



uk scholar halal survey

28 AUGUST 2009

From June to August 2009, an independent online survey was commissioned by Halal Monitoring Committee to understand and gain greater clarity of the scholarly opinions on Halal in the UK. This represented one of the largest surveys of its kind and was undertaken to attain grass root views on halal, directly from UK Scholars.

The online survey was sent to a database of 500 independent Alims, Muftis and Imams all over the UK and responses were received and processed from 282 (56.4%).

The survey remained open for a period of seven days in which responses could be accepted.

Responses were received and processed from 282 Alims, Imams and Muftis, covering a geographical area of over 25 towns and cities, including London, Birmingham, Newcastle, Glasgow, Leicester, Manchester, Blackburn, Reading, Preston and Dewsbury.

The survey asked questions covering issues of the acceptance of mechanical slaughter, the stunning of animals prior to slaughter, recitation of tasmiyah (reciting God's name) and views on the current religious exemptions in UK and European law for Jewish and Islamic slaughter.

## Key Questions Asked

The survey covered several topics. Questions were asked of the respondents to gain an improved understanding of the views currently held with regards halal methods being deployed in the UK.

The following questions were used as the basis of the survey:

### Q1

Based on your understanding, would you accept "Mechanical Slaughter" as an accepted method of Halal slaughter?

### Q2

Which method of ritual Bismillah is acceptable in religious slaughter?

### Q3

Would you accept "Electrical Stunning" as an acceptable method of slaughter in poultry/chicken slaughter?

### Q4

Would you accept the use of "Electrical Stunning" on red meat (lamb, sheep and cows)?

### Q5

Which of the methods would you prefer as an acceptable part of the Islamic slaughter process, slaughter with or without any type of stunning?

### Q6

The law currently allows the Muslim and Jewish communities to carry out religious slaughter without stunning due to their religious requirements.

Would you be happy for this to be maintained or would you like the exemption lifted?

### Q7

According to statistics, stunning does take place prior to slaughter in the majority of halal slaughter in the UK (maybe up to 90%). As a religious leader/representative are you upset, angry, pleased/happy, content or not concerned?

### Q8

What is your title? (Mufti, Alim or Imam)

### Q9

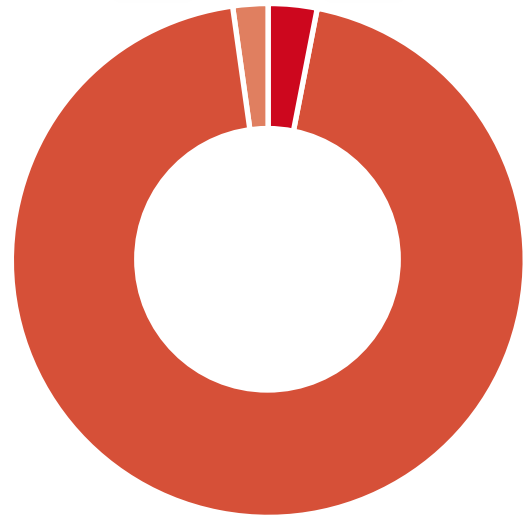
Which city do you serve?

# Q1

## response

Based on your understanding, would you accept “Mechanical Slaughter” as an accepted method of Halal slaughter?

Mechanical slaughter is usually used for chickens in the UK. The actual slaughter is done by a mechanical blade (machine) on a conveyor system.



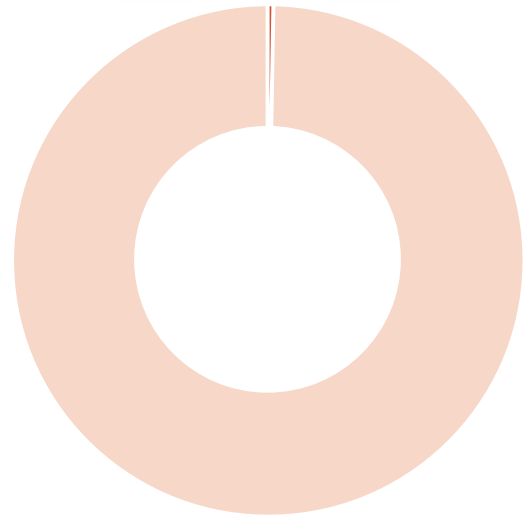
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
Yes	9	3.19%
No	267	94.68%
Not Sure	6	2.13%
Total	282	100%

94.68% responded that they would not accept “Mechanical Slaughter” as an accepted method of Halal slaughter. 3.19% indicated that they would accept Mechanical Slaughter and 2.13% were not sure.

# Q2

## response

Which method of ritual Bismillah is acceptable in religious slaughter?



Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Blessed blade	0	0%
<input type="radio"/> Recorded Bismillah	1	0.35%
<input type="radio"/> Bismillah at the start of slaughter for thousands of animals	0	0%
<input type="radio"/> Bismillah read by someone other than the slaughter man / or by someone standing on the side	0	0%
<input type="radio"/> Bismillah read on each animal by individual conducting manual slaughter	281	99.65%
Total	282	100%

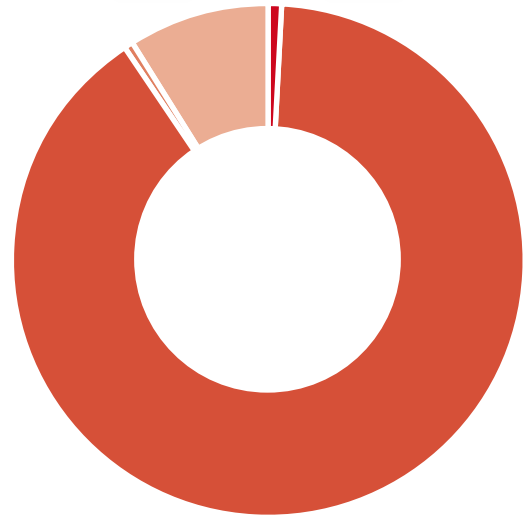
99.65% of respondents only accepted Bismillah being read on each animal by the individual conducting the manual slaughter. 0.35% indicated that they would accept a recorded Bismillah.

# Q3

## response

Would you accept “Electrical Stunning” as an acceptable method of slaughter in poultry/chicken slaughter?

For poultry, chicken heads are dipped in electrical voltage water. The intention is to stun the bird prior to slaughter.



Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
Yes (Accept stunning)	3	1.06%
No (Reject stunning)	253	89.72%
Not Sure	1	0.35%
Welcome further research	25	8.87%
Total	282	100%

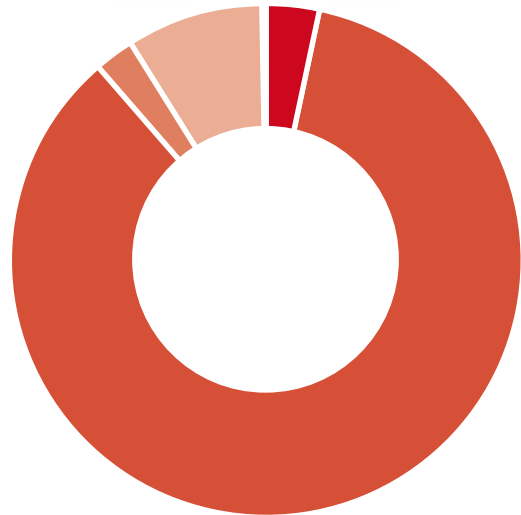
89.72% rejected electrical stunning for poultry/chicken slaughter whilst 1.06% accepted it. 0.35% were unsure of the acceptability of electrical stunning. 8.87% would welcome further research on the issue of electrical stunning.

---

# Q4

## response

Would you accept the use of "Electrical Stunning" on red meat (lamb, sheep and cows)?



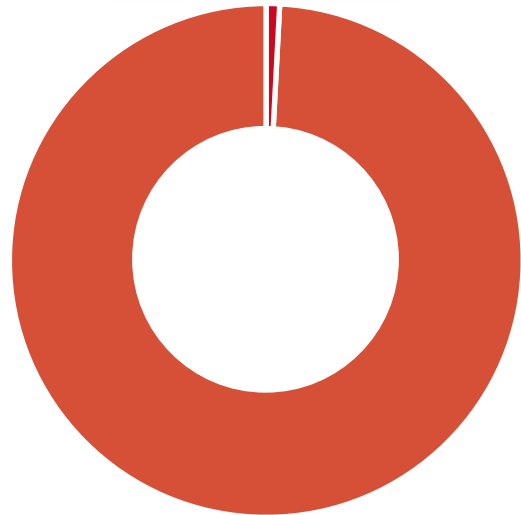
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
Yes (Accept stunning)	10	3.55%
No (Reject stunning)	240	85.11%
Not Sure	7	2.48%
Welcome further research	25	8.87%
Total	282	100%

85.11% rejected electrical stunning for lamb, sheep and cows slaughter whilst 3.55% accepted it. 2.48% were unsure of the acceptability of electrical stunning. 8.87% would welcome further research on the issue of electrical stunning.

# Q5

## response

Which of the methods below would you prefer as an acceptable part of the Islamic slaughter?



Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Slaughter with stunning	3	1.06%
<input type="radio"/> Slaughter without any type of stunning	279	98.94%
Total	282	100%

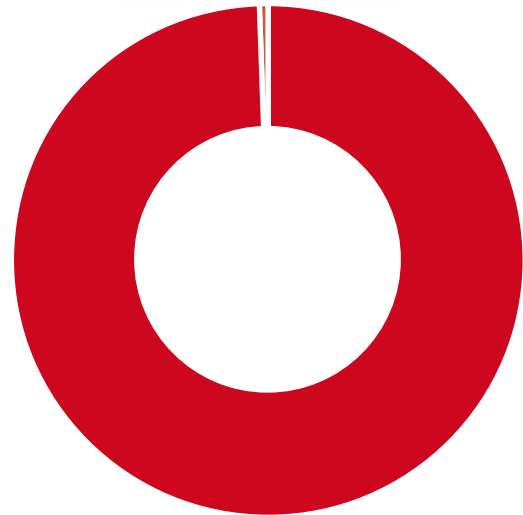
98.94% of respondents indicated that they would prefer slaughter without any type of stunning as part of Islamically acceptable slaughter. 1.06% indicated that they would prefer Islamic slaughter with stunning.

# Q6

## response

The law currently allows the Muslim and Jewish communities to carry out religious slaughter without stunning due to their religious requirements.

Would you be happy for this to be maintained or would you like the exemption lifted?



Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
<input checked="" type="radio"/> We would like the law to continue allowing the Muslims to carry out religious slaughter without stunning	281	99.65%
<input type="radio"/> We would like the law to ban non-stunned religious slaughter	1	0.35%
Total	282	100%

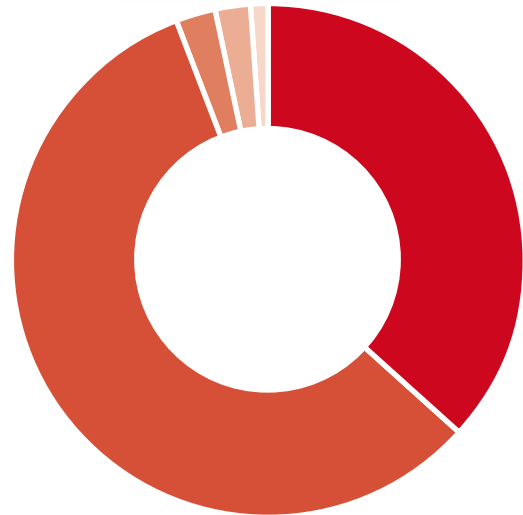
99.65% of respondents would like the religious exemption for the Muslims and Jewish communities to carry out religious slaughter without stunning to be maintained. 0.35% would like the exemption to be removed.



# Q7

## response

According to statistics\*,  
stunning takes place prior  
to slaughter in the majority  
of halal slaughter in the  
UK (maybe up to 90%).  
As a religious leader/  
representative are you:



Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
Upset	104	36.88%
Angry	162	57.45%
Pleased / Happy	7	2.48%
Content	6	2.13%
Not Concerned	3	1.06%
Total	282	100%

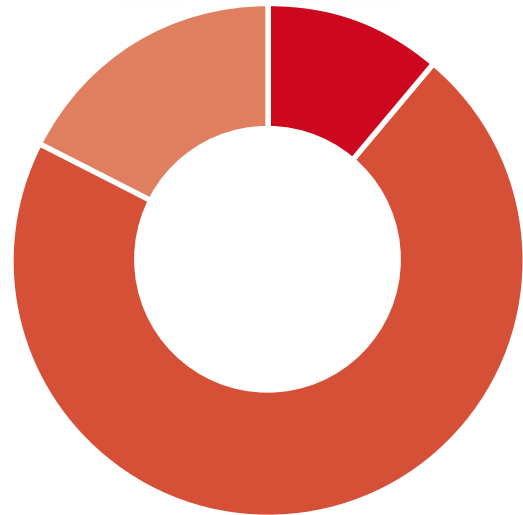
94.33% of respondents were upset or angry to read that according to statistics up to 90% of the halal slaughter in the UK takes place after stunning. 4.61% were pleased, happy and content that stunning takes place prior to halal slaughter in up to 90% of cases. 1.06% were not concerned by these statistics.




\* Dr Judy MacArthur Clark, Chairwoman of the FAWC,  
The Meat Hygiene Service (MHS), Animal Welfare Review, March 2004,

# Q8

## response

Please select your title



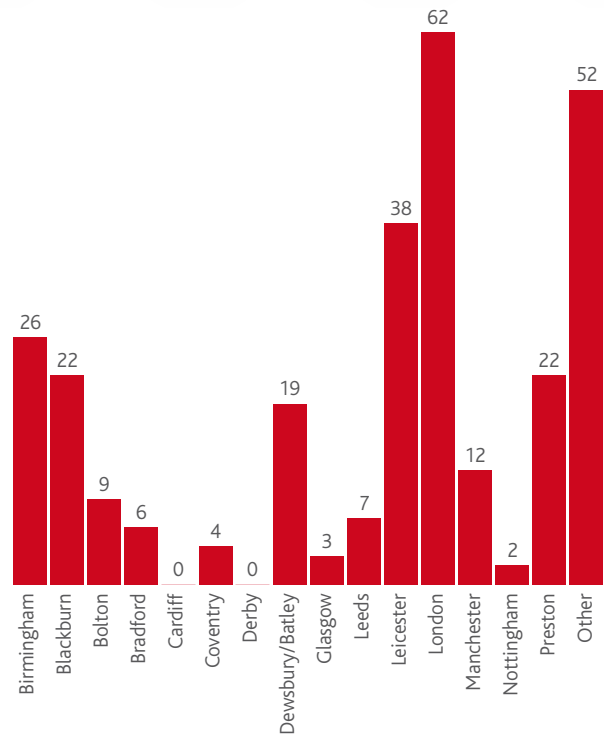
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
 Mufti	32	11.35%
 Alim	201	71.28%
 Imam	49	17.38%
Total	282	100%

71.28% of respondents identified their titles as Alims, 17.38% as Imams and 11.35% as Muftis.

# Q9

## response

Please select your City



1 respondent did not answer this question, whilst some respondents identified more than one location as their city. 21.83% of responses were based in London. 25% of the responses were from cities within the Midlands, including Birmingham, Coventry, Leicester and Nottingham. 34.16% of responses were received from cities in the North of England, including, Batley, Blackburn, Bolton, Bradford, Dewsbury, Leeds, Manchester and Preston.

## Summary of Findings

**95%**

of the Ulema do not accept "mechanical slaughter" as an accepted method of Halal slaughter; 2.1% want to understand the issue further.

**99.7%**

stated that Bismillah should be prayed individually by the person conducting the slaughter; not taped nor by person standing on the side.

**90%**

rejected 'electrical stunning' of chickens; 9% welcomed further research.

**85%**

rejected 'electrical stunning' of larger animals; 9% welcomed further research.

**99%**

expressed preference for non-stunned.

**100%**

believed that the current religious exemptions in UK and European law for Jewish and Islamic slaughter should remain.

## Conclusions of Survey

The results of this survey illustrate the views of 282 UK Scholars consisting of Alims, Imams and Muftis, with regards Halal methods of slaughter. A wide geographical area was covered, with over 25 cities and towns in the UK represented.

The key areas of agreement of the majority of the scholars are that mechanical slaughter is not acceptable in any form and that

Bismillah must be read on each animal by the individual Muslim conducting the manual slaughter.

On the issue of electrical stunning prior to slaughter, the majority consensus is that the current legal religious exemption from stunning should remain in place in the UK. Indeed the majority were upset and angry that stunning takes place in 80-90% of halal slaughter.