

Questions on Notice for the Department of Agriculture

Third party food certification public hearing – 21 August 2015 – Parliament House, Canberra

1. Please provide a list of countries that specify a particular halal certifier be used to comply with their import requirements. Please also provide the specific Halal certifier imposed by the importing countries.

The following Islamic organisations, current as at 10 September 2015, have an Approved Arrangement with the Department of Agriculture for the certification of red halal meat and red meat products for export to specific markets.

Islamic Organisation	State	Markets with specific listing requirements				
		Indonesia	Malaysia	Saudi Arabia	Singapore	United Arab Emirates and Qatar
Adelaide Mosque Islamic Society of South Australia	SA		X		X	X
Al-Iman Islamic Society	VIC		X		X	X
Australian Halal Development and Accreditation	QLD	X (QLD only)			X	X
Australian Federation of Islamic Councils Inc	NSW	X (NSW Only)		X	X	X
Australian Halal Authority and Advisers	VIC		X		X	
Global Halal Trade Centre Pty Ltd	VIC	X				
Halal Certification Council	QLD	X (QLD only)			X	
Halal Meat Board of Western Australia	WA			X		
Halal Supervisory Board of South Australia for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	SA			X		
Islamic Association of Geraldton	WA		X			
Islamic Association of Katanning	WA		X			X
Islamic Coordinating Council of Victoria	VIC	X (VIC only)	X	X	X (until June 2017)	X
Perth Mosque Incorporated	WA		X		X	X
Supreme Islamic Council of Halal Meat in Australia Inc	NSW	X (NSW Only)	X	X	X	X
Western Australia Halal Authority	WA	X (NT & WA only)			X	

2. Please provide a list of any other requirements that each importing country has requested of Australian exporters, in terms of halal certified meat provided to those countries.

Establishments approved for the production of halal certified meat and meat products for export must comply with the Australian Government Authorised Halal Program (AGAHP), which outlines halal requirements for the majority of export markets. Details of this program are outlined in the *Meat Notice 2009/08: Australian Government Authorised Halal Program - guidelines for the preparation, identification, storage and certification for export of halal red meat and red meat products* (www.agriculture.gov.au/export/food/meat/elmer-3/notices/2009/mn09-08).

Additional requirements also apply for the export of halal meat to:

- **Malaysia:** halal meat must be produced at fully integrated establishments and any haram products (products forbidden by Islamic law) are prohibited on Malaysian listed establishments. Establishments must comply with all requirements outlined under the *Malaysian Protocol for the Halal Meat and Poultry Productions 2011* and *MS 1500:2009 Halal food – production, preparation, handling and storage – general guidelines* (second revision). Further detail about these requirements is provided at Attachment A. The AIO certifying halal meat must be approved by the Malaysian religious authority.
- **Indonesia:** meat must be certified by an AIO based in the same state as the slaughter establishment and the AIO must be approved by the Indonesian religious authority.
- **Egypt:** meat must be produced at a fully integrated establishment. Halal certified meat must be accompanied by a declaration of commitment, signed and stamped by a representative of the Approved Islamic Organisation and the halal certificate must be countersigned at an Egyptian Consulate. Egyptian port quarantine officers must receive a copy of the certificate prior to the arrival of the consignment.
- **Brunei:** a Brunei inspector may be required to be present during the production of halal meat.
- **Iran:** a religious supervisor from Iran and a veterinarian from the Iranian Veterinary Organisation must be present during slaughter to issue an Iranian halal certificate.
- **United Arab Emirates (UAE):** the AIO certifying halal meat must be approved by the UAE religious authority. Additionally, the UAE is currently seeking to implement the Gulf Standardisation Organisation (GSO) Standard 2055 – Halal Products but has not yet commenced enforcing the standard. This three-part standard includes general requirements, requirements for halal certification bodies and requirements for halal accreditation bodies accrediting halal certification bodies. The department is continuing to investigate the proposed changes and is liaising with the UAE to monitor progress and ensure an adequate transition period is in place to reduce any potential disruption to trade. At this stage, the UAE is the only Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) member state seeking to implement the standard, but there is potential for it to be rolled out across all other member states (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia).
- **Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:** the AIO certifying must be approved by the Saudi religious authority. The establishment must include a Saudi program in their Approved Arrangement that must address identification, segregation and inventory control of all Saudi-eligible products, from receiving animals through to the point of loading for export.
- **Singapore:** the AIO certifying halal meat must be approved by the Singapore religious authority.

3. Mr Read stated that possibly “20 to 30 per cent” of product from export abattoirs flows into the domestic market (21 August Committee Hansard, p.37). What proportion of the domestic market does this product account for?

The department estimates approximately 65 to 70 per cent of beef and sheepmeat consumed domestically is produced at export registered establishments.

Additional Malaysian Halal Requirements

Establishments that slaughter, bone, process and store cattle, sheep, goats and deer, must comply with all requirements of three essential references:

1. Australian Government Authorised Halal Program (AGAHP)
2. *Malaysian Protocol for the Halal Meat and Poultry Productions 2011*
(www.halal.gov.my/v2/cms/content/editor/files/File/MALAYSIAN%20PROTOCOL%20FOR%20THE%20HALAL%20MEAT%20&%20POULTRY%20PRODUCTIONS.pdf)
3. *MS 1500:2009 Halal food – production, preparation, handling and storage – general guidelines* (second revision) (law.resource.org/pub/my/ibr/ms.1500.2009.pdf).

To comply with the *Malaysian Protocol for the Halal Meat and Poultry Productions 2011*, cattle, sheep, goat or deer establishments must meet the following requirements:

1. Halal personnel
 - The 2011 halal protocol requires an additional halal position (the halal supervisor) over and above the AGAHP requirements, for both cattle and sheep establishments.
 - The halal supervisor position needs to be a full time dedicated position. The halal slaughterman, head checker or checker may not fill in for this position if the halal supervisor is unable to work.
 - The halal supervisor position is superior to the halal checker, head checker and slaughterman and is non-interchangeable with these positions.
 - The department understands that the halal supervisor is permitted to have responsibility for additional tasks within the establishment (e.g. quality assurance) provided that they complete all halal supervisor tasks in full.
 - Roles and responsibilities of all halal personnel are outlined in the following table:

Position	Tasks
Halal Checker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be present on the slaughter floor at all times and ensures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – stunning is conducted according to approved methods – halal slaughter requirements are met – proper bleeding protocol occurs – determination of death prior to dressing operations – non-halal carcasses are handled according to Malaysian protocol • Records the number of animals slaughtered daily and non-halal carcasses
Halal Slaughterer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is satisfied animals provided are alive and if dead are removed from the halal system • Must give blessing/tasmiyyah immediately before slaughtering • Must be enough slaughtermen to ensure halal slaughter is correct on each animal • Be registered, trained and supervised by the Islamic Organisation • Slaughter procedure in accordance with 2011 Malaysian halal protocol.
Halal Head Checker (only if pneumatic stunning is used for cattle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be registered, trained and supervised by the Islamic Organisation • Responsible for assessing skull damage • Identify /label and record the related non-compliance carcasses. • Refer any uncertainty in skull damage to halal supervisor • Must identify/label and record non halal carcasses

Position	Tasks
Halal Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure internal halal control system as per the 2011 Malaysian halal protocol and be responsible for effectiveness of implementation • Ensure halal checker, head checker and slaughterman all function in accordance with 2011 halal protocol • Supervise and verify the following establishment halal records: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Stunning equipment verification and calibration records – Slaughtering record – Non-halal conformance record – Chiller room, freezer and blast freezer record – Deboning activity record – Packing and storage record

2. Halal Critical Control Points

- Establishments must determine and document the Halal Critical Control Points (HCCPs), similar to control points used in Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems but relevant for halal. HCCPs will form the basis for audits and checklist-identified issues and are the targets of corrective actions.
- HCCPs should be clearly pass or fail when monitoring these control points.
- The Approved Islamic Organisation (AIO) shall approve the HCCPs in association with the establishment.

3. Flow chart of halal processes

- The AIO must have a flow chart showing the flow of halal carcasses and offal through the plant. The flow chart must include HCCPs. (Note that Malaysia specified that separate flow charts for halal product and for non-halal product/processes must be produced).

4. Flow chart of non-halal processes

- The AIO must have a flow chart showing the flow of non-halal carcasses and offal through the plant and corrective actions to preserve halal integrity.

5. Establishments must have their own halal standard operating procedures (SOPs).

6. Development, monitoring and control of halal system in the establishment

- The AIO shall form and maintain a monitoring team in the establishment to be responsible for developing, monitoring and controlling the halal system in order to ensure effectiveness.

7. Internal Halal Audit

- The Internal audit checklists must contain halal audit criteria to comprehensively cover halal issues.
- The Internal Halal audit checklist must be named 'Malaysian Audit Checklist'.
- The Internal Halal audit checklist must address items contained in Appendix 2 of the - Australian Government Authorised Halal Program - guidelines for the preparation, identification, storage and certification for export of halal red meat and red meat products), as well as additional items required under the *Malaysian Protocol for the Halal Meat and Poultry Productions 2011* as outlined under item 30.13 in the *Department of Agriculture -System Audit Checklist – Export Meat Program – Abattoirs and Independent Boning Rooms* (www.agriculture.gov.au/Style%20Library/Images/DAFF/___data/assets/pdffile/0019/2400067/export-meat-systems-audit-checklist.pdf)

- Records of the completed Malaysian Audit Checklists must be maintained and available for review.

8. Internal Halal Committee

- The establishment's Internal Halal Committee meeting must be conducted quarterly and the halal audit report shall be submitted to the responsible AIO and accessible to the Malaysian Department of Veterinary Service (DVS) and the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) during audits. The report of the meeting must include completion of the Malaysian Audit Checklist.
- The halal supervisor must be a member of Internal Halal Committee.
- The Internal Halal Committee must involve management and seek AIO recommendations where appropriate.