunshot victim in the outer scene at 1.46 pm. The second officer arrived at the pedestrian gate at 1.51 pm. Entry into Masjid an-Nur was made at 1:54:48 pm.
- 6.2 Inside the masjid, Police cleared each individual room and confirmed that the offender was not present among those at the scene and that the scene was secure. This also involved ensuring that there were no explosive devices or other means of harming people left or set within the scene. It is part of Police training in response to acts of terrorism that some terrorists conduct secondary attacks on first responders by the use of explosive devices or some other harmful device. Police went through the process of assessing Masjid an-Nur as safe for other first responders to enter a total of three times. The first was a clearance to locate obvious threats, the second was a clearance to check cupboards and smaller areas where suspects may be hiding, and the third clearance was due to reports indicating that the offender may have returned to the masjid, as set out at paragraphs 5.15 and 5.16 above. The third clearance occurred once ambulance staff (see below) were inside the masjid.
- 6.3 Having entered the masjid, in tandem with the clearance process set out at paragraph 6.2, Police immediately tended to the wounded, triaged those persons and removed them for further care as soon as practicable.
- 6.4 Due to the nature of the wounds inflicted on those who were injured and due to transmission issues over the Police radio because of the volume of radio traffic, Police ran to the safe assembly point to get ambulances to come to the scene. During this time, at the direction of the Police, several victims were removed to the Christchurch Public Hospital with the assistance of members of the public in their private motor vehicles.

### **Ambulance services**

- 6.5 Ambulance staff arrived on scene at 2.04 pm. The first ambulance was granted access to the masjid at 2.08 pm after Masjid an-Nur was secured and cleared by Police and after it was successfully communicated that it was safe for the ambulances to have access, which, as set at paragraph 6.4, was a message that Police had to deliver in person to ambulances waiting at the safe forward point due to issues with the volume of traffic over the Police radio. Ambulance staff commenced first aid treatment and transported victims to the Christchurch Public Hospital.
- 6.6 All victims were then triaged by paramedics and the initial verifications of death were completed as part of this triage process.

## **First aid provided and ability to survive injuries**

- 6.7 A number of victims who survived received life-saving first aid at the scenes by first responders.
- 6.8 A total of two victims that were transported to hospital still exhibiting signs of life subsequently died in hospital. Many of those injured had suffered extensive and life-threatening injuries.
- 6.9 An expert pathologist's opinion is that those who were killed at Masjid an-Nur had suffered inevitably fatal injuries which meant they would not have survived had they been evacuated to Christchurch Hospital Emergency Department sooner. A total of 42 of the 43 victims killed at Masjid an-Nur had received inevitably fatal gunshot wounds. The remaining person killed had received injuries which in their totality the pathologist considered to be rapidly lethal at the scene, and therefore not survivable.<sup>46</sup>

## **7 INITIAL RESPONDERS – LINWOOD ISLAMIC CENTRE**

### **Police**

- 7.1 Police arrived at the Linwood Islamic Centre at 1.59 pm and made the scene secure, searching each individual room and vehicles to clear the area and ensure it was safe. While this was being completed other Police officers immediately assisted the wounded victims, commencing first aid and triaging the need for further medical care. Other first responders were brought in to assist once it was considered safe to do so (see paragraph 7.4 below).
- 7.2 Police staff who attended this masjid also consisted of Armed Offender's Squad and Special Tactics Group officers as well as normal constabulary members.
- 7.3 The Police national medical portfolio holder for the Special Tactics Group oversaw the initial emergency medical care of all persons and managed and oversaw the initial care and triage of the wounded.

### **Medical staff**

- 7.4 Shortly after the Police made the scene safe, doctors and nurses were brought onto the scene from an adjoining medical centre to assist with some victims being transported directly to hospital by Police vehicle.

### **Ambulance services**

- 7.5 When the first ambulance arrived, paramedics took control of the triage and first aid care for the victims. All victims were triaged by paramedics and/or first responders with paramedic qualifications.
- 7.6 Along with the paramedics, Police used the expertise of doctors from the nearby medical centre to verify the deaths of those at Linwood Mosque.

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<sup>46</sup> Statement of Martin Sage dated 29 December 2020.

## **Ability to survive injuries**

- 7.7 An expert pathologist's opinion is that those who were killed at the Linwood Islamic Centre had suffered inevitably fatal injuries that meant they would not have survived had they been evacuated to the Christchurch Hospital Emergency Department sooner. Six of the seven victims killed at the Linwood Islamic Centre suffered inevitably fatal gunshot wounds. The seventh person had a pattern of injury considered rapidly fatal at the scene. Surgical intervention may have been able to salvage the injuries but only in circumstances where the victim was virtually at the hospital at the time the injuries were received.<sup>47</sup>

## **8 VICTIMS USE OF CELLPHONES FROM INSIDE THE MASJIDAIN**

- 8.1 As part of the investigation into the individual's actions Police spent significant time exploring and obtaining cell phone footage captured by victims from in the masjidain. Worshippers had both taken film recordings or, in some cases, called loved ones to warn and advise them of the terrorist attacks.
- 8.2 The Masjid an-Nur CCTV footage shows victims talking on their cell phones while receiving medical treatment and while being removed from the masjid.
- 8.3 In one case a victim who had escaped the individual's initial attack was talking to loved ones when they were shot.<sup>48</sup>
- 8.4 There is one example of cell phone connectivity to loved ones outside the masjid during and following the attack, where investigations have shown the victim was in fact deceased at the time of that connectivity. Police investigations have shown that this is explained by an anomaly in the cellular phone and/or connectivity on the day.<sup>49</sup>
- 8.5 An expert pathologist's opinion is that having inevitably fatal injuries does not mean a person necessarily becomes unconscious or is unable to function immediately. In some cases a person's organs can continue to function for minutes before they die, and with some injuries people can perform tasks or move about for seconds or minutes. These things do not change the inevitably fatal nature of victims' injuries.<sup>50</sup>

## **9 FURTHER INFORMATION ON INDIVIDUAL VICTIMS**

- 9.1 In addition to the information provided in this Overview, Police are able to provide further specific information relevant to each of the deceased victims.
- 9.2 For reasons of privacy and out of respect to next-of-kin, Police will only provide this information to registered next-of-kin of each victim should they want to receive it.

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<sup>47</sup> Statement of Martin Sage dated 29 December 2020.

<sup>48</sup> Document 2606.

<sup>49</sup> Document 6389 and 6448.

<sup>50</sup> Statement of Martin Sage dated 29 December 2020.

9.3 The information available in respect of each deceased victim may vary from case to case depending on circumstances and some of the content could be distressing. Further information that can be made available upon request includes;

- A summary of known circumstances relating to each victim
- CCTV image of the victim entering the mosque, if available
- Overview map depicting the approximate location that the victim was located
- Verification of Death
- Coroner's Certificate and Release of Body documentation
- Post Mortem Report
- Disaster Victim Identification Report

C Farrant  
Detective Senior Sergeant  
Canterbury CIB

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*DOCUMENT PRODUCTION*

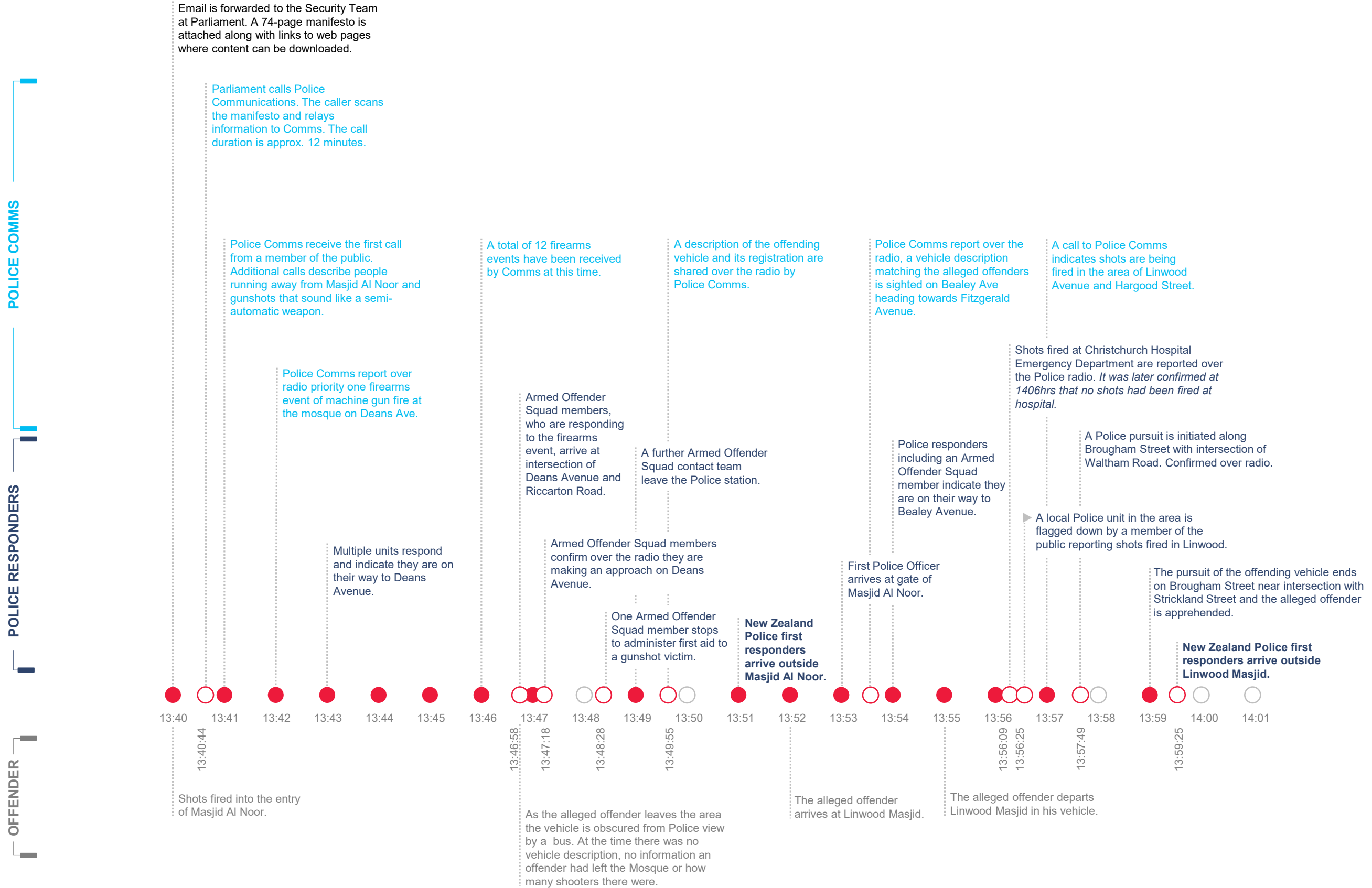
**AUTHOR** CFC985, Detective Senior Sergeant Craig Farrant  
**REVIEWED BY** GM8230, Detective Inspector Gregory Murton  
**RELEASED BY** DLG012, Detective Superintendent David Lynch

# *Operation Deans*

## **Evidential Overview – Appendix A**



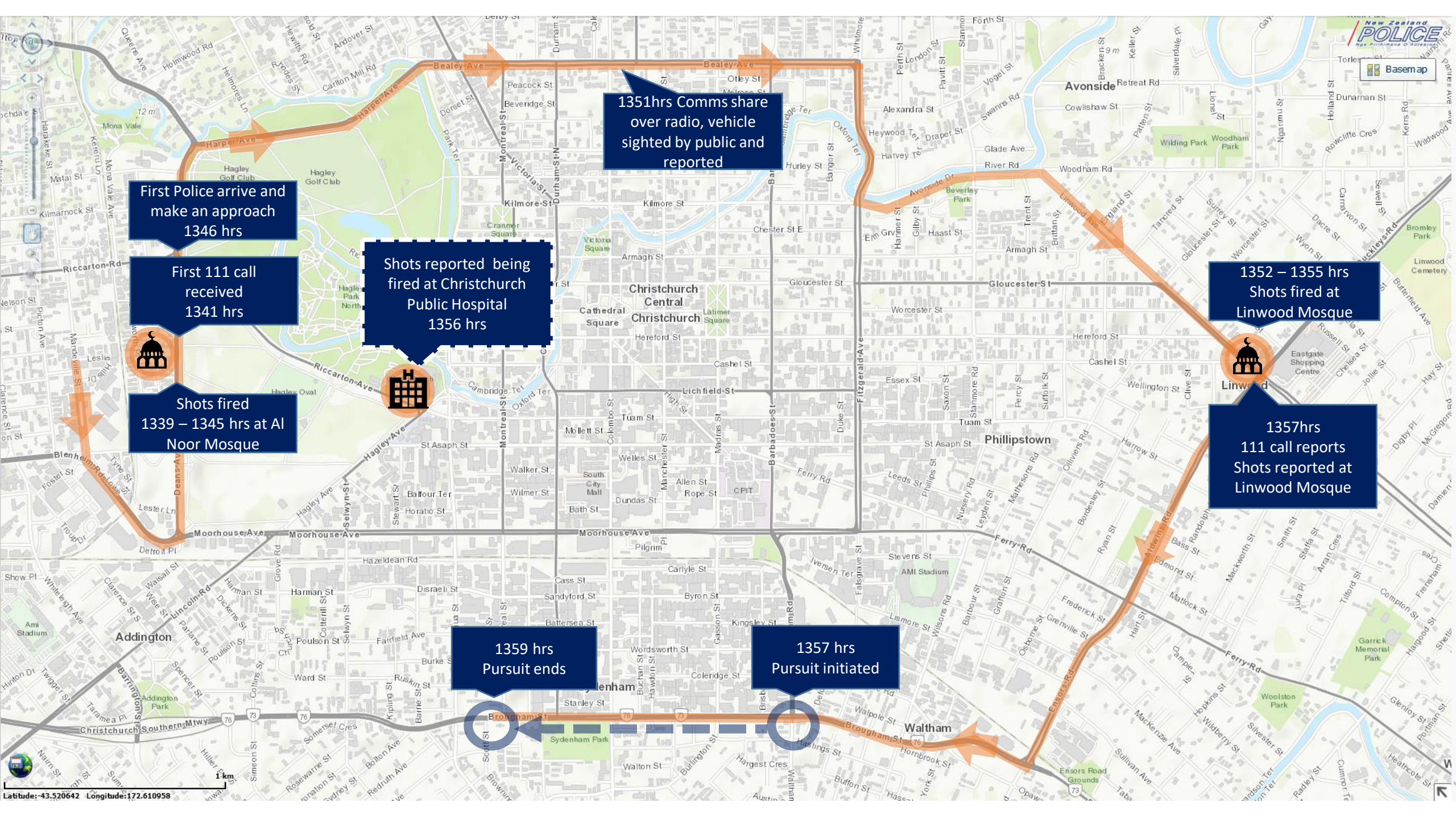
# Christchurch Mosque Shootings: Timeline of events 15 March 2019



# *Operation Deans*

## **Evidential Overview – Appendix B**





1351hrs Comms share over radio, vehicle sighted by public and reported

First Police arrive and make an approach  
1346 hrs

First 111 call received  
1341 hrs

Shots reported being fired at Christchurch Public Hospital  
1356 hrs

Shots fired  
1339 – 1345 hrs at Al Noor Mosque

1352 – 1355 hrs  
Shots fired at Linwood Mosque

1357hrs  
111 call reports  
Shots reported at Linwood Mosque

1359 hrs  
Pursuit ends

1357 hrs  
Pursuit initiated



# *Operation Deans*

## **Evidential Overview – Appendix C**

# CROWN SUMMARY OF FACTS

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