The Role of Certification Bodies in Halal Meat Industry in Australia

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ABSTRACT

Meat industry in Australia is a million dollar market. Australia has been exporting its various meat product to many countries around the world, including Muslim countries. It all began in the 1970s when Muslim countries representatives came to Australia looking for sources of halal meat. Since then, the abattoirs aiming to become the halal meat provider, started to have well-trained human resources i.e: halal slaughter-men, supporting infrastructure and technology. What started as small Muslim-based slaughterhouses catering for local market, has grown into multi-billion exporting business to cater for Muslim demand and halal meat market around the world and this, has sparked the participation of non-Muslim players into the halal meat industry. As a result of this situation, it has created a need for halal certification and eventually saw the dawn of certification bodies’ establishment (CBs) establishments. Initially, it was the non-formal religious “authority”, imam, ulama certifying the small scale slaughterhouses and the halal logo was simply put in front of the establishments. At present, certification bodies seem to be competing with each other in gaining customers’ trust and aiming to tap into the bigger oversea market. Obtaining JAKIM recognition too, the Malaysian halal authority, would have a big impact on their organization. This paper examines how certification bodies conduct their activities in issuing halal certification, by focusing on meat industry in Australia. It also explores issues and challenges facing the certification bodies in a