



The Kashrut Authority

Serving Australia, New Zealand & the Asia Pacific region

ועד הכשרות דסידני והמדינה

The Kashrut Authority President's Report – November 25 2014

I am writing to you to report on the positive developments that have taken place in the Kashrut Authority over the past year and to advise you of what we have planned for 2015.

During 2014 we took a number of steps to improve our corporate governance and management, to update our finances, and to expand our marketing initiatives.

Our role is to act as a licensing body that serves the community by ensuring the highest standards of kashrut in New South Wales. It is therefore appropriate that the Sydney Beth Din (SBD) – the pre-eminent halachic body in NSW – be the decider of Jewish Law for the Kashrut Authority. We act as its agent and are accountable to it in all matters related to kashrut, following the same model as in other major Jewish communities such as London Manchester and Johannesburg.

All our halachic policies are carefully researched and are based on the highest standards of Halacha endorsed by the SBD, taking advice when necessary from overseas kashrut agencies such as the Orthodox Union (OU) and the Organised Kashrut Laboratories (OK). They are matched to our unique circumstances and take into account the needs of our community. Many of our policies are available on our website and some are even endorsed by government such as our meat policy with the ACCC.

During the year we reformulated our constitution to properly reflect the structure of the organisation and the highest standards of corporate governance expected from an Australian not-for-profit. Our new constitution describes and enshrines the above structure, with the SBD deciding on matters of Halacha and a constitutionally separate Board of Management managing the finances and commercial aspects of the Authority. There is a clear separation of powers between the Rabbis of the SBD who decide Halacha and the members of the Board who make the commercial decisions. Working together, the SBD and the Board of Management ensure the smooth and efficient operation of the Kashrut Authority and the administration of kashrut in NSW. Our new constitution is available for download from our website as well as the make up of our current board at http://www.ka.org.au/index.php/KA_Board.html. As per the constitution there are still three positions vacant on the board and interested persons who fill the criteria outlined in the constitution are welcome to apply.

We are registered as a not-for-profit organization with the Australian Tax Office and the Australian Commission of Not-for-Profits and Charities. Our accounts are up to date, having been audited by chartered accountants Logicca (who also audit many of our communal organizations), and have been lodged with the Department of Fair Trading. A summary report is also available for download from our website at http://www.ka.org.au/index.php/KA_Board.html

In terms of our human resources, our community is blessed that our Rabbinic Administrator is Rabbi Moshe Gutnick. He is a member of the SBD, internationally renowned and arguably the most experienced and knowledgeable Rabbi in Kashrut in Australia.

The Kashrut Authority of Australia & New Zealand

Registered in NSW as: The NSW Kashrut Authority Inc; Under the auspices of the Sydney Beth Din

Rabbinic Administrator: RABBI MOSHE D. GUTNICK, President: BARON M REVELMAN

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Rabbi Gutnick came to the position of Rabbinic Administrator in 1990 after over a decade of communal disharmony created originally by the licensing of a caterer by a Rabbi other than of the SBD. Sydney Jewry overwhelmingly opted to return to only one Kashrut agency and the KA was formed. Since then, with the successive leadership of Sam Fisher AM, Frank Levy AM, Rabbi Selwyn Franklin and now myself, we have served the needs of the kosher consumer for nearly 25 years and are very proud of our accomplishments.

We have witnessed an unprecedented growth of kashrut in NSW over that period. Rabbi Gutnick has brought the most modern techniques in kosher supervision while always maintaining the highest halachic standards. Through him we have worked collaboratively on projects with organizations such as the OU and the OK and the Eida Hachareidit of Jerusalem. Rabbi Gutnick was one of the first in the world to use FaceTime as a means of overseeing kosher production in circumstances where video could replace a supervisor and has lectured on his innovations at international kashrut conferences.

In 2007, after a period of advertising and vetting, the Board of Management appointed Rabbi Aaron Groner to assist Rabbi Gutnick as assistant Rabbinic Administrator. He has brought the zest of youth to the KA and now plays an indispensable role in the growth and administration of kashrut. Rabbi Groner is at the helm of successful recent initiatives such as pop-up restaurants, introducing Turkish dining and most recently Japanese cuisine to the palate of kosher consumers in NSW.

We are particularly proud of our initiatives with Coles, IGA and Harris Farm Markets supermarkets (which include the implementation of our new product labelling system in Coles enabling products to be identified as kosher with a printed KA symbol on the price tag), the availability of fresh roasted kosher BBQ chickens at competitive prices and the general expansion of the kosher sections. The dedicated Kosher Supermarkets have made available imported products the likes of which have never before been seen in Australia.

The KA has never been as accessible and open as it is today. Through our presence on Facebook members of our community can find out more about kashrut. Halachic policies are defined and clarified. Suggestions are made as to which products consumers would like to see certified, and what improvements can be made for kashrut in NSW in general. We welcome your feedback and we strive to implement anything that will further advance kashrut.

All the above is the solid base from which we intend to continue to grow and expand. We plan to continue to increase the availability of kosher products. We will continue to oversee the growth of kosher dining and catering in Sydney with all of our outstanding caterers, restaurateurs and takeaways including the newly licensed Intercontinental Hotel. KA supervised products have won for the third year in a row the coveted top position at Kosherfest – the largest showcase of kosher products in the world.

In order to further enhance this growth we have recently invited both the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and the Council of Orthodox Synagogues of NSW to each nominate a suitable candidate to join the board of the KA.

Finally, I would like to thank our staff for their dedication and hard work towards our goal of “keeping kosher made easy”. The outlook for kashrut in our community is bright and we look forward to ongoing community support for a vibrant, growing and united Kashrut Authority.



Baron M Revelman
President