



Hilal Advisory Team (HAT)

Operational Policy

Adopted by Executive Council

Introduction & Background

1. The Islamic Education Board of the World Federation was originally entrusted to run the Hilal Committee.
2. It is our understanding that their remit was to provide guidance on the issue of moon sighting every month for the entire world federation membership. They issued such guidance through monthly statements on their website.
3. It is further understood that the Hilal Committee also undertook the process of educating the community in understanding of moon sighting from a Fiqh perspective in accordance with the rulings of Ayatullah Seestani.
4. For a period of 6 months, The Council of European Jamaats was involved with the Hilal Committee of The World federation as their European regional coordinator.
5. Thereafter, three years ago, The Council of European Jamaats took over the responsibility of Hilal guidance for Europe from The Islamic Education Board of The World Federation
6. Having agreed in principle to take over the European facet of the Hilal Committee of The World Federation, it was prudent that as a regional body we agree and adopt independently the aims and objectives of such a team.
7. HAT was formed to provide and has continued to provide advisory service to the community since 13 January 2007.
8. At the executive council meeting of CoEJ held in February 2010, it was agreed that a team be set up to re-form the HAT and review its terms of reference.

Proposed Aim and Objectives

9. The overriding objective of this team should be focused on a purely advisory role.
10. The aim of such a team should be to provide advice to our member Jamaats on the issue of moon sighting every month based on the ruling of Ayatullah Seestani and Ayatullah Khui.
11. The objective would be to provide advice but at the same time make it an inclusive decision having maintained the ethos under which HAT has been established as an Advisory body, at the same time allowing diverse views from other organisations to be discussed and debated internally.
12. Furthermore, the Team will have the objective of educating the community on the ahkam of moon sighting and processes by which HAT operates.

Hilal Advisory Team (HAT) Operational Policy

13. The Team will liaise with and endeavour to represent The Council of European Jamaats in all external hilal forums.

Proposed Naming

14. The name of this team should continue to be **Hilal Advisory Team** (“Team”).

Proposed Working Methodology

15. The President after consultation with member Jamaats, will recommend names of experts to sit on this Team, to be approved by the Executive Committee.
16. To define Experts: Muminin who have sound knowledge and understanding of Ahkam in the field of moon sighting and astronomy. In addition, the Head of the Team should also have knowledge of Principles of Jurisprudence.
17. In absence of finding candidates with necessary credentials, we can take on board some with expertise in one area and train them on the other.
18. The team should be comprised of FIVE experts. One of them will be the head of the Team. The Head of the team must be able to demonstrate strong leadership skills should disagreements arise. In addition to the 5, every member Jamaat is to second their Resident Alim to be part of the Team so as to provide a community perspective. Should disagreements arise, the Head of the Team will make a final decision which will be binding to the team. All members of the team will keep this confidential. In the event that the head of the HAT has been unable to reach a conclusion, then the matter should be referred to the Marja Taqlid for guidance.

The composition of the Team will be published on the CoEJ website

19. The President will also appoint the Team’s coordinator who will undertake the Team’s administrative responsibility.
20. The Team will communicate by e mail or conference call if required allowing member Jamaats to sit in as observers on a monthly basis. The conference call could be open to Jamaat presidents or their nominees.
21. The Team will be guided by the Ahkam of Marja Taqlid Marhum Seyyid AbulQasim Al Khui and Seyyid Ali Seestani and have liaisons with Ayatullah Seestani.

The HAT to specify in detail the criteria to be utilized for ascertaining the sighting of the moon. This is to include all the relevant Fiqh masails, responses to questions from the Marja Taqlid and relevant Astronomical information.

22. The Team will conduct its business using all mediums of communications and release its monthly statement through The Council of European Jamaat’s website and by email to member Jamaats.
23. The Team coordinator to consult the Team and prepare a draft statement for the Team to review upon every 20th day of the Islamic Month. Team members will have to respond within 48 hours.

24. The Team coordinator will receive news of moon sighting in relation to Europe's sighting on the eve of the new Islamic month and immediately pass that information to the Team for review and approval.
25. Once the Team has reviewed and approved the statement, the Team coordinator will forward the statement to the Secretariat for immediate publishing.

The statements are to be issued in the name of HAT. There should be no need for the names of the experts to appear at the end of each statement.

Start Period

26. The Team will commence its working once it is approved by the Executive Council.

Review

27. The Team will undertake a review in one year to check if the current methodology is actually working and propose any amendments for discussion and adoption by the Executive Committee.

Reporting

28. The Team will report to the Executive committee every six months.

Resources

29. The Team will have all the resources available to them as currently provided the Secretariat and may request any further resources as and when required.

Jamaat Undertakings

30. Member Jamaats agree to exclusively recommend its membership to follow the advice given by the Hilal Advisory Team.
31. No member Jamaats will operate their own Hilal teams and publish parallel statements.