

FILE No:

DOC:

MARS/PRISM:

Eilat at Hadassa Kosher Butchery

17 O'Brien Street
Bondi NSW 2026
Phone 93654904 fax 91304760

14 July 2005

The General Manager
Adjudication Branch
ACCC
PO Box 1199
Dickson ACT 2602

By Fax: 62431199

Dear Sir

Re: Notification No N19747 - The NSW Kashrut Authority Inc

I am the proprietor of Eilat at Hadassah Kosher Meats. I am under the supervision of the NSW Kashrut Authority Inc.

I am writing to support the meat policy of the NSW Kashrut Authority. I am not writing to comment on the religious aspects of the policy, though I support fully the religious decisions of the kashrut authority.

In all my 28 years as a kosher butcher I have always sought the highest standard of kosher supervision and am of the view that the KA represents one of the highest standards in Australia. The success of my business is dependant on the religious trust the community has in the KA. I have customers who have told me that were I to supply meat from another authority they would not buy my product.

I will however comment on the economic impact. I am not an economist and do not understand the fancy economic terms. I do know however the simple economic facts.

I do NOT have a monopoly. I may be the only kosher retail outlet licensed currently by the KA but I do have to compete with Coles and the kosher meat there. Even though there are some who will only buy from me for religious reasons I still do not have a monopoly. The KA has made it clear to me on numerous occasions that they will license anyone who is willing to open a shop. And they have. Over the years butchers have opened and closed and I am the only one still standing. Others have closed not because of any monopolistic practices but because simply the market can not sustain another shop. If no one else is willing to take the financial risks associated with operating a kosher butcher shop in our small market why should I be penalized by being called a monopoly. We stick it out because we know no other business.

AUST. COMPETITION &
CONSUMER COMMISSION
CANBERRA

15 JUL 2005

There are those who come with their fancy economic theories, that if there was more competition for me I would be forced to rationalize and would be able to compete with Melbourne. That may be nice in theory but simply does not reflect reality. They are not butchers. They have not put their savings on the line. The reality is that every additional customer that goes to Melbourne is another potential nail in the coffin of the only kosher butcher left in Sydney. The market is simply too small. The proof is that no one else wants to open even though the Kashrut Authority is willing to license them.

I am convinced that if the KA were forced to allow its licensees to allow other Shechitas, then that could lead to my closure and then there would be nothing left for the local consumer. I think the people who are advocating a fully free and open policy for licensees are desk-top economists shortsighted. Let them come and see my shop and how it operates. If I was forced to close in the end the community would suffer by not having a local butcher. People want to be able to come to a butcher shop and have the meat cut the way they want it.

Some people complain that my prices are more expensive than Melbourne. Well everything is more expensive in Sydney than Melbourne. If the community wants a local butcher they need to support it – not make it impossible for me to maintain my business. In my opinion my prices are fair and my service good. If there is so much profit in it then why doesn't someone else open? The answer is simple, there is not that much profit, the market is too small and without the support of the local licensees the community will suffer and have no butcher.

I know when you read this you may think that I am only saying this to protect my business. But the reality is the reality. No one else opens because the market is too small. Over the years butcher after butcher has closed – and I am the only survivor. Take away more of my customers and even I will not survive – and the community will certainly lose out.

I therefore recommend not only for my benefit but for the benefit of the whole community that the policy of the KA be allowed to stand.

Tom Rev
Proprietor of Eilat at Hadassah