

OUR HALAAL HELPLINE – HOW CAN WE HELP!

“It’s the Muslim consumer’s best friend,” is amongst the many accolades we have received about our Halaal Helpline over the years. This department has more interaction with the public than any other at SANHA. It has fielded about 280,000 queries since inception. It currently averages 500 emails, 1000 calls and a few hundred social media queries monthly. These emanate from various Provinces, neighbouring countries and even far afield as Canada and the Middle East.

The dedicated service was established about twenty years ago to address the drastic changes in lifestyle, dietary habits and challenges in determining the Halaal status of imported products flooding the country since liberation in 1994. A quick tour of your home will reveal the *“international-ness”* of products.

People today are working longer hours than before with two-breadwinner families. For the working mothers the idea of cooking a full meal from scratch at the end of the day becomes tedious and cumbersome at times. With smaller minimalist kitchens and combined incomes, the appeal of instant and tasty meals delivered swiftly, collected on the way home or a *“quick meal assembly”* from the freezer or pantry is a welcome relief for many.

While seeking different taste experiences, they require information on Halaal assurance of outlets and products instantly. We live in a global village where products from other countries including meat and poultry are found in abundance through global trade. With advances in technology there are now diverse ingredients of ever increasing complexity utilised that require clarification. Neither labelling laws nor

descriptions couched in trade jargon adequately disclose the Haraam ingredients found in certain products.

That is where the Helpline service steps in. Their key role is to maintain a comprehensive database for passing on knowledge about the Halaal status of products including alerts on incidences of fraud. This is done via the media streams of the telephone, e-mail, social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, a website and a weekly radio program. See icons and info at the bottom of the page.

It further undertakes personal contact educational initiatives by hosting programs in Musajjid (mosques), schools, fairs and trade exhibitions, participates locally and internationally in seminars and conferences and addresses special interest groups.

EMERGING TRENDS ON HELP DESKS

- Decentralising tasks from large centrally-located centres to multiple remote home office locations with automatic call routing for extended hours of service.
- The use of internet computer robotics (bots) that give consumers instant responses to FAQ type of queries of a repetitive nature. This allows more time for the consultants’ human- touch response to callers.

Number to call: **081 512 2936** during the lockdown

0861-786-111 normal times

HELP IS AT THE END OF THE LINE – OUR HELPLINE