

28 August 2017

Media Release: Melbourne Beth Din Strategic Review

The Melbourne Beth Din (MBD) Board has commenced a Strategic Review establishing a Steering Committee, with representation from the Rabbinic Council of Victoria (RCV), the Council of Orthodox Synagogues of Victoria (COSV) and other members of the Jewish Community to oversee a review of its practices and procedures.

While the MBD has made significant improvements to its practices and procedures over recent years, this review aims to provide a formal framework to assist the MBD in continuing to provide internationally recognised services with an enhanced experience for the community. The recent appointment of Mrs Elka Gaensler to the MBD Board has been one important driving force in the setting up of this framework.

In preparation for the review, representatives of the MBD met with Mrs. Shana Yocheved Schacter, CSW, a psychotherapist, who sits on the GPS (Geirus Protocol and Standards) Committee of the Rabbinical Council of America. A meeting was also held in Israel with the team currently reviewing the conversion curriculum of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel.

For the first stage of the process, a sub-committee has been established by the MBD Board to review the practices and procedures of our conversion process. As part of a broad process of consultation, the sub-committee will establish a consultative group of members of the community who have completed the MBD conversion program. They are expected to invite all people who have completed the conversion process over the past ten years to share feedback, including an option of responding anonymously.

Members of sub-committee for Conversion Practices and Procedures:

Rabbi Danny Mirvis (Chair), Rabbi Daniel Rabin (RCV, MBD Board), Mrs Elka Gaensler (COSV, MBD Board), Rabbi Mordechai Gutnick (Av Beth Din MBD)

Another sub-committee has been established by the MBD Board to review the procedure for appointing Dayanim, as appears in the constitutions of the MBD and COSV.

Members of sub-committee for appointment of Dayanim:

Mr Geoff Bloch (Chair), Rabbi Chaim Cowen (RCV), Mr Ezra May (COSV), Rabbi Daniel Rabin (RCV, MBD Board), Mr Mark Sarachik (COSV), Mr David Sher (COSV), Mr Ralph Zwier (MBD Board).

At all stages the strategic review will respect the judicial independence and Halachic guidance of the Dayanim of the Beth Din.

For further information contact:

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