

To the Inquiry on labelling on foods:

My name is Michelle Hall; I am 59 years old and the mother of six children. I am a house wife and a patriot. I am of not particular religious persuasion. I am opposed to the certification of any foods and the costs of this unnecessary practice for the Australian domestic market.

My concerns are in relation: Halal certification.

1. The lack of transparency in the additional costs of this particular certification on all foods, in the Domestic market.
2. The lack of identification of this certification on meat in particular displayed at point of sale.
3. The distribution of funds collected by the certifiers to an exclusive group but forced upon the wider community to fund.
4. The transparency of the financial gain and distribution of funds collected for the certification of Halal. The status of the Charity organisation or non for profit, when it is a business enterprise and out of the arms reach of Taxation and the ASIC, because of this classification.
5. The imposing of a religious requirement on the wider community by a minority group. **Halal food is simply a religious food tax imposed by Muslims on non-Muslims.**
6. The Introduction/ infiltration of a different law system on the wider community by stealth.
7. The lack of consideration towards other religious groups, this requirement of Sharia law method of slaughter and part of the certification process, stands against their other religious practices.

8. The reduction of other slaughterman who are of a different religion, whose jobs have been filled by the demand of this certification requirement. As the certifiers demand that it must be by a person of the same religion for certification to be granted. ISLAMIC.

In closing this for consideration, I would like to direct questions to my issues raised.

1. What did the Islamic group do for food prior to the application of Halal certification Is Halal certification for the domestic market required?
2. Why is the certification applicable to items that are not for human consumption?
3. If it be deemed necessary for the purpose of export only. How will you apply the costs to the export market only, and regulate that all costs apply to export goods only and do not transfer to the domestic market?
4. Due to the lack of control on the money taken as a result of this certification practise, Will you recommend, to change the classification of the certification business from a charity based model to a business so that regulatory and scrutiny of activities can apply?
5. Will you recommend that any Halal product that is sold within the domestic market is clearly and without exception offered as a fee free product and is clearly labelled as a Halal product at point of sale?
6. Will you recommend that, the unnecessary and inhumane slaughter of all animals comply with Australian standards pre

Halal and any other religious practice, both for domestic and export regardless of religious demands within Australia?

Kind regards

Michelle Hall.

I will attempt to expand on my concerns:

1. There is no need for the domestic market to be bearing the costs of this certification process that has developed for the purpose of export. Small boutique suppliers have met the demand for the Jewish community for their religious requirements for years. Halal is not a cost for the wider community to cover. Halal is only required for a 2% of the domestic market. The basis for certification may have been for quick identification of unknown product, but not required by 98% of the population. It is unjust to impose this on the wider community. Please find attached religious requirements for what is Halal and what is deemed correct in order to eat foods attachment .(1A)

2. When I go to the supermarket, the only indications of Halal certified foods are the small symbol on a label or the RSPCA approved sign on the chicken. . I have asked about other meat products and have been told that the boxes that the meat arrives at the store has Halal certified label on it, but the individual pre packed, do not have any reference to this process. My freedom of choice along with the rest of the community to enable an informed decision as to the ethics to purchase a product that is Halal certified has ceased. Why then, should the majority of consumers be forced to seek this information individually, when it is clearly available to the seller?



Failure to adequately label food is against the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (CCA) (formerly known as the Trade Practices Act 1974) which contains a general prohibition against conduct that misleads or deceives or is likely to mislead or deceive.

3. I have looked at the charity statement available to the public on the charities site. I use in point of reference the Islamic council of Victoria's statement. The collection of funds by this certification process is not seen to be distributed back into the wider community, yet the costs and fees associated with the certification on products for both the domestic and export market for a minority group in Australia is collected from the wider community. As this is for the sole benefit of a 2% minority it needs to be collected from the community for which require the certification and not forced upon the wider community to fund.

4 A. I do not have a degree in business or economics, as far as I can see it is for the benefit of this particular group to be a charity or non for profit organisation. When the concept of certification developed, I could see how, the above organisations may have undertaken this as an arm of a community service for the minority group that resided in Australia. As the Halal is now a multi- million dollar business globally. It needs to be reclassified. A crack down on multi-National companies evading taxation obligations and this is one.

B. GST is identified on a sales docket; to display the amount has been collected. There are no references to the costs attached to the product for this certification. In my opinion it is a tax / donation and should be identified at point of sale. Donations to charitable organisations are tax deductible and a receipt should be given. NOTE: not that I consider this to a wider community cost and should be removed with exception to the people who may require it. Or by voluntary donations.

5&6. If 98% are not of this religion and therefore do not require this practice, why is it being forced upon the 98%? It is also against other religions to consume foods that have been sacrificed to an Idol. This is also part of the biggest religious group The Christians. This also pertains to the issue of non-discloser and only for the benefit of one 2% minority group. This is a question of ethics.

Life is sacred

Islam places great emphasis in the way in which an animal's life ends, which has to be in accordance with Islamic regulations. Life is a sacred blessing of God to creation, animals as well as humans.

If the life of an animal has to be ended for human survival, then its life should only be taken in the name of God. Hence, the phrase bismillah ('in the name of God') **must be uttered just before slaughtering an animal.**

Muslims cannot consume the meat of animals that are sacrificed in a name other than God. Any animal slaughtered in the name of a person alive or dead, any deity or idol will be considered as haram and therefore it is not permissible for Muslims to consume that meat.

Again taken from the Islamic councils own writings. It is the same values given to other religions ,yet ignored by the permission of the government who need to consider all of the community.

"Every human being is responsible only for his own works." 53:39 . This also allows the people of this group to bless their own food to make it lawful. Again rendering this certification unnecessary. It is also a requirement on all food to be consumed.

This is the definition given by the Islamic council on what is Halal. I, question the part B. When referencing both of the religious text, no reference to the process is defined. This has been included as part of the UN necessary practice to validate the costs and need of certification.

. Definition

In general every food is considered halal in Islam unless it is specially prohibited by the Qur'an or the Hadith . By official definition, halal foods are those that are:

- a. Free from any component that Muslims are prohibited from consuming according to Islamic law (Shariah).
- b. Processed, made, produced, manufactured and/or stored using utensils, equipment and/or machinery that have been cleansed according to Islamic law.

7. This whole certification and the application to the wider community, places us under the requirements of Sharia Law. This is not the legal system in this country. Other areas of this have started to emerge and it is and should not be allowed to flourish and establish its self within our culture. The contrasting of aspects of this practice are in direct opposition of the fundamental principles we hold in all aspect of our daily lives. I as one reject this system, and its development on our food supply is concerning.

8. I challenge all of this as none of it appears in the books of faith. It has been contrived to create the need for certification and the Tax placed upon Non-Muslims. Remembering that the instructions on the whole of this ideology came from 630ad and have been re-written by the so called scholars' and interpreted daily to meet the every changing environment to suit that of the Islamic person alone. If one accepts the changes made by the scholar ,then one must accept the decree of late." It is perfectly alright to eat your dead wife if hungry".

This is taken from the Islamic councils own page. **Halal/Haram**

Foods containing ingredients such as gelatin, enzymes, emulsifiers, and flavours are questionable, because the origin of these ingredients is not known.

In the meat and poultry food industry, animals such as cows, veal, lamb, sheep, goats, turkeys, chickens, ducks, game birds, bison, venison, etc, are considered halal, but they must be prepared according to Islamic laws in order for their meat to be suitable for consumption (see below). None of these appear in in any text.

Fish and seafood (with the exception of crocodiles, alligators and frogs) are generally acceptable for Muslims but as always check first, as there may be a personal dietary preference or allergy. The preparation of the fish or seafood should not include alcohol (ie batter or wine, or anything considered haram).

In cases of necessity, prohibited things may become permissible (halal) for the duration of the emergency or need, as Islam puts a priority on life over death. Refer to Qur'an at Chapter 2:173 (Al Baqarah).

Islamic Halal Meat Preparation and Supervision

In Australia, the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC – the peak Muslim body) certifies and trains Islamic slaughtermen for the meat and poultry industry. AFIC's Halal Service Manager travels throughout Australia to various abattoirs/farms, meat and non-meat food companies, drugs, cosmetic establishments to perform Islamic supervision, audit/inspection, and halal preparation.

Halal products are derived from animals and/or poultry that have been prepared according to Islamic law under the following statement, “In the name of God – God is the Greatest/Bismillahi Allahu Akbar”.

Halal products and production are properly separated and clearly identified from non-halal products.

Islamic Slaughter

Muslims are only allowed to eat meat that has been prepared according to Islamic law. This method is often challenged by animal rights activists as ‘causing unnecessary suffering to the animal’. Muslims disagree and say that Islamic law on killing animals is designed to reduce the pain and distress that the animal suffers.

AFIC has strict rules with regards to Islamic slaughter. These rules state:

- 1. The slaughterer must be a sane adult Muslim.**
2. The slaughterer must say the name of God before making the cut.
3. The name of God is said in order to emphasise the sanctity of life and that the animal is being killed for food with God's consent.

4. The animal must be killed by cutting the throat with one continuous motion of a sharp knife.
5. The cut must sever at least three of the trachea, oesophagus, and the two blood vessels on either side of the throat.
6. The spinal cord must not be cut.
7. Animals must be well treated before being killed.
8. Animals must not see other animals being killed.
9. The knife must not be sharpened in the animal's presence.
10. The knife blade must be free of blemishes that might tear the wound.
11. The animal must not be in an uncomfortable position.
12. The animal must be allowed to bleed out and be completely dead before further processing.

Part 1. This is work place discrimination, as only 2% of the domestic market requires this practice and the largest percentage do not. It is again for the export market and as the whole of the export market is only 20% global export, for the sole purpose of the Halal certification practice and has eliminated jobs via religion. An employer can not engage in the services of a non-Islamic qualified slaughterman if they are certified for Halal slaughter under these demands which are not of direct religious writings, but derived for the purpose of imposing **an Islamic tax on the food**.

There is also a section that requires the animal to be blessed prior to slaughter, not the slaughterman be of this faith in the religious texts. If the beast is slaughtered without the certification practices, the consumer should also bless food prior to consuming. It again shows the whole certifying practice to be unnecessary.

Therefore eat of that on which allah's name has been mentioned if you are believers in his communications

This can be done before consuming the food.

Attchment

1A. The following are taken from the Quran. And have been use to formulate my opinion on this matter. These are in relation to Halal and Haram pro's and con's.

1.

Halal and Haram Foods according to Quran

In Quran, in the following verses, it has been described what foods are known as halal (lawful) and also haram (unlawful) foods:

say: i do not find in that which has been revealed to me anything forbidden for an eater to eat of except that it be what has **died of itself**, or **blood poured forth**, or flesh of **swine**-- for that surely is unclean-- or that which is a transgression, other than (the name of) allah having been invoked on it; but whoever is driven to necessity, not desiring nor exceeding the limit, then surely your lord is forgiving, merciful

therefore eat of what allah has given you, **lawful and good** (things), and give thanks for allah's favor if him do you serve

he has only forbidden you what **dies of itself** and **blood** and flesh of **swine** and that over which any **other name than that of allah** has been invoked, but whoever is driven to necessity, not desiring nor exceeding the limit, then surely allah is forgiving, merciful

and, for what your tongues describe, do not utter the **lie**, (saying) this is **lawful** and this is **unlawful**, in order to forge a **lie** against allah; surely those who forge the **lie** against allah shall not prosper

forbidden to you is that which **dies of itself**, and **blood**, and flesh of **swine**, and that on which any **other name than that of allah** has been invoked, and the strangled (animal) and that beaten to death, and that killed by a fall and that killed by being smitten with the horn, and that which wild beasts have eaten, except what you slaughter, and what is **sacrificed** on stones set up (for idols) and that you divide by the arrows; that is a transgression. this day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not, and fear me. this day have i perfected for you your religion and completed my favor on you and chosen for you islam as a religion; but whoever is compelled by hunger, not inclining willfully to sin, then surely allah is forgiving, merciful

they ask you as to what is allowed to them. say: the **good things** are allowed to you,

and what you have taught the beasts and birds of prey, training them to hunt-- you teach them of what allah has taught you-- so eat of that which they catch for you and mention the name of allah over it; and be careful of (your duty to) allah; surely allah is swift in reckoning

this day (all) the good things are allowed to you; and **the food of those who have been given the book** is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them; and the chaste from among the believing women and the chaste from among those who have been given the book before you (are lawful for you); when you have given them their dowries, taking (them) in marriage, not fornicating nor taking them for paramours in secret; and whoever denies faith, his work indeed is of no account, and in the hereafter he shall be one of the losers

therefore eat of that on which allah's name has been mentioned if you are believers in his communications

and what reason have you that you should not eat of that on which allah's name has been mentioned, and he has already made plain to you what he has forbidden to you - excepting what you are compelled to; and most surely many would lead (people) astray by their low desires out of ignorance; surely your lord-- he best knows those who exceed the limits

and do not eat of that on which allah's name has not been mentioned, and that is most surely a transgression; and most surely the shaitans suggest to their friends that they should contend with you; and if you obey them, you shall most surely be polytheists

o you who believe! do not forbid (yourselves) the **good** things which allah has made lawful for you and do not exceed the limits; surely allah does not love those who exceed the limits

and eat of the lawful and **good** (things) that allah has given you, and be careful of (your duty to) allah, in whom you believe

o you who believe! **intoxicants** and games of chance and (sacrificing to) stones set up and (dividing by) arrows are only an uncleanness, the shaitan's work; shun it therefore that you may be successful

lawful to you is the game of the **sea and its food**, a provision for you and for the travellers, and the game of the land is forbidden to you so long as you are on pilgrimage, and be careful of (your duty to) allah, to whom you shall be gathered

say: tell me what allah has sent down for you of sustenance, then you make (a part) of it unlawful and (a part) lawful. say: has allah commanded you, or do you forge a **lie** against allah?

and he it is who has made the sea subservient that you may eat **fresh flesh** from it and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear, and you see the ships cleaving through it, and that you might seek of his bounty and that you may give thanks

o children of adam! attend to your embellishments at every time of prayer, and **eat** and **drink** and be not extravagant; surely he does not love the extravagant

o messengers! eat of the **good** things and do **good**; surely i know what you do

o men! eat the lawful and **good** things out of what is in the earth, and do not follow the footsteps of the shaitan; surely he is your open enemy

allah is he who made the **cattle** for you that you may ride on some of them, and some of them you eat