

Senate Standing Committees on Economics
PO Box 6100 , Parliament House,
Canberra, ACT 2600

17 July 2015

Dear Committee Members,

THIRD PARTY CERTIFICATE FOOD INQUIRY

Points a,c, f & g of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference relate to Halal Certification. My comments in relation to point (b) refer to Halal, Kosher, GMO and Country of Origin Labelling. Where reference is made to ritual slaughter my comments relate to both Halal and Kosher)

a. the extent of food certification schemes and certifiers in Australia including, but not limited to, schemes related to organic, kosher, halal and genetically-modified food and general food safety certification schemes;

According to Islam, everything is 'halal' (permitted) unless there is proof that it is 'haram' (forbidden). Haram relates only to; blood, alcohol, meat or any products from a forbidden animal, including pigs and any carnivorous animals or birds or prey or meat or any products of an animal that has not been slaughtered in the correct manner in the name of Allah. Halal certification in Australia works on the exact opposite principle, i.e. everything is 'haram' unless it is declared by the certifiers to be halal.

There are currently hundreds and hundreds of Australian products that carry certification although they are naturally 'halal' e.g. fresh herbs, water, flour, chocolate, cream, butter, bread, honey, fish, sugar, vegetables, fruit and nuts & grains etc.

In addition, non-food products are also being certified e.g. halal underwear and panties, sanitary pads, cosmetics, knives and forks, ink, sex toys, clothing, swimming pool salt, soap, dishwashing powder, resins and the list grows daily.

Clearly, there is something very wrong when products that are naturally halal are being certified, and non-food products are also receiving certification.

b. current labelling requirements of food certification schemes;

Current labelling schemes in Australia are inadequate because they are voluntary. Halal Certified products in most situations, are impossible to identify as more and more companies are choosing not to display the logo. I have emailed many companies up to three times and not received a response.

1. I don't want to buy genetically modified food that has been sprayed with chemicals.
2. I want to know the country of 'origin' of all the food I buy. Local and imported is not sufficient information.
3. Under no circumstances do I want to financially support any religious ideology. Whether it be Halal, Kosher or any other religion.
4. Under no circumstances do I want to support the barbaric religious slaughtering practices of some religions.

c. the need for labelling on products produced by companies that pay certification fees;

If Australian companies choose to certify their products when certification is not necessary, then that is entirely up to them. However, as a consumer, I am entitled to clear, unambiguous labelling so that I can make informed purchasing decisions. I do not want to pay for certification fees when it is a requirement necessary for only 2% of the population. There are currently hundreds of Australian companies who have chosen to certify their products but do not display the logo. I'm at a loss to understand why would a company pay for certification fees and not display the logo? How do their 'target market' i.e. the Islamic community know that their products are permissible to eat? Surely this defeats the purpose of certifying one's products.

If the Islamic community requires food certification, then it needs to be 'user pays'. A simple solution is mandatory labelling on all packaging, which will allow all consumers to make informed buying decisions and clear up the current discontent. In addition, supermarkets need to have Halal/Kosher/GM/Organic sections for ease of identification by consumers. Lastly, company websites need to clearly advise consumers that their products are certified

d. whether current schemes provide enough information for Australian consumers to make informed purchasing decisions;

As mentioned previously, current labelling of halal certified foods are inadequate because they are voluntary. There needs to be the immediate introduction of compulsory labelling so that consumers can make informed purchasing decisions.

In addition to compulsory labelling, all meat that has been slaughtered according to religious beliefs (Halal or Kosher) needs to be labelled either:

1. **Ritually Slaughtered** where no stun has been used; and
2. **Halal Slaughtered** where a reversible stun has been used.

f. the importance of food certification schemes in relation to export market access and returns to producers;

While certification may be required for some exports, what is happening in the Australian domestic market has nothing to do with exports.

A good example of this is the chicken industry. More than 70% of all chicken, slaughtered in Australia is slaughtered according to Sharia Law i.e. Islamic principles and rituals, yet only 2% of the consumers are Muslim. Most chicken meat produced in Australia is consumed locally, with just under 5 per cent being exported primarily to South Africa, Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, Papua New Guinea & the South Pacific Islands (DAFF, 2011) [The Australian Chicken Meat Industry: An Industry Profile](#), (AMCF Inc March 2015). These are not even primarily Muslim countries. This means that nearly all chicken meat produced in Australia is eaten in Australia.

Baiada/Steggles and Ingham have more than 70% of the market share and all of their chickens are certified. Other companies like Red Lea also pay certification fees. How is it that Baiada/Steggles and Ingham are paying certification fees when only 2% of the population is Muslim and just under 5% of chicken meat is exported?

g. the extent and adequacy of information available to the public about certifiers including, but not limited to, certification processes, fees and financial records; and any related matters."

Halal certification schemes are unregulated and lack transparency. Many Australian companies are made to sign non-disclosure agreements and in my opinion, any kind of secrecy in certification clearly warrants thorough investigation.

There is now ample evidence in the public arena both in Australia and overseas to support the theory that funds from halal certification do go to some dubious causes / charities. In fact, the Islamic Council of Western Australia in the last paragraph of their President's Report (Annual Report 2013), stated *"During the year ICWA had made ongoing donations to Syria because of the difficult civil conditions. The donations were through Al Imdaad Charity to ensure that no recriminations could be directed at the ICWA"*. [ICWA President's Report 2013](#)

To say there is no link between Halal certification and the funding of terrorist organisations is premature and naïve. To date, there has not been any thorough investigations carried by Australian authorities. There are many examples around the world that support this theory. **Please refer to Appendix 1:**

Lastly, this is about free choice, and I choose not to donate to the Islamic religion, just as the Islamic religion would not donate to my Christian church. Money from halal certification goes to supporting the Islamic community and also helps to build schools, mosques, etc. In fact, on June 2015, Islamic community leader Jamal Rifi called on halal certification groups to fund deradicalisation programs and said “**revenue collected by halal certifiers belonged to the “Muslim community”**”. As an Australian Christian, and as a consumer, I am outraged knowing that I am being forced to contribute to an ideology (Islam) that I am vehemently opposed to, often without my knowledge or approval.

Thank you for considering my submission,

Appendix 1

WHO CHECKS THE FACT CHECKER WHEN THE FACT CHECKER DOESN'T FACT CHECK?

Paul Zanetti – 14 April 2015

The problem with being a self-appointed 'fact checker' is, that when you don't fact check, you risk being just another discredited propaganda mouthpiece.

And when that fact checker is part of the ABC, well, one can only assume like many of the publicly-funded broadcaster's arms, it starts out with a predetermined position, and works backwards to pick and choose the information to mold its agenda.

Take, for example, today's FACTCHECK; Does halal certification fund terrorism?

Their so-called investigation was prompted by Pauline Hanson's claim on the Nine Network's Today program that halal certification was a money-making racket.

"It is a profit money-making racket. The money goes into Islamic organisations and has been connected to the Muslim Brotherhood in France and actually also in Canada," she said.

The 'Fact Check' report was a light surface scratch of a complex scam.

For example, on their primary question, 'Does halal certification fund terrorism?'

The facts say ' YES'.

Fact Checker says, 'NO'

You can read the Fact Check report here:

www.abc.net.au/.../fact-check-does-halal-certificatio.../6383238

Now, there's a world of information available to you if you bother to look. But if you choose to look away from a problem, or somewhere else, and then proclaim, 'nothing to see here', that doesn't mean the problem doesn't exist. It just means you're in denial.

Let's take a look at the evidence.

Pauline Hanson referred to the Muslim Brotherhood, which is a proscribed terrorist organisation by some governments, but not by the Australian government. Countries that do classify the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organisation are, Russia, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. There are cases where funds from Halal certification has been funnelled to the Muslim Brotherhood, but for the purpose of this exercise, we will look only at terrorism as classified by the Australian government.

Hamas is listed as a terrorist organisation by the Australian government.

You can see this on the Australian government National Security page here:

www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/.../Hamasslzzal-Dinal-QassamBriga...

In the US, France and Canada it has been proven that halal certification schemes have funded proscribed terrorist organisations.

According to publicly available information, the Canadian halal certifier MAC (Muslim Association of Canada) funnelled \$14.6 million to the International Relief Fund for the Afflicted and Needy (IRFAN) Canada (an Islamic front charity), which in turn contributed to terrorist organisations including Hamas. These scams have now been broken up and the ringleaders charged. The Canadian government has subsequently classified IRFAN as a terrorist entity.

The Muslim Association of Canada (MAC), the main Muslim Brotherhood organisation in Canada owns the halal certification agency. For over ten years, MAC has been an important contributor to IRFAN-Canada, the Hamas fund collector in the country.

Hamas is involved in a program aiming not only at the elimination of the state of Israel but also at the destruction of Western civilization.

In a speech given on October 2011, its leader Mahmoud Al-Zahhar stated that "This (Western) civilization will not be able to withstand the great and glorious Islam." The Canada Revenue Agency revoked IRFAN-Canada's charity status in April 2011 after having concluded that it financed the terrorist organisation Hamas.

You can read this in detail here:

<http://pointdebasculecanada.ca/muslim-association-of-canad.../>

On April 29, 2014, Steven Blaney, Canadian Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness announced that the Government of Canada has listed IRFAN-Canada as a terrorist entity under the Criminal Code.

(Quote)

The listing process requires extensive analysis of intelligence and/or criminal information. Between 2005 and 2009, IRFAN-Canada transferred approximately \$14.6 million worth of resources to various organizations associated with Hamas.

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) revoked IRFAN-Canada's charitable status in 2011. CRA's findings indicated that IRFAN-Canada provided resources to operating partners that were run by officials of Hamas, openly supported and provided funding to Hamas, or have been listed by various jurisdictions because of their support for Hamas.

(Unquote)

You can find this on the Canadian government website here:

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=843809>

That one case alone answers in the affirmative, that yes, halal certification funds terrorism.

In the US, the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) is a major halal certifying body. ISNA is listed by the US Administration in court documents as an unindicted co-conspirator with links to the Muslim Brotherhood and their various front groups.

The Justice Department designated ISNA as "an un-indicted co-conspirator as part of its successful 2007 trial of those accused of coordinating fundraising efforts for Hamas in the United States through the Dallas-based Holy Land Foundation, (listed as a terrorist organisation in the United States).

Among the founders of the Holy Land Foundation is Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook, a political leader of Hamas, who provided substantial funds to the Holy Land Foundation in the early 1990s, before Hamas was designated a terrorist organization. HLF reported Marzook's donations on its tax returns. Marzook was deported from the US to Jordan in 1997. He was indicted on August 20, 2004, by a US federal grand jury in Chicago. He and two other individuals were charged with a 15-year conspiracy to raise funds for terrorist attacks against Israel.

The judge's (Judge Solis) ruling reads: "The Government has produced ample evidence to establish the association of ISNA, with the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP), and with Hamas".

Key evidence presented at the trial were checks written to known Hamas terrorists and deposited into ISNA accounts from where they were passed on to Hamas. Shukri Abu Bakr, now serving a 65-year sentence following his conviction on multiple counts of providing material support to Hamas, admitted to working from inside ISNA's headquarters as he served as Hamas's top operative in the United States.

A three-page memo produced at the trial fingered both Abu Baker and ISNA as working together for the “coordination and accounting” of Hamas’s deadly suicide bombing campaign that killed and wounded thousands of Israelis between 2000 and 2003, during the so-called “2nd Palestinian Intifada.” Al-Imdaad Foundation – a South African charity, the British branch of which has previously partnered with Viva Palestina, the pro-Hamas charity established by George Galloway and that included Hamas activists among its staff.

In France, researchers of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre documented ties between one of the largest certification organisations UOIF (Union des Organisations Islamiques de France) and the Muslim Brotherhood as well as radical clerics involved in jihad campaigns.

The report states: “Furthermore, the UOIF participates directly in the financing of Hamas, through a French-registered charitable organisation, the CBSP (Palestinian Charitable and Relief Committee)”.

AUSTRALIA

Much of the funnelling of funds to terrorists is done via Islamic charities, or Not For Profit Organisations (NPOs).

A number of Islamic charities are either proscribed as terrorist organisations or are accused of ties to terrorism.

You can see some of these here:

http://en.wikipedia.org/.../List_of_charities_accused_of_ties...

In Australia, an entry in the annual report of the halal certifier, Islamic Council of Western Australia (ICWA), confirms using profits for “...ongoing donations to Syria. Because of the difficult civil conditions, the donations were made through ‘Al Imdaad’ (Islamic charity) to ensure that no recriminations could be directed at ICWA”.

You can read it here (last line):

<http://www.islamiccouncilwa.com.au/presidents-report/>

Al-Imdaad Foundation has previously partnered with Viva Palestina, the pro-Hamas charity that included Hamas activists among its staff.

One of Al-Imdaad’s trustees, Qari Ziyaad Patel, has written and sung a nasheed (Islamic song) in praise of the Taliban.

In 2012-13, Al-Imdaad's British branch raised over £400,000 for the IHH, a Turkish charity widely accused of funding terrorism that publicly supports Hamas. Al-Imdaad UK has also given over £50,000 (over \$80,000) to the Zamzam Foundation, a Somali charity run by the Saudi funded Somali Muslim Brotherhood.

In addition, events organized by Al-Imdaad UK have included speakers such as Maulana Sulaimaan Ravat, a South African preacher who has propagated conspiracy theories that Jews overthrew Libya's dictator, Colonel Gaddafi, in order to steal Libya's oil reserves.

On September 16, 2014, The Sydney Daily Telegraph reported:

"Islamic State supporters are siphoning money from charities and using not-for-profit organisations as a guise to transfer funds from Australia to finance terrorism.

"Terror groups have turned to charities as a vehicle to move sizable funds because surveillance of financial transfers has increased significantly."

You can read more here:

www.dailytelegraph.com.au/.../ch.../story-fni0cx12-1227059675528

Human Appeal International (HAI) is an Islamic charity established in 1984. It has 14 offices worldwide including local offices in Australia at Lakemba (Sydney), Coburg (Melbourne) and Mile End (Adelaide).

America's CIA rang alarm bells about HAI nearly 20 years ago in 1996, reporting, "International Islamic charities have established a presence in nearly every country around the world that has a substantial Muslim population. Islamic activists dominate the leadership of the largest charities and prominent members of some smaller organisations have been identified as extremists.

In regard to Human Appeal International (HAI) the CIA states, "Support to Extremist/Terrorist Activities: Among other activities, this organisation probably acts as a fund-raiser for Hamas."

In 2003 the US FBI outlined, "...a close relationship between Human Appeal International and Hamas". The FBI further reported that HAI was a major recipient of funding from the outlawed 'Specially Designated Global Terrorist' (SDGT) entity, and the 'Holy Land Foundation' (HLF).

In February 2005 Hamas' website openly announced the receipt of funds from HAI, and in September of that year HAI was implicated in the investigation of British Hamas fundraiser Ahmad Saltana.

The Gatestone Institute in the US, is a non-partisan, not-for-profit international policy council which analyses and reports on issues such as military and diplomatic threats to the United States and its allies, events in the Middle East and their possible consequences, and the transparency and accountability of international organisations.

The Institute reported in June 2013 on 'charities' that are linked to Hamas, based on various government sources.

Its report on HAI is as follows:

In 2005, a website belonging to Hamas reported that funds were transferred from Human Appeal's affiliated organisation in the UAE to IQRA and Rifdah, two Hamas front organisations based in the West Bank.

In 2004, documents obtained from the US Internal Revenue Service by Senator Charles Grassley revealed that the IRS considered Human Appeal International to be one of a number of charities "which finance terrorism and perpetuate violence."

Further, leaked State Department cables also revealed that staff from the Human Appeal UAE branch were funding terror groups, and that, "In 2003, there were indications that HAI was sending financial support to organisations associated with Hamas and that members of its field offices in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Chechnya had connections to al-Qaeda associates."

In 2008, the Israeli Government proscribed a number of Human Appeal's affiliated international branches as "bodies that are active abroad and which are responsible for raising very large sums for Hamas activities in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip."

In July 2011, Human Appeal International was one of a number of charities honoured at a Hamas ceremony in Gaza.

Also in July 2011, Human Appeal hosted, along with the Palestinian Forum of Britain, an event with a number of radical hate preachers and Hamas supporters.

The Palestinian Forum of Britain is one of the UK's leading pro-Hamas organisations, whose spokesman is Zaher Al-Birawi, a man closely connected to the Hamas leadership.

One speaker at Human Appeal's 2011 event was Raed Saleh, a prominent supporter of Hamas, known for his anti-Semitic and anti-homosexual views. Saleh has claimed that 4,000 Jews skipped work at the World Trade Centre on 9/11, those who killed the "Martyr, Sheikh Osama Bin Laden" had "sold their consciences to Satan", and that the honour killing of girls is acceptable.

One of Saleh's poems includes the lines:

"You Jews are criminal bombers of mosques,
Slaughterers of pregnant women and babies.
Robbers and germs in all times,
The Creator sentenced you to be loser monkeys,
Victory belongs to Muslims, from the Nile to the Euphrates."

Saleh is best known for his frequent invocation of the 'blood libel' -- an ancient anti-Semitic claim that Jews kill children to use their blood to make matzah at Passover. Even a British court concluded that Saleh's comments were hateful of Jews.

Saleh was joined at the Human Appeal event by Ahmad Noufal (also spelled 'Nawfal'), a prominent figure in the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood who is "directly involved in sponsoring and organising Hamas terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians." In 2005, Noufal endorsed the French Holocaust denier Roger Garaudy on Saudi television:

Roger Garaudy said: "If we take the number of gas chambers and the maximal daily capacity of an oven, and multiply them by the period, you Zionists claim the Holocaust lasted – even if we multiply the number of ovens by the maximal [capacity], the figure is grossly exaggerated. The number of those burned [sic] was 600,000. You added another zero, and turned it into six million."

In December 2011, Human Appeal hosted an event which featured the hate preacher Haitham al-Haddad as a guest speaker. Al-Haddad regards Jews as, "enemies of god, and the descendants of apes and pigs", and disregards any form of peace until "Allah's law [will] govern the whole earth, and for no other law to remain."

Haddad deems homosexuality a crime and supports the subjugation of women, telling them: "you must obey [your husband]." (end)

In Australia, Human Appeal International raises much of its funds through an annual concert called 'Sounds of Light', held at the end of each year at Flemington Racecourse, Melbourne, Olympic Park, Sydney, Town Hall, Adelaide and Riverside Theatre, Perth.

A major 'Gold' sponsor of Sound of Light is Halal Helpline (www.halalhelpline.org). Gold sponsorship for the HAI Sounds of Light concert is \$20,000.

Halal Helpline is an affiliate of Sydney-based Halal Certification Authority Pty Ltd.

Financing terrorism is an offence under the federal Criminal Code with a penalty of life imprisonment.

According to the federal Attorney-General's Department a person can be convicted of financing terrorism if they "donate to a charity and are aware there is a substantial risk that the donation will be used for terrorism purposes".

When the Australian federal Police or Crime Commission is asked if halal certification in Australia is linked to terrorism, journalists usually get the stock standard answer that, "We have no information to indicate there are links to terrorism financing from halal certification fees" or "we are not aware of any direct links between the legitimate halal certification industry and money laundering or the financing of terrorist groups,"

That doesn't mean there isn't evidence. It just means they haven't looked or it's impossible to follow the complex money trail designed by the terrorist funders to create a web of deceit.

David Chaikin, an expert on international financial crime at the University of Sydney Business School has said, "If money goes to an overseas charity, the problem we've got is that charity may give money to another charity and that's impossible to track,"

"I think it's a bit of a needle in a haystack."

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is a global independent intergovernmental body that develops policies to protect the global financial system against money laundering and terrorist financing.

FATF recommendations are recognised as the standard for global anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorist financing (CTF). The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) references FATF for its intelligence on terrorist funding.

The AIC is Australia's national research and knowledge centre on crime and justice under the watch of the Federal Minister for Justice, Michael Keenan.

The most recent report by an Australian government on the links between terrorists and non-profit organisations was over three years ago.

Julia Gillard was Prime Minister, Nicola Roxon was Attorney General and Jason Clare was Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Justice.

On February 10, 2012, Roxon and Clare released a report by the AIC on the risks of money laundering and terrorism funding by NPOs. It was pretty much just a rehash of the FATF warnings.

The AIC report contains no local information or scrutiny of any NPOs, because they've not been checked out. So of course our intelligence agencies will tell reporters they have 'no evidence' of links from halal certification to terror.

The AIC admits damningly:

"Australia has not conducted a similar examination of financial management in the non-profit sector, other than to produce guidelines that include best-practice approaches to mitigating risk of abuse (see Regulation of the non-profit sector)." (end)

In other words, "We haven't bothered to look."

The report found that smaller, local, community-based NPOs, especially informal ethnic and faith-based charities (i.e. Islamic) often fall outside the watchful regulatory eye of our government agencies and are especially likely to be used for financing terrorism.

The report says terror funding is undertaken by exploiting legitimate charities where funds raised for charitable purposes are diverted to individuals or groups associated with terrorism. Sham charities are common.

In a number of cases, the NPO collects funds intended for humanitarian aid or welfare relief, but a percentage is specifically intended for the financing of terrorists.

Many of the implicated "charities" form part of a complex web, moving funds between multiple accounts held by various charities, sister NPOs, companies (both legitimate and fictitious) and individuals.

Multiple conduits are used in the country of money origin and transferred across different jurisdictions, before eventually being transmitted to the intended recipient(s) – terrorists.

Funds are first deposited into the bank accounts of charities, or of individuals associated with charities, before being transferred, using cash deposits, wire transfers or other remittance schemes.