



Submission No 9

Inquiry into Australia's Relationship with Malaysia

Organisation: Baw Baw Shire

Contact Person: Peter Kulich
Economic Development Officer

Address:

John,

As per our conversation please find below a summary of issues raised.

1) Use of halal as a form of restriction on trade. Whilst acknowledging that we have to respect the culture and religious beliefs of trading partners a firm definition of halal and its requirements needs to be developed. At the present businesses are finding that they take actions to comply with what they believe, or have been told, are the requirements to then have further requirements placed upon them. My understanding of halal is that it is far broader than just the way an animal is killed. An example of this "shifting goalpost" is a local cheese company who have halal accreditation but have never been inspected, when visited by their customer the issue of an alcohol-based flyspray was raised and the question as to whether or not the cheesecloth used was halal certified. Whilst both these issues were easily overcome they were areas outside the "manufacturing process" as understood by the company and advised by their accrediting body. Their comment was that they were more than happy to comply but would have liked to know in the first place - it was possibly only their long-term relationship with their customer that allowed the order to continue.

Peter Kulich

Economic Development Officer
Baw Baw Shire

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