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Orthodox Union

Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America • איחוד קהילות האורתודוקסים באמריקה
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KASHRUTH DIVISION

MARTIN NACHIMSON
President

January 2, 2014

OU REVIEW OF RCC

HARVEY BLITZ
Chairman

Rabbi Meyer H. May
President, Rabbinical Council of California (RCC)
3780 Wilshire Blvd. Suite # 420
Los Angeles, CA 90010

DAVID FUND
Vice Chairman

RABBI MENACHEM GENACK
Rabbinic Administrator, CEO

Dear Rabbi May,

RABBI ALEXANDER S. ROSENBERG
Rabbinic Administrator (1950-1972)

In April 2013, the RCC approached the OU Kashrus Department and asked for an independent audit of kashrus systems in place in RCC establishments.

Under the able direction and guidance of Rabbi Moshe Elefant, COO of the OU, I was asked to conduct this review process. To that end, I visited Los Angeles on five separate occasions in the past eight months.

It is fair to say that almost any kashrus organization would benefit from a thorough review, and areas of weakness would likely be identified in the best of supervisions.

During my first trip to LA, I visited many facilities and made various suggestions for enhancement of RCC supervision. My recommendations related to two areas: standards of hashgacha and systems of monitoring of establishments.

The RCC immediately accepted my recommendations and made significant efforts to effect these changes as soon as possible. I am pleased to state that in my last two visits to Los Angeles, I inspected almost every RCC retail outlet and found that my recommendations were implemented across the board. This is a major achievement, and the RCC deserves to be highly commended for this effort.

Following is a brief summary of some of the changes that have occurred:

- Stronger kashrus standards of supervision.
- Increased levels of supervision by in-store mashgichim.
- Written protocols with precise instructions for mashgichim in each establishment.
- Enhanced on-going training of in-store mashgichim.
- Increased inspections by RCC professional staff. Additional staff was hired to accommodate this need and allow for crisscross inspections of a team, as opposed to individuals.

In addition to these internal changes, the openness of the RCC led to the creation of the Kashrut Vaad of LA (KVLA), a non-partisan oversight committee of local Rabbonim and Bnai Torah. The KVLA inspects local facilities on a regular basis to insure that kashrus standards are appropriately maintained. Observations of this group regarding RCC establishments are forwarded to the RCC administrative staff and issues are addressed with proper dispatch. The OU has also instructed a number of OU local mashgichim to perform ongoing inspections of RCC establishments and file reports. I am copied on the inspections of the KVLA and OU mashgichim, as well as many of the reports of the RCC staff. In this way I am able to continue to maintain a strong level of involvement and oversight.

In conclusion, this entire process has greatly enhanced the level of supervision of the RCC. Particularly significant is the receptiveness of the RCC professional staff to recommendations for change and the alacrity in implementing such modifications. Above all, the willingness of the RCC to subject itself to layers of independent auditing on an ongoing basis and maintain a high level of transparency and review is unparalleled by any other supervisor agency that I am familiar with.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Yaakov Luban". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rabbi Yaakov Luban
Executive Rabbinic Coordinator
Orthodox Union