

2019

Annual Report

Safe and trustworthy food for everyone



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Our mission

We protect consumers by leading a collaborative food safety community to continuously raise food standards and create a culture of excellence.

To The Minister for Health

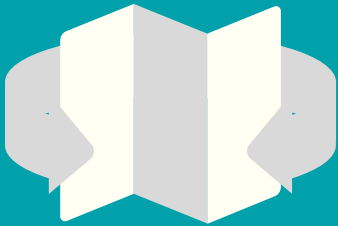
The Board is pleased to submit to the Minister of Health its Annual Report and accounts for the 12-month period ending 31 December 2019, in accordance with Section 25 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998.

Mr Martin Higgins
Chairperson

Dr Pamela A Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

2019 in review

20 years of protecting consumer health and interests



**New
safety strategy**



**125 enforcement
orders**



**New healthy
eating guidelines**



**A food science
conference**



**Five protected
disclosures**



**107 food and
allergen alerts**



**49,501 food
businesses**



**585 media
outputs**



**Committed to
staff culture**

Chairperson and Chief Executive's statement



The past year was a significant one for the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI). During 2019, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Authority; we held the Authority's first science conference; launched a new strategy, conducted and published world-class research; enhanced Ireland's regulatory approach; audited and inspected Ireland's food business operators; and increased our efforts to raise compliance with food law nationwide – all while putting the protection of public health first and foremost in the Authority's decisions and activities. We would like to thank our team for their ongoing commitment and dedication to achieving our food safety mission. We continue to be inspired by the professionalism and passion of our staff, Board, committees and external partners in delivering on our legislative mandate and protecting consumers in Ireland as well as consumers of Irish food in 180 markets across the world.

We are pleased to present the 2019 Annual Report and accounts for the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. It demonstrates the significant role the Authority plays in raising compliance with food law, taking the appropriate enforcement action where necessary, and protecting public health by basing all our risk management decisions on science, evidence and expertise. During 2019, the Authority worked towards delivering on its ambitions, ensuring that it retained its focus on the areas of highest risk in order to protect consumers from any impact on their health due to unsafe and untrustworthy food being

placed on the market. This process is facilitated through a multi-pronged combination of cutting-edge science, regulatory powers and training and education, all of which put the protection of public health at the forefront of the national food safety and authenticity agenda. However, none of this would be possible without our dedicated internal team and external partners. We would like to recognise the extensive work and passion demonstrated by each individual who played a role in helping us deliver our vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone over the past 20 years. It is thanks in no small part

to these committed individuals that we live in a country that is recognised as having one of the best food systems in the world.

In 2019, we were particularly proud to launch the Authority's 2019–2023 strategy, following extensive consultation with key stakeholders. Strategic goals and objectives were agreed, along with a set of outcomes that would allow the Authority to measure its progress and achieve its mission. In its 2019–2023 strategy, the Authority reiterated its ambitious vision of 'Safe and trustworthy food for everyone'. Our purpose and mission for the years to come is clear: "We protect consumers and raise compliance through partnership, science and food law enforcement." This mission, fully endorsed by the Board and fully in line with the Department of Health's overarching strategy and Government policy, focuses on protecting consumers, raising compliance and food standards, and creating a culture of excellence. Core to the delivery of our strategy are our values: integrity, respect, passion, transparency, teamwork and collaboration. The strategy is fully aligned with the legislative mandate of the Authority outlined in the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 (as amended) and our obligations under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). It should prove to be a very effective and efficient roadmap as the Authority enters what is certain be a very rewarding but also challenging and dynamic period.

In the first year of our new strategy, we focused on preparedness for the new official

controls regulation and Brexit; building our evidence base; enhancing our resilience to food crises; and strengthening our relationships with our stakeholders. Central to these endeavours was the celebration of the Authority's 20th anniversary of safeguarding Ireland's food safety system. As one of the world's very first food safety agencies, it was imperative that this event highlight how far we have come, assess where we are and where we are going, with the overarching aim of the continuing to protect Ireland's health into the future. Throughout 2019, the Authority partnered with the Science Gallery Dublin in Trinity College Dublin (TCD) to place an emphasis on the importance of science in food safety. This was further highlighted through an FSAI food science conference which was attended by more than 300 international food experts.



FSAI International Food Science Conference 2019

During 2019, data from food business inspections, audits, research, food incidents (national and international), and website analytics continued to drive business decisions and inform our approach to minimising risks to public health. Access to comprehensive data, robust evidence and the

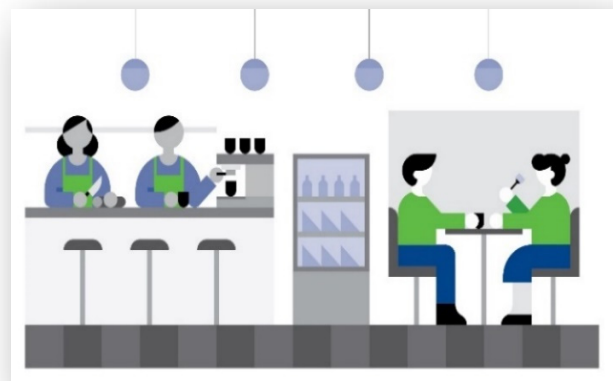
best scientific information available is key to delivering on the Authority's ambitions and is achieved through the Authority's Scientific Committee, talented scientific staff, and collaboration with scientists in Ireland and internationally. The Scientific Committee and its subcommittees have proven crucial in assessing risks to consumers from food, which underpins strong risk management decisions and the development of policies that ultimately benefit public health. We would like to recognise all that was achieved by these groups over the course of the FSAI Science Strategy (2016–2018).

'Safe and trustworthy food for everyone' is the vision of the Authority and it is this purpose that guides how we oversee and harmonise the official food control system in Ireland. In order to assess the food industry's compliance with European food law, the Authority oversees the enforcement of a strong regulatory framework that is based on the best scientific evidence, data and enforcement powers available, allowing the minimisation of consumer risk, contributing to the protection of public health nationally. Our regulatory oversight of the food chain – from farm gate to consumer – is formalised through service contracts with 33 individual State agencies in Ireland. The Authority regulates and oversees a dynamic food industry, with the clear purpose of protecting public health and the interests of consumers. This dynamic environment is being driven by regulatory changes in official controls within an industry that continues to innovate in an increasingly

complex global food system where food safety risks continue to exist and become more challenging to pre-empt and manage.

Therefore, our role in the protection of public health in Ireland also extends to the consumers of Irish food in 180 markets worldwide. Having an independent, respected and robust system of official controls in place has proven to be a tremendous asset and is key to the underpinning of Ireland's societal health and well-being and to entering new, and maintaining existing, markets.

Through data provided to us from the official inspection agencies, we have identified a slight increase (0.47%) in the number of food business operators in Ireland in 2019, which can be explained by increases in the number of businesses in the primary producer, food services and fishing sectors. Overall, in 2019 there were 233 more food business operators in Ireland compared with 2018. The food industry is expected to expand even further, as outlined in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's *Food Wise 2025* strategy, which has set significant growth targets and aspires to deliver this growth through dairy, beef, seafood, consumer food



and drink exports. However, Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic may affect these targets in the short term.

Our mission is to “protect consumers and raise compliance through partnership, science and food law enforcement” within the Irish food industry. To achieve this mission, in 2019, the Authority worked as hard as possible to continue providing the resources and tools required to support the food inspectorate to assess industry compliance with food law, and also to support the industry to comply with the law, despite constraining resources. While the legal responsibility for putting safe food on the market rests with the food industry, the Authority and its partners in the official agencies are responsible for providing the evidence to demonstrate that the industry is fulfilling its legal obligations.

As Ireland's food safety authority, we monitor and evaluate the food chain from farm gate to fork, in order to assess, manage and mitigate risk to public health and to protect consumer interests in line with the legal framework.

This role takes many forms, including monitoring for chemical and microbiological contaminants; carrying out risk assessments on food hazards; auditing the food service sector and managing food incidents related to issues that have occurred in Ireland or that

have emerged from other European Union (EU) countries. We also audit Ireland's food control system to ensure that it is robust and compliant with European food control legislation. All this requires a highly skilled and accessible network of scientific experts and food inspectors with knowledge and expertise in risk analysis, food safety and authenticity science, risk management and food inspection which help to inform national and international decisions and policies that affect public health and well-being.

Our work in the management of food incidents is ongoing. During 2019, the Authority issued 55 food alerts and 52 allergen alerts, and it dealt with 679 food incidents, representing a 15% decrease on the 2018 figure (799). Consumer complaints about food or food premises, labelling, and allergens remained similar to the number recorded in 2018 (3,460). During the year we carried out a crisis simulation exercise to ensure that we are prepared for future food safety crises. Complaints about allergen information, hygiene and food poisoning all notably increased during 2019. In 2018, the Authority's Advice Line dealt with 8,964 requests from industry. Some of the most frequent queries were in relation to legislation on food labelling requirements; requests for FSAI publications, as well as information for new food businesses setting up operations. Collaboration and integrity are key values of the Authority, and in order to fulfil our mission we work in partnership with the official agencies and in collaboration with others,

both nationally and internationally. Our relationships with our regulatory partners are key to Ireland's success in protecting consumers and delivering an enhanced national food safety control system. Through our service contracts, as well as through our relationships with the Health Service Executive (HSE), the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, and the Local Authority Veterinary Service, we ensure that we are in a position to direct our limited resources to focus on the areas of highest risk to consumers. However, any further reduction in resources will seriously challenge our ability to protect public health.

Our close working relationships with those further afield also ensure that we can share, exchange and leverage critical information in a timely manner where there is a risk to consumers from food, either produced in Ireland or imported into Ireland. These close relationships also create a useful platform where countries can share learnings, insights and best practices. Partnerships and engagements with agencies such as the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and our counterparts in Europe and across the world enable us to access timely, accurate and robust information which helps us to maintain an evidence-based, world-class system of controls that stands up to scrutiny.

Regulation (EU) 2017/625 came into effect on 14 December 2019. This Regulation sets the rules for the performance by EU Member

States of controls in the agri-food sector, replacing existing official controls legislation, Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 and Regulation (EC) No. 854/2004. In 2019, significant work went into the preparation of Ireland's food control system for the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2017/625; this involved extensive cross-agency work, which should help to ensure a bright future for Ireland's regulatory approach to food safety and authenticity.



We would like to acknowledge the work of the inspectorate and the State laboratories in delivering a significant programme of work during the year, particularly as many of the agencies were working with constrained resources. Ensuring that we can deliver on our legislative mandate requires a team, and we are privileged to have a very professional and committed team within the Authority. In 2019, we continued a programme of work which aims to enhance the Authority's inclusive, collaborative and high-performing environment. This programme of work involved the implementation of the actions identified in our staff survey and we also continued to provide personal and

professional development opportunities for Authority staff and Board members.

We feel confident and prepared for the years to come as we seek to operate and deliver our strategy in deliver our strategy in a period of unprecedented challenges.

The achievement of the Authority's mission will depend on the resources allocated to it to ensure that its system of controls continues to be delivered in line with cutting-edge scientific evidence and the most up-to-date information. We will continue to build and implement capacity and capability within Ireland's food control system in order to allow Ireland to react and deal effectively with current and future crises. Creating an environment where Ireland is a trusted and recognised leader in food safety and integrity is embedded within the Authority's culture and strategy. Ireland is renowned internationally as a 'food island'. This reputation places a further onus and responsibility on food businesses to produce safe and trustworthy food. Put simply, there is no market for unsafe food, and all involved in Ireland's food system – especially the food industry – must make consumers' health and

Dr Pamela A Byrne

Chief Executive Officer

interests with regard to food their top priority. Alongside this, we will deliver a robust system of controls and corporate governance designed to ensure accountability, transparency and public value within our food system. This will become even more important in the context of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Authority has a strong reputation globally due to its expert staff's commitment to protecting consumers. Its reputation is also due to the strong compliance provided by the Irish food industry, and we commend them for this. The food inspectors of the official agencies and the staff in the laboratories who work under a service contract with the Authority are vital to achieving our goal of ensuring safe and trustworthy food for everyone, and we thank and recognise them for their ongoing diligence and dedication to their role as part of the national food safety inspectorate. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Health, Simon Harris, TD; the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed, TD; and the staff of their respective Departments. I would also like to thank our Board members, the Scientific Committee, the Food Safety Consultative Council, and the industry fora as we work towards delivering our new strategy over the next four years

Martin Higgins

Chairperson

An introduction to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland

The Authority was established in 1998 under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 as an independent Government agency responsible for the enforcement of food legislation in Ireland. This Act was enacted in July 1998 and came into effect on 1 January 1999.

The Authority is a statutory, independent and science-based regulatory enforcement body dedicated to protecting public health and consumer interests in the areas of food safety, hygiene, integrity and authenticity. It reports to the Minister for Health, who appoints a 10-member Board. It also has a 14-member Scientific Committee (also appointed by the Minister of Health) that assists and advises the Board. Therefore, decisions relating to food safety, hygiene and integrity are made using the latest and best scientific advice and information available.

This ensures that people in Ireland have access to a safe food supply and trustworthy information about the food that they eat. In this way, the FSAI takes all reasonable steps in order to ensure that food consumed, produced, distributed or marketed in Ireland meets the highest standards of food safety and hygiene reasonably available, and to ensure that food complies with legal requirements or, where appropriate, with recognised codes of good practice.

By doing what it does, the Authority protects consumers of Irish food both at home and abroad. The Authority's activities are key to

underpinning Ireland's societal health and economic growth.

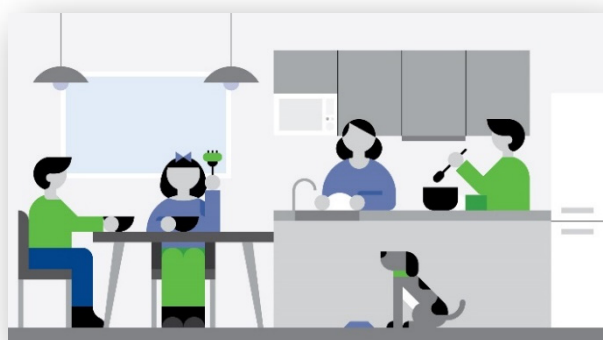
Underpinning a healthy society and functioning economy

The basis of a healthy society and a functioning economy is healthy people making informed choices about the food that they eat.

[The Department of Health Statement of Strategy 2016–2019](#) recognises the

importance of ensuring that the appropriate legal frameworks and policies and the relevant structures are in place in order to achieve the highest standards of food safety and to achieve the Department of Health's overall objective of supporting people to lead healthy and independent lives.

For individuals, unwanted bacteria, viruses and chemicals in food can have both acute (e.g. gastroenteritis) and chronic (e.g. cancer) health effects, and these impact considerably



on quality of life. In addition, the consequences of food poisoning can impact on the economy at a societal level through inability to work, as well as through healthcare

and social welfare costs. According to the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), unsafe food causes 600 million cases of foodborne diseases and 420,000 deaths each year. Thirty per cent of foodborne disease-related deaths occur among children aged under 5 years. The WHO estimated that globally, 33 million years of healthy lives are lost each year due to eating unsafe food. Consequently, a safer food supply means improvements in the lives of people in Ireland through reduced illness rates, lower health and welfare costs, and increased economic productivity.

Food and drink manufacturing is the largest indigenous sector in Ireland, with an average annual turnover of €27.5 billion.

It is deeply integrated into the wider economy, spending €18 billion per year on intermediate consumption in other sectors plus a further €2.1 billion annually on employee compensation. It accounts for 94% of total external product flows from the agricultural sector.

In addition to servicing the domestic grocery and food service markets, the food and drink industry is highly internationalised and exports to 180 countries. It maintains substantial market positions in the United Kingdom (UK), other European Union (EU) markets, and international markets.

Ireland's food and drink export success is underpinned by meat and dairy exports,

Ireland is the largest net exporter of dairy ingredients, beef and lamb in Europe. Ireland exports over 80% of its dairy and beef production. Both employment and exports have now recovered to, or exceeded, 2009 levels. Additionally, 250,000 jobs are linked directly to the agri-food sector.

The Irish food and drink sector is dispersed throughout the country and is a strong driver of regional development, accounting for 9.7% of total employment in Ireland's economically weakest regions.

The FSAI's commitment to compliance building and the provision of safe food underpins the performance of these economically crucial national industries. It also plays a significant role in Ireland's image nationally and globally as a world-class producer of safe and trustworthy food. Simply put, there is no market for unsafe food.

The Authority's work in ensuring the safety of the Irish food supply will become even more significant as a result of Brexit, and particularly if the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's [Food Wise 2025](#) projections are realised.

The Irish food safety system

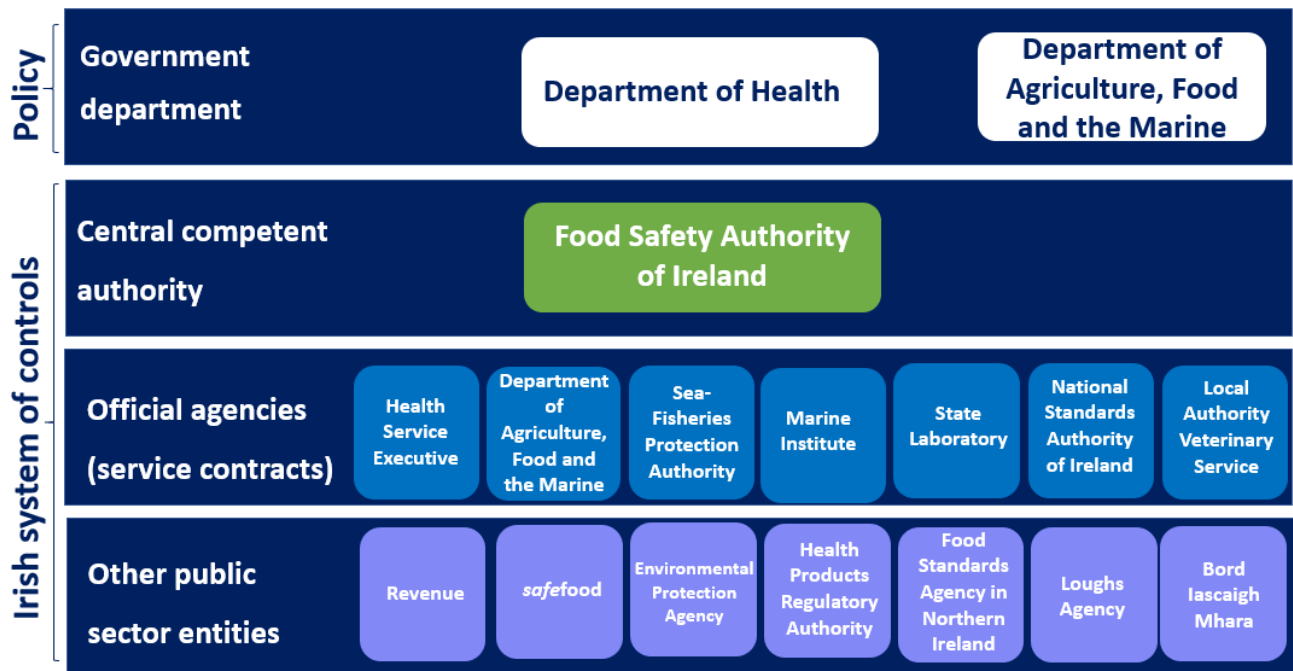


Figure 1 The Irish Food Safety System

What the Authority does

The Authority's key remit is the enforcement of food law, which is coordinated through working in partnership with other food regulatory authorities. Food legislation is enforced on behalf of the Authority by a network of official agencies through a service contracts programme, which the Authority monitors. The Authority also reports on the agencies' activities and seeks continuous improvement and accountability through a programme of regular audits. Read more about the [range and scope of our work here](#).

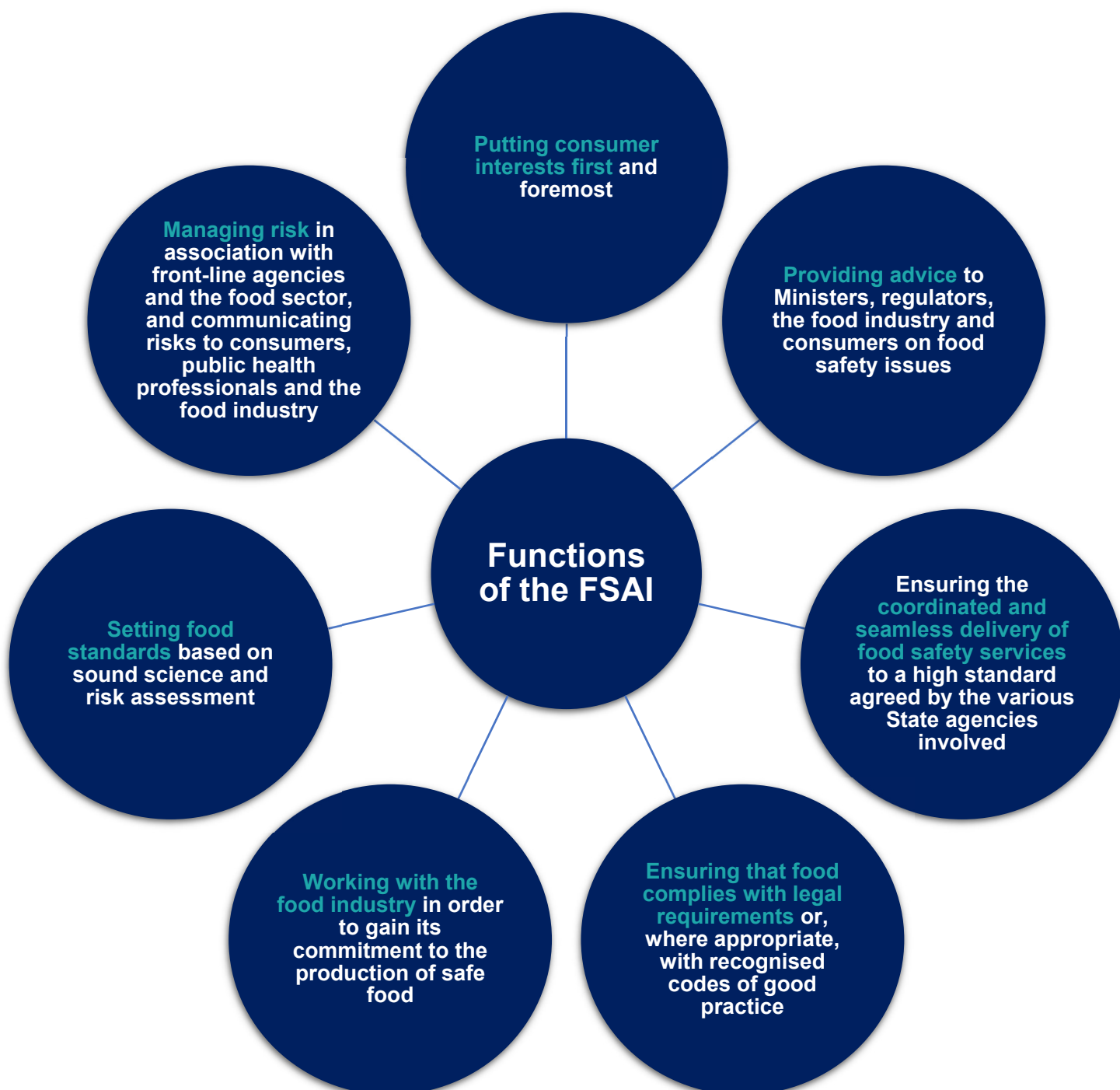


Figure 2 The range and scope of the Authorities work

How the authority operates

The Authority enforced food legislation through service contracts with 31 official agencies in 2019, and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 provides the requisite legislative basis for this.

The Authority's role is to coordinate and monitor the activities of these official agencies through the service contracts, which outline an agreed level and standard of food safety activity that the official agencies perform. The service contracts are in place for a minimum duration of three years, and may be reviewed

during that time subject to the request of either the Authority or the official agency. Regular meetings are held with senior management in each agency and with the line managers responsible for the delivery of the inspection and analysis service.

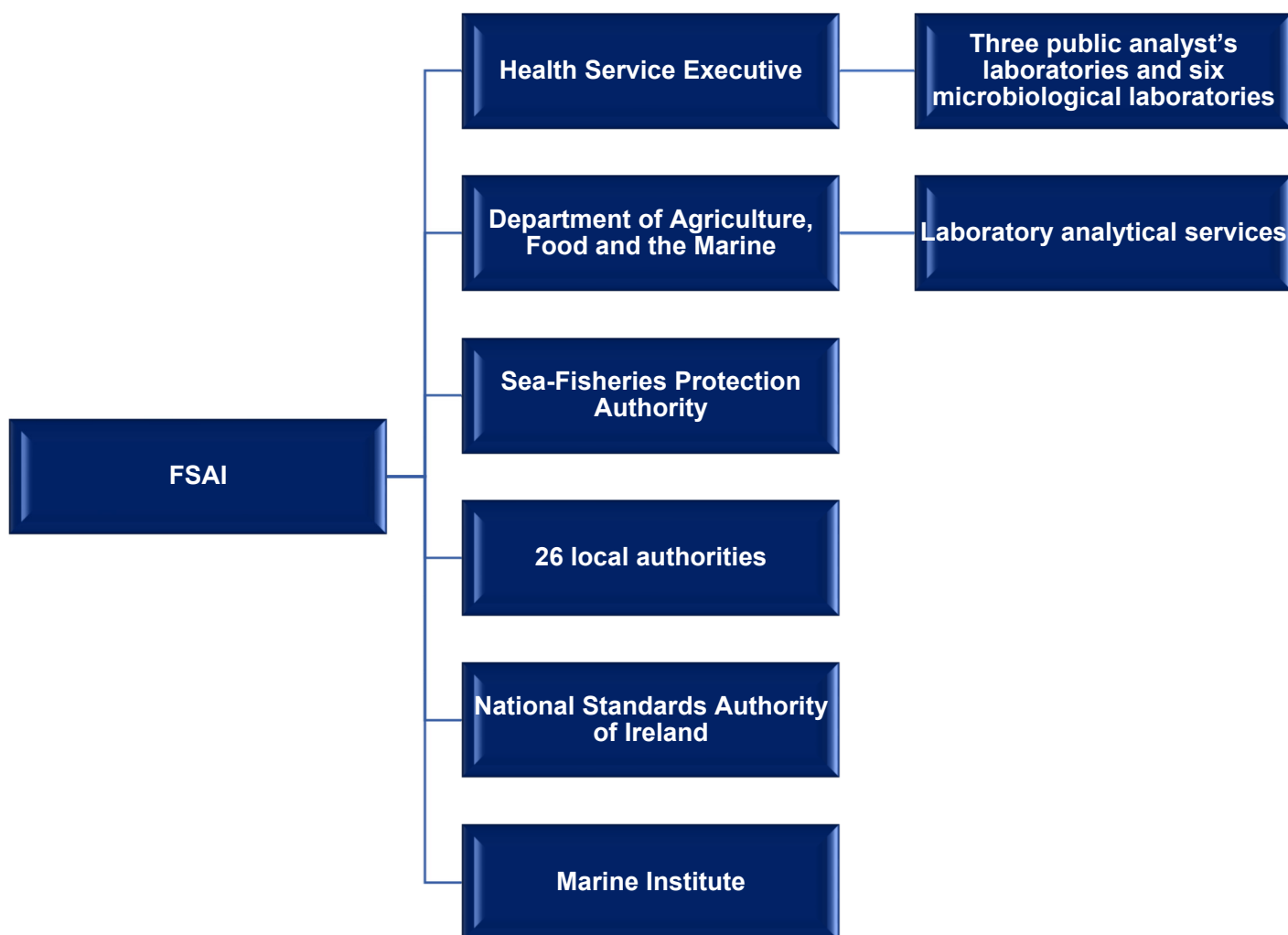


Figure 3 How the authority operates



Industry Engagement

The food industry is primarily responsible for the safety of food on the Irish market, whereas the Authority's role is one of oversight and enforcement.

Consequently, the Authority engages with the food industry in order to encourage compliance and to make food businesses aware of their responsibilities. During 2019, the Authority continued to engage with the food industry on many levels in order to reinforce the need for the sector to take responsibility for producing and marketing safe food and to improve food safety and hygiene standards.

To this end, the Authority hosted a number of meetings with its four industry fora (see [Appendix 1](#) for a list of members). These provide certain sectors of the food industry with a platform to raise pertinent issues and gain important information from the Authority.

Artisan Forum

Members of the Artisan Forum come from a very diverse and dynamic group of artisan, small-scale or domestic food producers. The Forum provides a useful setting through which the sector and the regulators can engage, interact and exchange information. This in turn assists in enhancing compliance throughout the sector. The Forum met four times in 2019. The diversity of the sector is demonstrated through the range of topics considered this year, which included: embracing the flexibility provided in food law – for example, to enable the operation of small-scale local poultry slaughterhouses; possible implications that rapidly evolving new testing technologies can have for producers; the use of glyphosate in agriculture; bee health; the possible mislabelling of honey; the prospect of providing a definition for certain food names (e.g. sourdough and Irish black pudding); the feeling that the sector may be over-regulated; developing and enhancing interactions with education providers and regulators; cooking directly over a fire; and enabling the sale of small quantities of eggs through local retail outlets.



Retail Forum

The Retail Forum includes representatives from both the main supermarket chains and the major symbol groups operating in Ireland. The Forum serves to increase understanding of food legislation, disseminate food safety advice and share best practice. The Retail Forum held four meetings in 2019: two regular meetings and two ad hoc meetings to discuss Brexit preparedness. The main issues discussed were: antimicrobial resistance; Brexit; *Campylobacter*; allergen information on non-prepacked foods; acrylamide; upcoming legislation on primary ingredients; Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* detection in food; product reformulation; labelling of raw milk cheese; permanent baiting; and Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on official controls.



Food Service Forum

The Food Service Forum draws its membership from catering businesses, food service businesses and representative organisations. The Forum disseminates food safety advice, shares best practice and improves understanding of relevant food legislation. The Food Service Forum met twice in 2019. The main issues discussed were: Brexit; acrylamide; a review of the FSAI *Safe Catering Pack*; online meal ordering and delivery services; enforcement consistency; trans fats; and permanent baiting.



Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee

The Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee is the national stakeholder committee for the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme. The aim of the Programme is to ensure that only safe shellfish are placed on the market. The Committee is chaired by the Authority and includes representatives from the official agencies (the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, the Marine Institute and the Health Service Executive), Bord Iascaigh Mhara, the shellfish industry, and other stakeholder groups. During 2019, the Committee met four times and discussed a wide range of issues, including sample coordination, biotoxin events and shellfish water quality. The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority and the Marine Institute kept the Committee up to date on norovirus, general toxicity trends, water quality, environmental contaminants and developments regarding shellfish safety within Europe. The Committee oversaw reviews of both the biotoxin and microbiological codes of practice under the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme. The Committee members provided user feedback to the Marine Institute on the continued development of the harmful algal blooms biotoxin database, and stakeholders also supported the Marine Institute in its running of a Shellfish Safety Workshop for competent authorities, industry and all interested parties.



Collaborations

In 2019, the Authority marked 20 years since its inception. It is clear to the FSAI that it can credit national and international collaborations as some of the reasons behind its collective successes in food safety over the past 20 years. In this way, the Authority recognises the importance of its collaborators and partners in delivering a system of controls for food safety and authenticity that ensure the delivery of its vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone. Collaboration is one of the Authority's core values, and the FSAI fully believes that its ability to protect consumers can only be achieved through working in partnership and collaboration both within the FSAI and with industry and key stakeholders.

During 2019, the Authority continued its collaborations with a number of organisations both in Ireland and abroad. Its close cooperation and collaboration with the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland is enabled through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that is designed to ensure rapid and effective cooperation in the event of a cross-border food incident and to address issues related to consistency of enforcement in both jurisdictions. The MoU between the Loughs Agency and the Authority covers assistance that the Loughs Agency provides to facilitate the operation of the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme in Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough. The Authority continued to work with *safe food* in 2019 on areas of mutual interest and to identify opportunities for future collaboration. This included a joint celebration to mark World Food Safety Day 2019 together with the Department of Health, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), and members of the food industry. The FSAI also worked with other regulators in Ireland, including the Health Products Regulatory

Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency. In addition, the FSAI collaborated with the Science Gallery Dublin in Trinity College Dublin (TCD) to mark the Authority's 20th anniversary and to pay homage to the massive contribution's science provides to food safety annually.



World Food Safety Day 2019

The Authority contributes to the Health Service Executive's (HSE's) Scientific Advisory Committee of the Health Protection Surveillance Centre and to the Environmental Protection Agency Advisory Committee. The Authority is an ongoing, active contributor on a number of other committees from other organisations, the purposes of which are to raise and maintain standards in the food

sector. These organisations include: Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland; Bord Bia; Broadcasting Authority of Ireland; National Hygiene Partnership; and the National Standards Authority of Ireland.



The FSAI hosted the European Heads of Food Agencies meeting in March 2019

The Authority is an active member of the European Food Safety Authority and the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies, and it also chairs Food Law Enforcement Practitioners, an EU group of inspectors and laboratory personnel engaged in food law implementation. In addition, the Authority participates in a global government-to-government meeting on the use of private certification schemes in the context of official controls, and is an active member of the International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods (ICMSF). The Authority assists agencies in other countries which regard it as a model for single national food control agencies. In addition, it continues to be a member of Sustainable Food Systems Ireland (SFSI), an initiative by Enterprise Ireland and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to make Ireland's food

safety, scientific, technical, policy, and agri-food expertise available in order to support development overseas.

European engagement in 2019 included the FSAI's continued participation in a network of other Member States and in the European Commission working on a standard format for producing National Control Plans for official controls across the EU and for reporting on them. In addition, the FSAI participated in an EU working group in relation to compliance with EU rules on olive oil monitoring and reporting.

International work included capacity-building initiatives in food control systems in Vietnam and Albania. In 2019, the Authority, along with a consortium of Irish Government agencies and their international partners, began to support Albania as a candidate for accession to the EU by strengthening its food safety, veterinary and plant health standards. This project is intended to continue for the next three years and is supported by a €5 million EU grant. The consortium is led by the Authority and includes the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, with project management by SFSI. Other partners are the Finnish Food Authority and an Albanian not-for-profit partner, Creative Business Solutions.

In October 2019, the Authority hosted a delegation from Albania as part of The Food Safety Project, funded by EuropeAid.

The delegation of 13 senior staff from four State agencies attended a week-long workshop on National Control Plans and risk-based planning. The work was carried out to address the need for a more integrated control plan that describes the activities of all relevant authorities in Albania and the arrangements for coordination between them. In addition to presentations from FSAI specialists in a number of areas, the workshop also provided an opportunity for those attending to scrutinise existing systems within Albania in the context of EU agri-food chain legislation, to identify areas for improvement, and to critically evaluate those same systems in order to help direct the project's future activities. Discussions with the food agencies in Vietnam and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade continued in 2019 as part of the Irish Aid international development programme. This resulted in Vietnamese food safety officials visiting the FSAI offices during 2019.



A visit from food agencies in Albania

From a global perspective, the FSAI shared ideas with Canada and New Zealand with a view to developing a more formal working

relationship with these countries in the future. The Authority also has a confidentiality agreement with the United States (US) Food and Drug Administration. And it continues to host foreign delegations who wish to learn more about the Authority's strategy and operations. In 2019, the FSAI hosted a European Heads of Food Safety Agencies meeting, in addition to hosting delegations from Albania, the United Arab Emirates, Vietnam and the Netherlands.

The Authority's Director of Food Science and Standards, Dr Wayne Anderson, is a member of the ICMSF. The Authority is also the national contact point for the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), a joint initiative between the WHO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It involves 177 Member States in the routine exchange of information on food safety issues and the sharing of experiences and expertise and allows for rapid access to information in the event of food safety emergencies.

The Authority collaborates with Food Drink Ireland (FDI) on horizon scanning through the Emerging Risks and Threats Forum, which has members from the FSAI, FDI and the larger multinational food manufacturers. There is no doubt that these collaborations and partnerships are essential in ensuring a safe and trustworthy food system, both nationally and internationally. The Authority recognises its partners' contributions in achieving the delivery of this system for Ireland.

FSAI Strategy 2019–2023

The Authority launched a [new strategy](#) in 2019. The strategy sets out its vision, mission, values, and strategic goals and objectives for the next five years and is the result of extensive internal and external consultation. The FSAI’s vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone clearly articulates the Authority’s ambition, and the delivery of the strategy builds upon the work undertaken in the past, fostering a partnership approach by delivering a strategically planned food safety regulatory system that continues to be relevant, progressive and robust for the future.

The Authority’s success is firmly based on food law, science, and collaboration with those in the food safety community. Its commitment to protecting consumers is the foundation of its mission, which states:

‘We protect consumers and raise compliance through partnership, science and food law enforcement.’

Figure 4 illustrates the values that underpin how the Authority works:



Figure 4 FSAI values

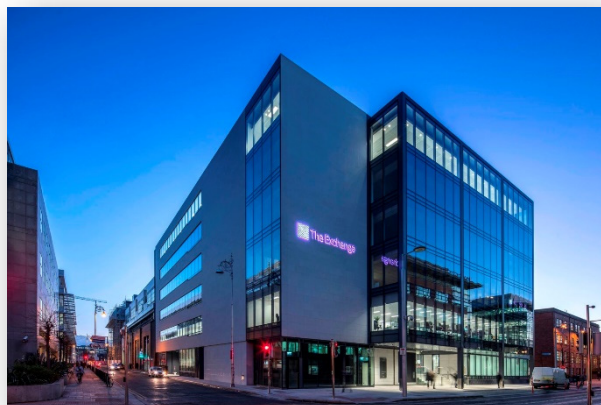
These values guide the Authority’s decisions and interactions as the organisation strives to achieve its vision and deliver on its mission and strategic goals. This new strategy and mission statement will guide our vision for the next five years.

Corporate social responsibility

The Authority is dedicated to operating in a socially responsible manner. As a public agency, the FSAI is aware of the impact that its activities have on its staff, its stakeholders, society, and the environment. To this end, the Authority identified environmental savings, education, food waste, packaging, accessibility and fundraising as key areas of focus for corporate social responsibility (CSR) development in 2019.

The Authority is committed to carrying out its statutory duties in an environmentally friendly manner. In support of EU and Government environmental action plans, the FSAI engaged with stakeholders in a way that minimised environmental risk and contributed to Ireland's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in 2019. This involved minimising the need to travel to meetings where technology solutions were available; ensuring that staff used public transport as frequently as possible to travel to meetings; and encouraging staff to avail of public transport when travelling to and from work in order to reduce the FSAI's carbon footprint. The FSAI continued to support and promote the Tax saver Commuter Ticket scheme and the Bike to Work scheme in 2019.

The Authority also provided environmental awareness communications to staff in 2019 in a bid to raise awareness and reduce its carbon footprint.



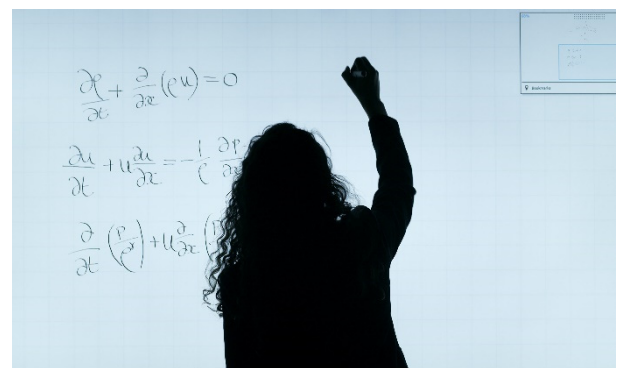
The Exchange building that the Authority resides in holds LEED Gold standard certification due to its emphasis on sustainability and energy efficiency, and is rated BER A3. Compared with buildings which have a BER C1 rating, this rating indicates a 50% reduction in energy consumption, a 51% reduction in carbon emissions, and a 30% reduction in water usage. In addition, the Authority has undertaken specific measures to reduce printing and increase light savings by reducing the number of printers and utilising LED lighting throughout the building. In 2019, the FSAI also adapted in order to adhere to the Government's decision in 2019 which set out that Government Departments and agencies would not purchase single-use plastics, beverage cups, cutlery or drinking straws, either directly or indirectly, except

where specific public health/hygiene or safety issues arise. In addition, the FSAI's procurement plan will include, where possible, the product energy efficiency ratings and life cycle costs as tender award criteria in 2020. The FSAI will continue to be a proactive member of The Exchange Building Environmental Team in 2020 in order to deliver improvements in the consumption of utilities and reduce the volume of waste with the overall aim of reducing The Exchange Building's carbon footprint in 2020.

As an information-led organisation, the FSAI understands that its staff are its most important asset, and it is committed to being a fulfilling place to work.

Staff upskilling and wellness were selected as key areas for development in 2019, including supporting staff initiatives such as mindfulness, yoga, Christmas carols, a craft club, a book club and other social activities. Following the 2018 staff survey, further opportunities for improvement were identified and rolled out in 2019. The Authority also provides excellent upskilling opportunities, with staff members having availed of online learning, training courses and further professional development opportunities in 2019.

The Authority continued to place an emphasis on contributing to the education of the future generation of food scientists, food safety inspectors and those studying for a career in regulatory agencies through lectures and seminars across Ireland. During 2019, student training was provided both through student placement in the FSAI and through the organisation of a regulatory training course for master's students in the FSAI in conjunction with the other functional areas. Further outreach at third level included 60 hours of lectures, seven allergen masterclasses with *safe food* at a number of third-level institutions, a two-day training programme on regulatory affairs for food safety master's students studying at University College Dublin (UCD), and the FSAI's long-running commitment to provide training for veterinary surgeons studying at UCD. Furthermore, the FSAI has guidance and numerous e-learning resources on its website which also help to contribute to and reinforce its educational efforts.



The FSAI partnered with the Science Gallery Dublin at TCD as part of its 20th anniversary celebrations. As part of this collaboration, the Authority took part in events on food waste, sustainability and the use of food packaging.

The events raised awareness of these important topics and helped to communicate the FSAI's stance on them. In addition, the FSAI Food Safety Consultative Council hosted an open meeting on food packaging in November 2019. This open meeting proved very successful and fruitful in the drive for achieving a balance between food safety and environmental sustainability.

Another area in which the Authority is focusing its efforts is that of accessibility. The FSAI is mindful of the importance of communicating to everyone; therefore, it is reviewing its communications in order to help ensure that they are as accessible as possible to those availing of the Authority's services.

The Authority is also committed to supporting communities both locally and nationally.

During 2019, the FSAI team engaged in fundraising initiatives for several charities, one of the most notable being a clothes collection for Cedar House Crosscare Homeless Shelter. In addition, FSAI Chief Executive Officer Dr Pamela Byrne took part in Focus Ireland's Shine A Light Night to sleep out in solidarity with homeless people and those at risk of homelessness. Dr Byrne live-tweeted this experience in a bid to raise further awareness and more funds for Focus Ireland.

Operating in a socially responsible manner is an ethos which permeates the core of the

Authority, and it will continue to build upon this work in 2020 and beyond.



The Authority took part in events on food waste, sustainability and the use of food packaging with the Science Gallery Dublin at Trinity College



FSAI Chief Executive, Dr Pamela Byrne took part in Focus Ireland's Shine A Light night where she raised funds while sleeping out in solidarity with the homeless & those at risk.

Governance and management

The Authority has a non-executive Board, appointed by the Minister for Health, which is responsible for the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer and for oversight of corporate governance in accordance with Government guidelines. Two independent bodies advise the Board: the Food Safety Consultative Council, comprising stakeholders in the food chain (e.g. food industry, consumers), and the Scientific Committee, comprising scientists. This is illustrated in Figure 5.

The Scientific Committee comprises 14 independent scientists appointed by the Minister for Health in consultation with the Board. The Chairperson of the Scientific Committee must be a member of the Board. The Scientific Committee advises the Board on scientific matters underpinning food safety and nutrition, and the Authority may not act on an issue referred to the Scientific Committee until such time as its opinion is provided to the Board. The Scientific Committee establishes subcommittees of independent scientists to progress its advice; consequently, the Authority is advised by the work of approximately 83 scientists.

FSAI Organisational Chart

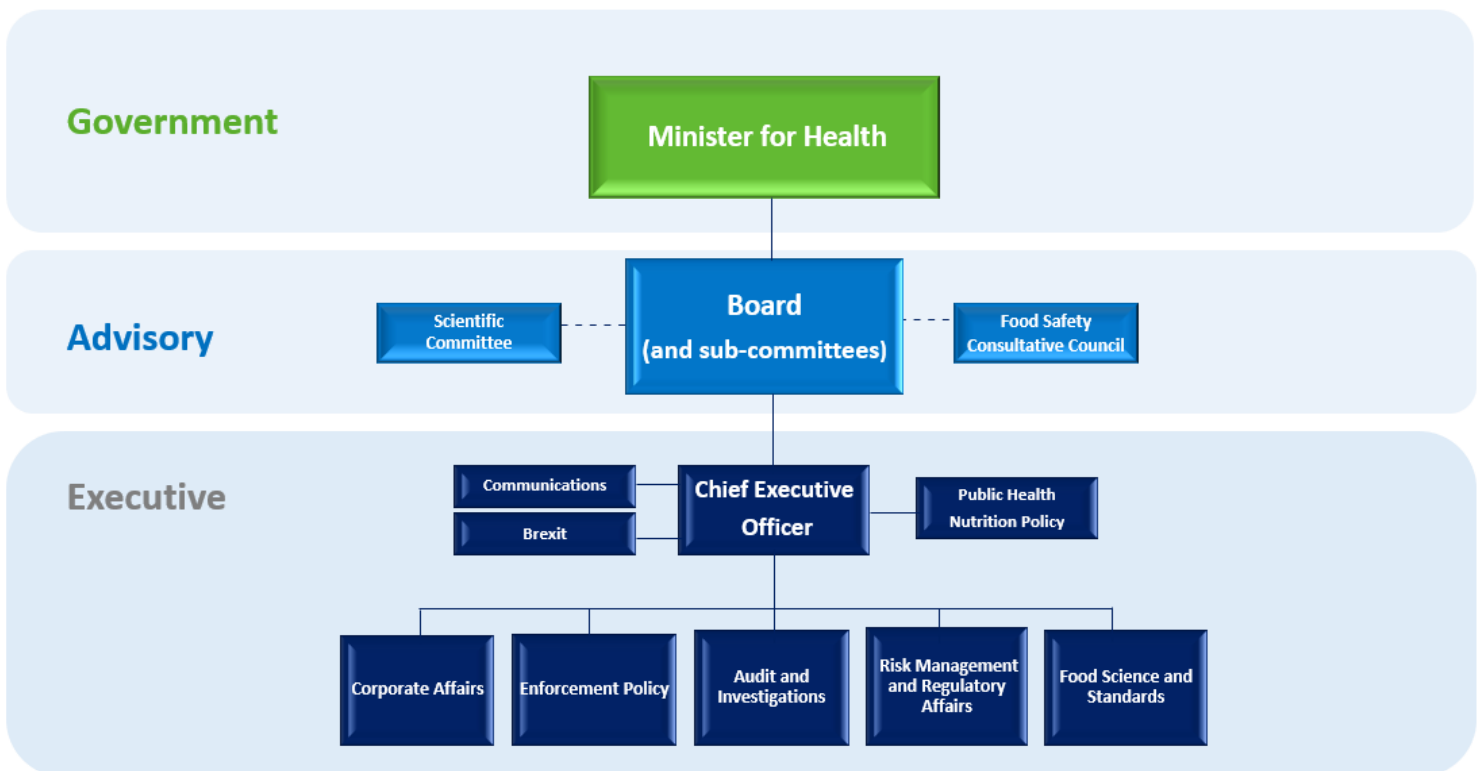


Figure 5 The FSAI Organisational Chart

**Food Safety Authority of
Ireland Board, 2019**

Mr Martin Higgins (Chairperson)

Mr Ciaran Byrne

Ms Mary Cullen

Mr Derek Cunningham

Prof. Albert Flynn

Ms Margaret Moran

Ms Ros O'Shea

**Dr Susan Quinn (Board member
until October 2019)**

Mr Gerry McCurdy

Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan

Prof. Francis Butler

Prof Patrick Wall

**Food Safety Consultative
Council, 2019**

Mr Ray Bowe (Chair)

Musgraves Retail Partners

Ms Maree Gallagher

Food Law Solicitor

Mr Dermot Gates

Boxmore Plastics Ltd

Mr Cormac Healy

Meat Industry Ireland

Mr Dermot Jewell

Consumers' Association of Ireland

Mr Jamie Knox

Britvic Ireland

Ms Siobhan Murphy

Health Service Executive

Mr James McCrudden

Country Markets

Mr Tim O'Brien

Restaurateur

Mr Eamonn Quinn

Kelsius

Mr Martin Roper

Food Safety Consultant

Ms Annette Sweeney

TU Dublin

**Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Scientific Committee, 2019**

Prof. Albert Flynn (Chairperson)

University College Cork

Dr Paula Barry Walsh

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Prof. Kevin Cashman

University College Cork

Dr PJ Cullen

TU Dublin

Dr Geraldine Duffy

Teagasc

Dr Mark Fenelon

Teagasc

Mr John Keegan

Dublin Public Analyst's Laboratory (retired)

Prof. Brian McKenna

University College Dublin (retired)

Dr Eleanor McNamara

Health Service Executive

Dr Michael O'Keeffe

Residue Specialist

Dr Margaret O'Sullivan

Health Service Executive

Mr Ray Parle

Health Service Executive

Dr Dónal Sammin

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Ms Ita Saul

Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin (retired)

Key highlights of the Authority's activities

The official food control system: the numbers at a glance

Enforcements

During 2019, food inspectors served food businesses with 108 Closure Orders, 4 Improvement Orders and 13 Prohibition Orders, and took 2 prosecutions against food businesses throughout Ireland (Figure 3).

The types of recurring food safety issues which lead to Enforcement Orders and Improvement Notices (Table 1) are poor cleaning and sanitation of premises; poor personal hygiene; lack of running water; inadequate hand-washing facilities; incorrect food storage; lack of or an ineffective pest control programme; structural problems arising from a lack of ongoing maintenance; and lack of or an inadequate food safety management system.

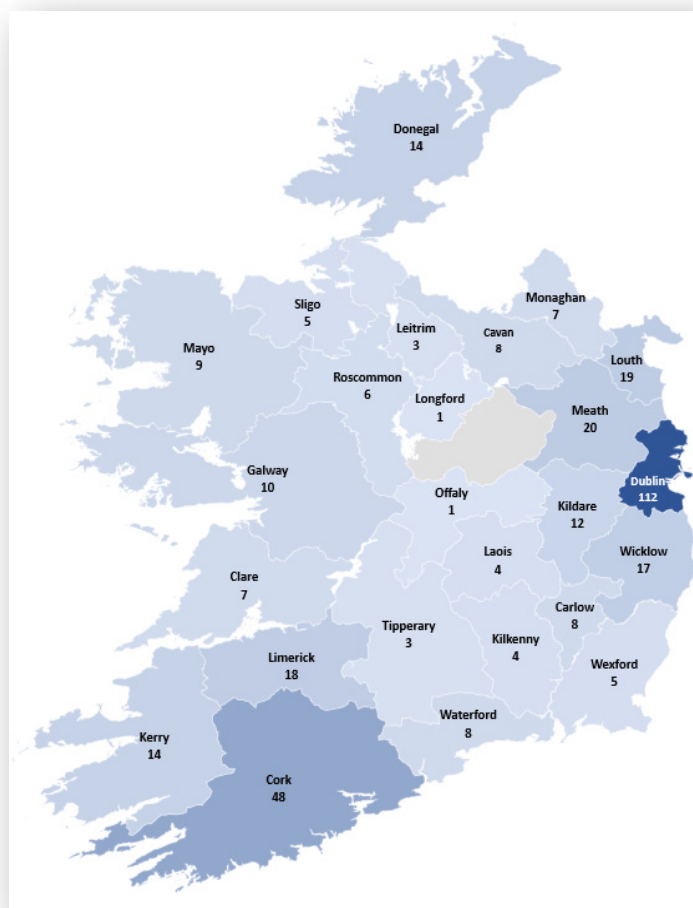


Figure 6 Enforcement Orders and prosecutions, by county, 2019

Enforcement action	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Closure Order	90	94	64	95	108
Improvement Notice	265	263	262	230	236
Improvement Order	0	3	1	5	4
Prohibition Order	16	9	4	10	13
Prosecution	13	13	11	9	2
Total	384	382	342	349	363

Table 1 Enforcements and prosecutions served, 2015–2019

Food business inspections

In 2019, 49,501 food businesses were under the supervision of official agencies that have service contracts with the Authority (Table 2). This represents a small (0.47%) increase from 2018. Of the registered food businesses inspected, almost 92% were inspected by the HSE; 6% by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; 2% by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and 1% by local authorities. This distribution of the share of food businesses inspected by each of the official agencies has been similar over the past six years. A wide range of activities is carried out by these food businesses, from importing and manufacturing to distributing, retailing and catering operations.

Table 2 Number and type of food businesses under supervision by official agencies, 2015–2019

Official agency	Premises type	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Primary producers	311	114	123	337	340
	Manufacturers and packers	383	297	352	441	428
	Distributors and transporters	120	411	419	236	132
	Total	814	822	894	1014	900
HSE	Service sector	29 222	28 933	29 177	28 676	28 832
	Not assigned	39	23	46	46	36
	Transporters	105	123	132	144	130
	Wholesalers/distributors	1183	1138	1158	1183	1194
	Packers	108	117	121	120	112
	Retailers	11 362	12 950	13 529	13 336	13 373
	Importers/exporters	57				
	Manufacturers	3110	2109	1437	1436	1400
	Third-country importers/exporters		37	41	41	42
	Administrative food businesses		102	162	208	263
	Total	45 186	45 532	45 803	45 190	45 382
Local authorities	Slaughterhouses	205	201	195	182	175
	Small meat manufacturing plants	200	204	209	211	217
	Poultry plants	38	40	38	40	32
	Cold stores	31	36	43	45	38
	Butcher shops	8	9	8	9	9

Official agency	Premises type	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
	Mobile businesses	16	21	33	34	23	
	Total	498	511	526	521	494	
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	Fishing vessels	2077	2195	2079	1912	2077	
	Approved establishments on land	195					
	Molluscan production areas	141	2	182	185	187	
	Registered food businesses on land (including ice plants)	110	8	10	11	15	
	Food broker				1	1	
	Freezer and factory vessels	52	40	60	65	67	
	Processing plants		111	121	124	116	
	Fresh fishery products plants		60	60	72	72	
	Importers		53	58	64	62	
	Cold stores	16	15	16	15	4	
	Shellfish farmers		17	33	35	30	
	Purification plants		16	17	20	28	
	Dispatch centres		12	14	15	14	
	Mobile businesses			9		7	
	Transporters					8	9
	Wholesalers/distributors					8	42
	Auction halls					1	1
	Total	2591	2539	2651	2543	2725	
Total number of food premises		49 089	49 404	49 873	49 268	49 501	

Food inspections

All official agencies operate risk-based programmes of official controls, and each agency categorises risk in agreement with the Authority. Those food businesses which carry out activities that present the greatest potential risk to human health are prioritised for inspection. Unannounced inspections of food businesses are a key element of the official controls, as well as other activities, such as food sampling and investigation of incidents and outbreaks. There was a decline from 2015 to 2018 in the number of inspections carried out (Table 3). However, there were 86 more planned food inspections carried out in 2019 than in 2018. In addition to planned inspections, a significant

number of unplanned inspections take place; these arise as a result of food incidents, investigations, follow-ups on complaints from the public, and advisory visits to food businesses. In 2018, the HSE Environmental Health Service carried out 11,035 other inspections of food businesses.

Table 1 Number of planned food inspections by official agencies, 2015–2019

Official agency	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
HSE (Environmental Health Service)	36 353	35 786	33 193	32 254	31 189
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Inspectorate)	15 011	11 985	11 569	10 826	12 214
Local authorities	5033	4870	4891	4582	4320
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	2015	2228	2245	2122	2121
National Standards Authority of Ireland	61	72	84	62	88
Total number of food business inspections	58 473	54 941	51 982	49 846	49 932

Staff working in official controls

The official agencies report annually to the Authority on the staff resources they have dedicated to official controls under the service contracts. In 2019, 1,271 whole time equivalents (WTEs) were involved in carrying out official controls in Irish food businesses (Table 4). There was an increase of 121 WTEs in 2019 over the number in 2018. This means that the number of WTEs in the food safety inspectorate in Ireland is the closest to the number of WTE staff that there were in 2011 (1,280) that it has been in the past eight years. The food safety inspectorate continues to develop its expertise through training courses. In 2019, 704 courses were taken by the inspectorate.

Table 4 WTEs by official agency, 2015–2019

Official agency	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine					
Inspection Service	319	319	338	345	407
Laboratory Service	84	79	82	82	90
HSE					

Environmental Health Service	304	336	339	339	377
Laboratory Service	128	104	130	124	125
FSAI	72	70	73	79	79
Local authorities	101	116	104	101	106
Marine Institute	38	41	41	41	41
National Standards Authority of Ireland	1	1	1	1	1
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	43	42	36	40	45
Total number of WTE	1090	1108	1144	1150	1271

Food sampling

The service contracts include programmes by the official agencies for the sampling and testing of food for compliance with all aspects of food legislation. Samples taken by the food safety inspectorates are analysed by a network of Official and National Reference Laboratories operated by the official agencies. In 2019, 56,755 samples were taken and tested, a decrease of 11.1% compared with 2018 (Table 5).

Table 5 Number of samples taken by official agency, 2015–2019

Sampling agency	2015	% of total	2016	% of total	2017	% of total	2018	% of total	2019	% of total
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	30 333	54%	31 456	56%	32 947	57%	35 983	56%	32 035	56%
HSE (Environmental Health Service)	13 744	24%	13 220	23%	11 699	20%	11 678	18%	11 217	20%
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	8 229	15%	9 004	16%	8 353	14%	8 386	13%	8 463	15%
Local authorities	3 107	5%	2 388	4%	3 306	6%	3 195	5%	2 524	4%
Other agencies	1 262	2%	520	1%	1 335	2%	4 597	7%	2 516	4%
Total	56 675		56 588		57 640		63 839		56 755	



Office of the Chief Executive Officer

Dr Pamela A Byrne

Chief Executive Officer



The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Authority as well as for providing leadership among her peers in food safety agencies across Europe and beyond. She is supported by the Senior Leadership Team, which oversees operations within the Authority's five functional areas. The CEO's Office is also responsible for liaising with the Authority's Board and coordinating the communications function, as well as stakeholder management and engagement; organising events; designing and publishing the Authority's publications; promoting the Authority's work in the media; and representing Ireland at the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA's) Communications Experts Network.

The Public Health Nutrition Policy team responsible for providing the secretariat to the Authority's Scientific Public Health Nutrition Subcommittee and to various national working groups in the area of nutrition. The Public Health Nutrition Policy team also chairs the Codex Alimentarius Electronic Working Group to develop an international nutrition standard for older infants and young children. The FSAI's Brexit team also reports to the CEO's Office; this team has implemented a number of Brexit initiatives to support national Brexit preparations.

The CEO is the Irish representative to EFSA's Advisory Forum and the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies group. She is a member of the Irish delegation to the Codex Alimentarius Commission; a member of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's Research Advisory Committee; and Chairperson of University College Dublin's Institute of Food and Health Advisory Board. The CEO is also the Chairperson of the Board of the Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies.



Communications

The Authority actively communicates with, and provides information to, interested parties on all aspects of food safety and hygiene. The Authority also encourages consumers to contact it with any food safety complaints or issues that they may have.

The Authority's two-way communication is facilitated by its Advice Line, website, extranet, social media pages, and events. Over the course of 2019, the Authority partnered with the Science Gallery Dublin at TCD and organised a number of events at the gallery, including the launch of its Strategy 2019–2023 and the Food Safety Consultative Council (FSCC) open meeting.



Dr Pamela Byrne presenting Rian Byrne with a BT Young Scientist award for his project on honey

It also participated in events hosted by the Science Gallery Dublin, namely the launch of its exhibition on perfection (a public debate on plastics) and an event which explored emerging organic, 'clean' and 'raw' food cultures. As part of its ongoing direct engagement with its stakeholders, the

Authority hosted an international science conference; a seminar on Brexit which looked at the food regulatory requirements will change; a 'Breakfast Bite' on food labelling; an educators' forum; and a workshop for butcher shops.



Helen Crowley and Carol Heavey at Taking Care of Business 2019

The Authority also collaborated with more than 30 State agencies for the Taking Care of Business exhibition, which was a one-stop shop for businesses, entrepreneurs and start-ups to get information and advice from State offices and agencies. It also sponsored "the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Award, at the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition 2019 and attended CATEX, Ireland's biggest food service and hospitality event.

The Communications team responded to 228 media queries and issued 24 press releases in 2019, which directly resulted in

585 media outputs in print, online and broadcast.

FSAI staff were regularly invited to speak on national and local radio throughout the year. The team continued its work on a stakeholder engagement project, which is a means to improve collaboration, create a wider understanding of the Authority's role, and encourage and create change in line with scientific developments and changes in regulation, while also supporting those directly involved in seeking to provide a robust official food control system.

The Authority continued its active engagement with its stakeholders through

Facebook and Twitter, with an increase in the number of followers to 14,512 and 8,579, respectively. In response to Brexit, the FSAI created short informational videos for food businesses using its YouTube channel. The Authority also actively engaged on LinkedIn, resulting in an increase in followers from 12,272 in 2018 to 16,984 in 2019. A total of 24 new publications were published, and 11 publications were updated. These were all published on the FSAI website and include guidance notes for the industry, audit reports, FSAI Scientific Committee reports, surveys, and other materials to support the achievement of the Authority's vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone.

A closer look at some of the Authority's events in 2019:



FSAI International food science conference 2019

In honour of its 20th anniversary, the FSAI was delighted to host [The Science of Food Safety – What's our Future?](#), its international food science conference. The two-day event focused on the microbiological safety and chemical safety of food. Regulatory chemists; toxicologists; microbiologists; policy-

makers; food law enforcement practitioners; academics and their teams working in chemical and microbiological food safety; food industry scientists; scientific consultants; and non-governmental organisations from Ireland, Europe and beyond participated in a unique and valuable event programme designed to inspire, inform and evoke ideas related to food safety. More than 300 stakeholders attended the event.

Perfection and The Full Package events with the Science Gallery Dublin

The *Perfection* exhibition was a creative collision of scientific experimentation and artistic expression. It was launched by FSAI CEO Dr Pamela Byrne in collaboration with the Science Gallery Dublin at TCD. The exhibition intended to raise awareness of food waste, encouraging attendees to look past the aesthetics of food and focus on the safety aspects. *The Full Package* exhibition took the form of a panel debate and examined the use of plastic packaging. Panelists included FSAI CEO, Dr Pamela Byrne; Co-founder and Sales Director of Ecostraws, Sarah Keyes; Director of the AMBER research centre and a Professor in the School of Chemistry at TCD, Michael Morris; and lecturer in the Product Design Department at the National College of Art and Design (NCAD), Enda O'Dowd.



Seafood and microplastics

The Authority hosted a meeting of interested stakeholders to examine the issue of ocean-borne microplastics and their potential as a food safety issue for seafood. The meeting was attended by people from a variety of State agencies involved in the issue, including the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. The Institute has been actively involved in the monitoring and analysis of microplastics in the ocean, which have an increasing profile as both an environmental and food safety issue. The meeting reviewed the current state of the science and the work being undertaken by EFSA, as well as the monitoring of microplastics under the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (the 'OSPAR Convention').

Brexit – Your Food Regulatory Obligations

This [free seminar](#) focused on Brexit and the possible impacts from a food law compliance perspective. It also addressed the issues of import controls of food. There were speakers from the FSAI and from other Government agencies. More than 200 stakeholders attended this event.



Food Safety Consultative Council Open Meeting: Food and Plastic – A Question of Taste?

The purpose of this [open meeting](#) was to review and debate the role of plastic in the food sector. Food and Plastic – A Question of Taste? provided a platform for experts to debate the use of plastic packaging in the food sector and changing attitudes towards plastic use. The event attracted more than 140 stakeholders.

Brexit

In 2019, as part of the Government's Brexit plans, the Authority implemented a number of Brexit initiatives to support the national Brexit preparations. These initiatives included preparing food businesses to meet the regulatory and compliance changes associated with Brexit and working with official agencies and the Government to ensure that systems, infrastructure, staffing, and information technology (IT) system capacity are ready for Brexit. The FSAI set up a cross-agency group to strengthen and enhance coordination and partnership between the official agencies in the context of Brexit's potential impact on food safety and public health.

The Authority also contributed to the Government's Brexit preparations and contingencies through the Department of Health's (DOH) Secretary General, Heads of Agencies Group and Brexit Operations Team.

The Authority also worked with Government Departments and agencies to develop a risk-based interagency approach to ensure optimal goods trade traffic flows at Dublin and Rosslare ports.

In March 2019, the FSAI organised a stakeholder event to highlight the regulatory issues that food businesses needed to be aware of in order to prepare for Brexit. The seminar, *Brexit – Your Food Regulatory Obligations*, was attended by more than 200 representatives from a broad mix of industry stakeholders.

The Authority continued its engagement with food businesses and their representative groups to discuss and address Brexit-related questions throughout the year, presenting at 16 industry events and FSAI industry fora meetings. The newly set up Brexit section on the FSAI website received more than 9,400 page views in 2019. The Authority's dedicated

Brexit email address allowed industry to get the most up-to-date information available. The FSAI answered more than 270 Brexit queries in 2019, predominately from the retailer/wholesaler and manufacturing sectors.

The Authority began a social media campaign in June targeted at small- to medium-sized food businesses, prioritising the Brexit topics most important to them, as well as providing signposting to relevant messages from other Government Departments. The *Brexit and your food business* video series was developed as part of this campaign, with five videos launched in 2019 resulting in 19,135 views on social media by year end. This campaign led to 2,765 FSAI website visits, and the FSAI's total social media reach for Brexit in 2019 was 258,879 newsfeeds.

The Authority launched an electronic newsletter in July 2019, and by year end had more than 320 subscribers representing a wide range of industry stakeholders.

The five editions of the *FSAI Brexit Ezine* published in 2019 focused on Brexit preparedness and assisting food businesses in getting Brexit-ready. The Authority also provided input on the Government's *Getting Your Business Brexit Ready* campaign to

assist businesses in preparing for the risks associated with Brexit.

To support Environmental Health Officers EHOs' work in import control, the Authority, in conjunction with the Environmental Health Service (EHS), developed an e-learning module on official controls for third-country imports of foods of non-animal origin. In addition, the Authority supported the EHS in its training of 50 EHOs assigned to Brexit work with a focus on food legislation, official controls and the specific requirements for import controls. The local authority veterinary inspectors were provided with a one-day Brexit workshop on the impact of Brexit on their official control work and on the food businesses they supervise.

Protected disclosures

The CEO of the FSAI is a designated person under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014. During 2019, five protected disclosures were made to the CEO, all of which were investigated by the FSAI's Audit and Investigations team. In all instances, the allegations of wrongdoing contained in the protected disclosures were verified, and at times significant enforcement actions were implemented on the food business operators concerned. Information contained in one protected disclosure resulted in the largest multi-agency, multidisciplinary investigation ever conducted by the Authority.



Corporate Affairs

Kevin Roantree

Director, Corporate Affairs



The Corporate Affairs functional area, led by Mr Kevin Roantree, ensures the quality and alignment of the Authority's corporate operations in order to ensure that supporting structures, processes and systems are optimally in place to maximise the impact and benefits of the FSAI strategy.

Corporate Affairs has responsibility for the FSAI's human resources (HR), finance, IT, information and data management, organisational development, Freedom of Information, corporate governance, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and general facilities management functions. This functional area is key to ensuring that the Authority achieves its business objectives internally and externally, and utilises innovative approaches to constantly improve its services and ensure the optimal utilisation of resources.

The Corporate Affairs team also leads the Authority's ISO 9001:2015 compliance for its quality management system and works with colleagues across the organisation in developing and delivering on the FSAI's business planning and reporting mechanism.



During 2019, Corporate Affairs ensured, and reported on, its compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* (2016) and agreed its Oversight Agreement/Performance Delivery Agreement (OA/PDA) with the Department of Health. It continued to progress an extensive programme to develop the Authority's culture, maintained certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard, provided a broad range of training programmes, and achieved the highest level of assurance regarding the effectiveness of its systems of internal financial controls following completion of a review.



The Authority's Corporate Affairs functional area plays a key role in ensuring that the Authority has the capacity and capability, systems, and processes to facilitate effective delivery of its services to all stakeholders and that it maximises the impact and benefits which the FSAI strategy delivers.

The Corporate Affairs functional area is responsible for managing finance, HR, organisational development, data collection and analysis, information, IT, and facilities, as well as managing and ensuring adherence to

its obligations with regard to governance, procurement, Freedom of Information and data protection. In addition, it oversees the Authority's business planning and reporting mechanism.



Organisational compliance

During 2019, the Authority ensured, and reported on, its compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* (2016) and agreed its OA/PDA with the Department of Health. In addition, it provided the Department of Health with quarterly updates on progress against the OA/PDA as part of the agreed governance arrangement, and did so within an improved business planning and reporting framework which clearly highlighted progress, as well as any deviation from planned work and the measures being taken to manage it.

Organisational culture

In 2019, Corporate Affairs worked with colleagues across the organisation in implementing a significant programme which sought to develop the Authority's culture in order to ensure that it is collaborative, high-

performing and based on positive teamwork. This included ongoing engagement in refining the prioritised areas for development, embedding the organisation's values into everything it does, and implementing the actions to further improve its working environment.



Quality management

The Authority is committed to having a strong quality management system in place, which is essentially based on the concept of identifying customers and their requirements, planning how to meet these requirements, documenting procedures where appropriate, setting measurable objectives for all functional areas and all staff, and regularly reviewing achievements.

In 2019, the Authority maintained certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard.

Organisational development

The HR team within the Corporate Affairs functional area focused on ensuring that staff

had the requisite competencies, skills and knowledge to meet both organisational and personal development needs. The Authority places a strong emphasis on continuous learning and development, and it encourages staff to engage in continuing professional and personal development activities. During 2019, a broad range of training programmes were delivered to support this, and the Authority also supported a number of staff through developmental and further education programmes.

Finance

An efficient and effective finance function continues to be in place within the Authority in order to ensure appropriate management and control over resources, as well as to ensure that relevant accounting standards are met and adhered to and that effective financial management systems and controls are operating. During 2019, the internal auditors conducted a review of the systems of internal financial controls, and the level of assurance achieved was 'substantial', the highest level available. The Authority also ensures that Department of Finance and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform budgetary measures are implemented in terms of salary, travel rates, procurement and other expenditure savings.



Enforcement Policy

Dr Bernard Hegarty



Director, Enforcement Policy

The Enforcement Policy functional area, led by Dr Bernard Hegarty, is responsible for the enforcement of food legislation in Ireland. A key activity is the management of the service contracts with the Authority's official agencies, which carry out the enforcement activities.

The service contract mechanism for the enforcement of food safety legislation was mandated under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, and 2019 saw the 20th anniversary of this important consumer protection work, which came into effect in 1999. Service contracts are in place with 31 official agencies. Most of the Enforcement Policy team's activities are focused on supporting the strategic goal of enforcing food legislation with the FSAI's regulatory partners.

The Enforcement Policy team also provides advice to Government Departments on proposed legislation and operates one of the Authority's consultative fora (the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee). There are four main official agencies, and the structure of the Enforcement Policy functional area reflects this operating model. The team also organises the preparation and follow-up for the cross-agency audits carried out by the European Commission and other bodies.



In 2019, the Authority published 125 Enforcement Orders (including 108 Closure Orders, 13 Prohibition Orders and 4 Improvement Orders) served to food businesses for breaches in food safety legislation, an increase of 14% on 2018.

The main service contracts with the 31 official agencies continued to operate during 2019. Negotiations on the FSAI's first service contract with the State Laboratory concluded with the signing of the contract on 1 March 2019. The service contract with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority was renewed for a five-year period, while the service contracts with the HSE, local authorities and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine were extended pending the development of new official control regulations.



Regulation (EU) 2017/625

During 2019, the Authority continued its preparations for the new European legislation on official controls, Regulation (EU) 2017/625, which came into effect on 14 December 2019. This Regulation sets the rules for the performance by EU Member States of

controls on the agri-food sector, replacing existing official controls legislation, Regulations (EC) No 882/2004 and 854/2004.

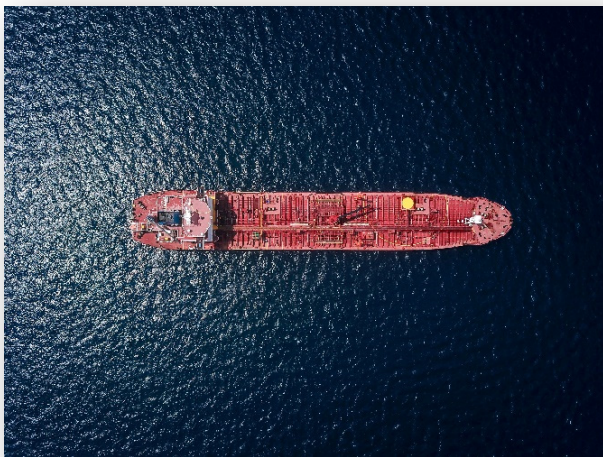
A programme of work to implement the Regulation was under way during 2019, and included:

- Participation in a steering group comprising the Authority, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and the Department of Health
- Input into the development of tertiary legislation (implementing delegated EU Acts) in relation to Regulation (EU) 2017/625 at EU level
- Provision of introductory training to the official agencies on the requirements of the Regulation
- Provision of advice to the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on the key issues to address during the development of national legislation to give effect to the Regulation's requirements
- Organisation of a public consultation for the Department of Health on the Authority's website to seek stakeholder views on the general methods to calculate the mandatory charges for certain official controls
- Completion of a survey of the readiness of the official laboratories and national reference laboratories to comply with the stricter rules

applicable to them as a result of the Regulation.

The impact of Brexit on official controls

A consistent theme for the official agencies during 2019 was the impact that Brexit preparations would have on the other aspects of the official controls carried out by the official agencies and the Authority. The preparations, particularly for enhanced import controls at



Dublin Port and Rosslare Europort, presented practical challenges in delivering normal levels of official controls.

The Authority's extensive activities of engagement and support with the agencies included the following:

- A bottled water training workshop was held for environmental health officers and laboratory staff from the HSE. The workshop provided attendees with an overview of changes to EU and national legislation, the changes to the Authority's Guidance Note on the subject, and a new sampling protocol.

Presentations included learnings from recent food incidents, source protection for groundwater, food contact materials legislation, and microbiological and chemical parameters for bottled water.

- A workshop on geographical indications was held for the agencies involved in these controls, including Customs and Revenue staff.
- A training event was held for local authority veterinary inspectors on microbiological sampling in February, ahead of the commencement of their sampling plan.

Enforcement orders

In 2019, the Authority published 125 Enforcement Orders (including 108 Closure Orders, 13 Prohibition Orders and 4 Improvement Orders) served to food businesses for breaches in food safety legislation, representing a 14% increase on the 110 Enforcement Orders served in 2018.

Two prosecutions were taken by the HSE during 2019 for breaches of food legislation were also publicised.

The full text of the Enforcement Orders served to food businesses were published in order to improve the transparency of the official controls process and inform other food businesses of practices to avoid.



Laboratories

The HSE continues to provide chemical and microbiological laboratory analytical services under the terms of its service contract. The service is provided by three public analyst's laboratories and six microbiological laboratories. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine also provides considerable laboratory analytical services. In common with all EU Member States, Ireland has a National Control Plan, which is a requirement of European official food control regulations. This covers food safety, animal health and welfare, animal feed, and plant health. The Authority is responsible for the food elements of the plan.

Audits

The Authority coordinated the preparation for, and follow-up to, two audits by the European Commission (DG-Santé) to assess the official controls on the production of horsemeat and on the use of geographical indications (used

to denote the qualities of foods from specific areas, such as Irish whiskey). The reports on these audits are published on the FSAI website and provide a useful benchmark of the official control systems in Ireland, with recommendations for their further development.





Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs

Raymond Ellard

Director, Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs



Mr Raymond Ellard leads the Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs (RMRA) functional area. It is responsible for leading on risk management decisions required in relation to food incidents, and for issuing warning notices to the public about food recalls and withdrawals. The risk management decisions taken by the Authority are based on risk assessments, often provided by the staff in the Authority's Food Science and Standards group.

In addition, the RMRA group is the national contact point for the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), a network managed by the European Commission to exchange information between members of the network – including EU Member States, the European Commission and EFSA – on hazards identified in food, feed, and food contact materials. It is also the contact point for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/World Health Organization's International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN). RMRA is also responsible for the development of the Authority's regulatory strategy; supporting the work of staff in the official agencies; and working with veterinary, agricultural, fishery, dairy, scientific and environment health experts both within and external to the Authority. RMRA manages the Authority's food supplement notification system.

RMRA's training and compliance team ensures that the right tools are developed and in place to enable food safety inspectors' understanding of, and industry compliance with the law. The RMRA team is also responsible for the management and coordination of the Authority's Food Safety Consultative Council, Artisan Forum, Retail Forum, and Food Service Forum. In this way, RMRA looks after outreach and engagement with key stakeholders within the food safety ecosystem.



The main role of the RMRA group is to work in collaboration with the official agencies to reduce the potential harms to consumers from unsafe, potentially unsafe or illegal foods. The group coordinates incidents where unsafe food has to be recalled or withdrawn from the market; monitors and acts as necessary in the placement of food supplements on the market; supports the work of staff in the official agencies through direct interventions or guidance on regulatory affairs; develops and arranges training tools and training; and interacts directly with the FSAI's stakeholder groups, including the Food Safety Consultative Council. RMRA is the part of the FSAI which interacts with the "regulated", such as directly with individual businesses or through their trade organisations and including a proactive engagement through the various fora.



FSAI Food Safety Consultative Council Open Meeting

The RMRA team interacts directly the FSAI's stakeholder groups, including the Food Safety Consultative Council. The team manages the FSAI's industry and food sector groups – the Retail Forum, Artisan Forum and Food Service Forum all of which met regularly during the year. Some ad hoc meetings were arranged to discuss preparedness for Brexit. Liaison meetings were also held with the Health Products Regulatory Authority and with industry representative groups.

Food incidents

In 2019, the RMRA team dealt with 679 food incidents, compared with 799 in 2018. The reduction is explained entirely by a temporary drop in follow-up actions on notifications on food supplements due to staff vacancies. Nevertheless, the number of incidents remains higher than in all other years since 2006, when there were 206 food incidents. A total of 107 public warnings about food being recalled or withdrawn from the markets were issued in the form of food alerts (55) and food allergen alerts (52), representing a slight increase on the 102 food alerts/food allergen alerts in 2018. Apart from public warnings, a key coordination function of the FSAI is the management of these food-related incidents together with staff in the inspection and laboratory services in the official agencies, as well as with the food businesses involved.

The FSAI is the national contact point for the EU's RASFF. This operates on a operates 24

hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year (as is required by law), and therefore the Authority must be available 24/7/365 to make the relevant inputs or respond. The system works very well to share important information on the distribution of unsafe foods. In 2019, the RASFF dealt with 3,997 events. Of these, just 34 were notified by Ireland (FSAI). Some 21 notifications were in respect of food which had originated in Ireland and 13 were related to foods in distribution in Ireland. Given that Ireland exports and imports vast amounts of food, these numbers put in context the relatively high level of safety of our food supply.

Food allergen alerts

Three in every 100 people in Ireland have food allergies. This means that it is important that they are made aware of any product which contains an allergen, but which is not properly declared. On average, the Authority issues an allergen alert once a week. This happens when mislabelled foods are identified and when they do not make it clear and conspicuous that they contain one of the 14 categories of allergens which by law must be declared. For prepacked food, this means indicating each allergen in the list of ingredients, with clear reference to the name of the allergen and highlighting it in a way that makes it stand out from the other ingredients. For food sold loose, it means having the information available in writing at the point of presentation, sale or supply. In 2019 the



Authority issued 52 allergen alerts. Subscribers to the Authority's alert system are informed of these alerts by text message.

Food alerts

Fifty-five food alerts were issued in 2019 advising the public and the food sector of the need for a withdrawal (from the food chain) or recall (from consumers). The principal reasons for these alerts were a direct or indirect threat to consumers because of the presence of foreign matter, of pathogenic microbes such as *Salmonella* or *Listeria*, or of chemical contaminants such as arsenic.



Food supplements

It is a legal requirement in Ireland that those placing a food supplement (as defined in

Directive 2002/46/EC) on the market must notify the FSAI. RMRA operates the notification system. In 2019, 2,894 notifications were submitted. Of these, RMRA determined that 38 warranted follow-up as incidents – mainly related to vitamins and minerals at unsafe levels. RMRA developed a protocol for the National Food Supplement Survey which examined cannabidiol (CBD) food/food supplement products on the market to establish the levels of various cannabinoids, including CBD and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC, or D⁹-tetrahydrocannabinol), in hemp- and cannabis-based products (CBD oils and water-based liquid food/food supplement products). Some 37% (14 out of 38) of samples were found to be unsafe due to the presence of THC and were recalled from the Irish market. The survey is the subject of a separate FSAI report.

Regulatory issues

Some 26 regulatory incidents were managed by the RMRA team. These covered such matters as unauthorised health claims on food labels, unsatisfactory levels of nutrients found on testing compared with the levels declared on labels, and general labelling non-compliances (e.g. labels not in English, or containing misleading information). The majority of regulatory issues are detected and managed by front-line staff in the official agencies. To support this work, RMRA ensures that all stakeholders have access to up-to-date regulatory changes; in addition, it provides updates on changes in legislation.

RMRA ensures that the FSAI website remains a resource for all, in that it contains a readily accessible database of national and EU food law. In order to ensure openness and transparency, RMRA is responsible for publishing public consultations, thus giving stakeholders an opportunity to contribute their views. In 2019, two consultations were published by the FSAI, one on behalf of the



Department of Health on proposed alcohol warning labelling and the other on the calculation of mandatory fees for official controls.

Food Trainers Network meeting December 2019

Training and compliance building

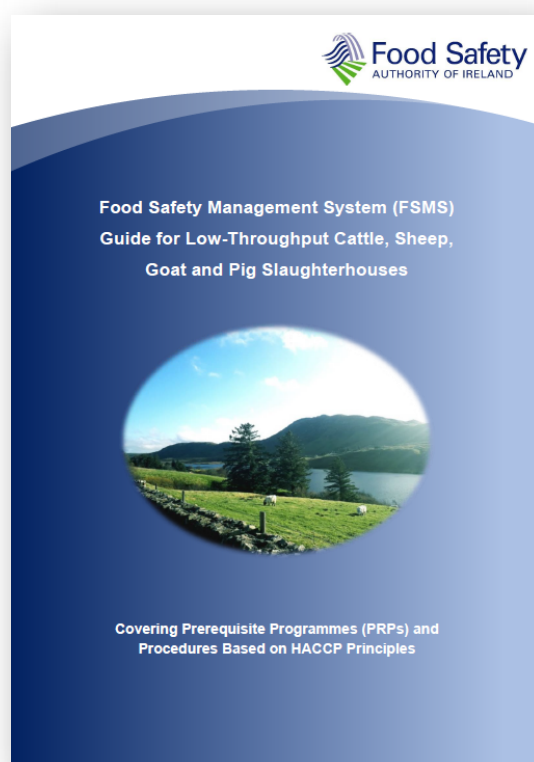
2019 saw the launch of two new networks by RMRA's training and compliance team. The first of these was a network for food safety trainers, the goal of which is to establish links, provide support and raise the standard of food safety training being provided in Ireland. The second network was the Educators' Forum. The aim of this forum is to provide a structured forum for the official exchange of information between the FSAI the institutions

of higher education. These two networks are part of the development of a training and compliance strategy. During 2019, the RMRA training team also continued the development of e-learning modules for official agency staff and food businesses. It also managed part of Ireland's participation in the European Commission's Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) programme; in addition, the RMRA team delivered some face-to-face training.

Veterinary public health

RMRA has a veterinary public health and agriculture expert team that provides support for veterinary staff in local authorities by way of answering technical and legal queries; providing training; participating in management and liaison meetings; and carrying out on-site visits. During 2019, a 'Food Safety Management System (FSMS) Guide for Low-Throughput Cattle, Sheep, Goat and Pig Slaughterhouses' was completed and an associated training plan was developed. The team provided technical support on numerous issues, such as animal by-products, residue controls, and pesticides, in addition to providing technical secretariat support for the Scientific Committee Ad-hoc Subcommittee on Mycobacterium avium subspecies paratuberculosis (MAP) and Crohn's Disease. RMRA also ensures that the FSAI contributes to industry stakeholder

initiatives, such as the Bord Bia's quality assurance schemes, the Association of Craft Butchers of Ireland's National Craft Butcher Apprenticeship scheme, and the Irish Grain and Feed Association's hazard analysis and critical control point. In addition, RMRA has worked on developing the new syllabus for wild game hunter training (Country Sports Ireland).



During 2019, a 'Food Safety Management System (FSMS) Guide for Low-Throughput Cattle, Sheep, Goat and Pig Slaughterhouses' was completed and an associated training plan was developed.



Audit and Investigations

Peter Whelan



Director, Audit and Investigations

Mr Peter Whelan leads the Audit and Investigations functional area, which is responsible for conducting audits and investigating protected disclosures and food fraud. The Audit and Investigations team carries out audits of the official food control system and targeted audits of food businesses in order to ensure compliance with the Authority's legal mandate.

The team also provides support during third-country and SANTE F audits in Ireland. The annual risk-based audit programme is designed to ensure adequate coverage of all relevant areas of activity and all official agencies over a period of five years. Audit reports and their corrective action plans are published on the Authority's website. The team conducts special investigations in conjunction with official agencies and other State agencies where serious breaches of food law have been alleged or food fraud has been detected. These investigations are designed to determine the nature and extent of non-compliance with food law and/or related food fraud offences.

Outcomes of such investigations may result in enforcement actions and criminal proceedings being taken against offenders. Notifications to the CEO, who is a designated person under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, are investigated by the Audit and Investigations team.



In 2019, the Authority commenced a targeted audit on halal claims on meat and poultry. Targeted audits examine food business operators' compliance with respect to a specific aspect of food law and may examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls. In addition, an official control audit was commenced on the table egg supply chain to examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of all aspects of official controls as implemented by official agencies in relation to food law and service contract requirements.

During 2019, the following reports and corrective action plans were published on the FSAI website:

- *Audit of official controls carried out by the Local Authority Veterinary Service (Regulation 2073/2005)*
- *Targeted Audit of Sushi Production and Processing Facilities*
- *Audit of Compliance of Public Analysts Laboratories with Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 and Service Contract Obligations*

- *Audit of the Official Controls Undertaken by the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) Regarding the Microbiological Classification of Shellfish Waters*
- *Audit of the Wild Game Food Supply Chain.*

Corrective action plans were updated as progress was made on closing out the individual audit findings.

International audits

Two SANTE F audits were carried out in Ireland to assess the implementation of official controls. The first audit evaluated the control system in place governing the production of horsemeat, including traceability. The objective of the second audit was to evaluate the control systems related to protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI) and traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG) for agricultural products and foodstuffs and geographical indication (GI). The Authority represents Ireland on the European Commission-chaired National Audit Systems Network.



A number of audit reports and corrective action plans were published during 2019

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) continues to carry out foreign surveillance inspections in Ireland to ensure that food business operations meet the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). In March, April and September 2019, FDA teams carried out a total of 20 inspections in Ireland. The implementation of corrective actions on non-compliances raised by the FDA inspectors is being monitored by official agency personnel in so far as the corrective actions relate to compliance with EU or national food legislation.

Investigations

During 2019, authorised officers from the Authority, together with other State regulatory authorities and official agencies, conducted 52 investigations where breaches of food law and food fraud were suspected or where some of these breaches arose from protected disclosures received. These investigations were designed to determine the nature and extent of non-compliance with food law and related food fraud offences. They required a variety of approaches, ranging from the execution of search warrants secured in the District Court to the monitoring of social media pages in cases where the operation of unauthorised food businesses was suspected. Outcomes of investigations in some instances resulted in the issuing of Enforcement Orders. The Authority also participated in a Garda-led operation targeting the illegal presentation of equines for slaughter.

During the year, Authority staff also participated with official agency staff at multi-agency roadside checkpoints, organised by An Garda Síochána.

Audit and Investigations functional area staff also attended two Northern Region Multi-Agency Checkpoint Forum meetings, which were chaired by An Garda Síochána.

The Food Fraud Task Force is chaired by the Authority, and during 2019, three meetings of the task force were convened. This multi-agency, multidisciplinary forum continues to consider and report on issues that are likely to significantly impact on food integrity/authenticity. In 2019, Audit and Investigations functional area staff attended three meetings of the Cross-Border Task Force on Food and Rural Crime.



Food fraud – national and international cooperation

On behalf of the Authority, the Audit and Investigations functional area acts as the

national food fraud contact point for the European Commission. During 2019, Audit and Investigations functional area representatives participated in three EU Food Fraud Network meetings. In addition, the Authority monitored the European Commission's Administrative Assistance and Cooperation/Food Fraud Network database; Ireland also published four cases in 2019 relating to alcohol, beef, and fish, and responded to other Member State cases as required. 2019 also saw the completion of an FSAI-led vulnerability assessment of the dairy chain on the island of Ireland.

The Authority continues to participate in the Food Industry Intelligence Network (FIIN) and meets with members of the management board on a quarterly basis. FIIN currently represents a number of large food industry companies in Ireland and the UK. FIIN meetings involve discussion of the quarterly intelligence report and sharing of relevant information on food fraud. In Ireland, the Authority sits on the Emerging Risks and Threats Forum jointly chaired by Ibec and the FSAI.



In collaboration with An Garda Síochána and Revenue's Customs Service, the Audit and Investigations team participated in the joint Europol/INTERPOL operation known as Operation OPSON VIII which targeted counterfeit and fraudulent food. Returns submitted by Ireland to Europol included seizures of food of animal origin (meat/dairy) and alcohol.

In 2018, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre established the Knowledge Centre for Food Fraud and Quality. Representatives from the Audit and Investigations functional area have participated in two of their annual workshops to discuss a variety of initiatives, including the development of food fraud early warning systems and compositional databases.

In collaboration with the University of Manchester, the Authority are participating in a project that proposes to develop an operational toolkit for food safety practitioners committed to reducing non-compliance in the food industry.

It will be a tangible toolkit that practitioners, regulators and enforcement personnel can utilise to analyse deviance in the food system, and to design intervention mechanisms to correct such deviances.

The Authority is also participating in the FoodSmartphone project, which endeavours to identify science and innovation gaps and how they relate to high-speed and novel biorecognition of food contaminants. Kits will be developed that can be attached to smartphones to instantly analyse foods.

The Authority is represented on the advisory board of the EU Food Integrity project, and it has participated in the conference organised by this body.

Guidance on fraudulent and deceptive practices

The introduction of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on official controls placed an increased emphasis on regulatory responsibilities relating to fraudulent and deceptive practices in the food chain. In response, the FSAI Board

commissioned Grant Thornton to review and provide clarity to the FSAI Board in relation to the Authority's regulatory obligations in this area and its role in the context of a multi-agency approach. Following consideration of the report and the subsequent Board Steering Group paper, *Fraudulent and Deceptive Practices in the Food Chain: Options Examined*, it was agreed that a model consisting of a hybrid of the options proposed by Grant Thornton would be the most appropriate for addressing the legislative requirements for an official control system that is capable of capturing and controlling fraudulent and deceptive practices. The delivery of the proposed option would be a key point of transformation with regard to the FSAI's role in this area, and the starting point of a necessary and significant project.





Food Science and Standards

Dr Wayne Anderson



Director, Food Science and Standards

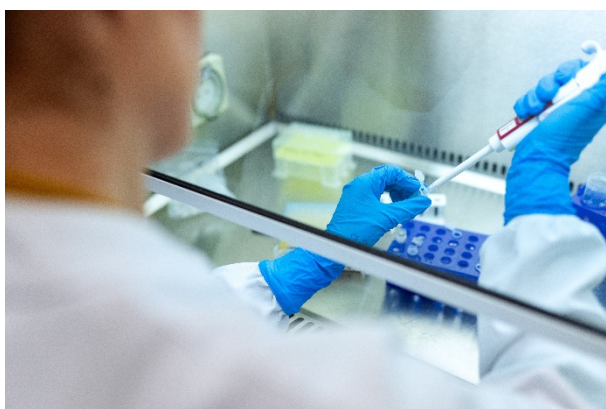
The Food Science and Standards (FSS) functional area focuses its work on expanding and analysing the evidence base and using this in combination with the expertise of its scientists to conduct risk assessments, draft technical guidance for the food industry, support the work of official agencies, carry out direct official controls, and deliver expert support to officials in the EU Commission in Brussels as well as to officials in the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) for the development of food legislation at European level.

The FSS functional area also manages the FSAI Scientific Committee and provides technical input into the risk assessment work of EFSA and the Code Alimentarius Commission that sets international food standards.

The work of scientists in the FSS functional area and in the Scientific Committee is supported by a dedicated team of administrators whose work maximises the efficiency and effectiveness of the FSS functional area and ensures the quality of outputs, as well as providing vital in-house services for other functional areas.



The FSS functional area plays a key role in providing scientific and technical support to the food safety enforcement work of the official agencies, often in collaboration with the Enforcement Policy functional area. Detailed scientific recommendations were provided to the HSE for its 2020 chemical monitoring programme and to the DAFM on its 2019 pesticides and veterinary medicine monitoring programmes. We also reviewed and suggested amendments to DAFM guidelines on carcass swabbing under microbiological criteria legislation. The FSS functional area provided further technical input at 27 agency liaison meetings, with eight presentations at agency training days. Information on foods for specific groups and scientific support for Food for Special Medical Purposes (FSMP) notifications was updated on the FSAI website to help enforcement officers with interpretation of the law in these areas. Detailed technical input was provided for three agency documents on parasite control in fish, on control of *Clostridium botulinum* in smoked fish and on testing for shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in beef.



In conjunction with the training unit and the

DAFM, the FSS functional area developed and delivered training for DAFM inspectors on microbiological criteria in addition to providing a webinar on flavourings for the HSE and providing technical input into an FSAI e-learning module, *Why Food Safety Matters*.

Assessing and managing risk

The FSS functional area also carries out several competent authority functions in the area of notifications and approvals of certain foods. In 2019, three health claims dossiers were processed and sent to EFSA. Notifications of 308 foods for special medical purposes (representing an increase of 104 on 2018 figures) and 10 infant formulas/follow-on formulas were assessed for safety and compliance with legislation. Medicinal health claims checks were conducted on 1,219 food supplements, and additives checks were conducted on 227 of those supplements. Under novel foods regulations, the FSS functional area assessed eight notifications for traditional foods from third countries, provided a reasoned opinion on the novel food status of four consultation requests, and sent information on 10 novel foods applications to the Department of Health for voting at EU level. In addition, there were 13 reviews of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) for food and feed following an EFSA assessment. The FSS functional area plays an important role in supporting the food incident team in the RMRA functional area by providing scientific advice and conducting risk assessments. In that context, the FSS functional area provided

205 risk assessments in 2019, including 108 in the chemical safety area alone, and provided more detailed advice for 10 food incidents and one significant outbreak of *Salmonella*. The FSS functional area also played a significant role in a crisis simulation exercise, both in scenario development, planning and review, and by acting in the incident management role during the simulation. 2019 also featured an increased workload in supporting the Audit and Investigations functional area in its work on protected disclosures, with involvement in the fieldwork and follow-up for two large investigations. The FSS functional area also provided extensive technical support for the follow-up to an audit of DAFM enforcement of food law in infant formula manufacturers.

In the area of emerging risks, the FSS functional area set up the in-house Emerging Risk Screening Group to progress briefing notes developed around potential emerging issues. The FSS team continued to build its database of emerging risk issues published in peer-reviewed literature and it explored several social media tools for early warning systems. The team continued to share these issues with EFSA and with national emerging risk contacts, including the food industry, at two meetings of the Emerging Risks and Threats Forum. Importantly, the FSS team was able to work with the National Poisons Information Centre in Beaumont Hospital, Dublin to scope out a nutravigilance system. The HSE has agreed to fund a pilot of this system in 2020, and the FSAI expects that it

will provide an early warning system of emerging toxicological risks.

Research and guidance

An important function of the FSS functional area is the management and facilitation of the work of the Scientific Committee and its subcommittees and working groups comprising 83 scientists. The Scientific Committee met five times in 2019 and approved several important opinions and requests for advice. Three reports were published on the FSAI website: *Advice on shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (STEC) detection in food*, accompanied by a plain language infographic outlining the implications of the report for businesses; *FSAI Risk Ranking Model for Chemical Contaminants in Food*; and *Information required for the risk assessment of undeclared food allergens in Ireland*.



Three scientific reports were published in 2019

A further three opinions were adopted by the Scientific Committee for publication in 2020: [Scientific Recommendations for Food-Based Dietary Guidelines for 1 to 5 Year-Olds in Ireland](#); [Botanicals used in food supplements](#); and Appraisal of new and emerging food processing technologies and their potential risks to food safety. In addition, work continued on four further opinions: *Scientific recommendations on healthy eating guidelines for the elderly*; An update of the Scientific Committee opinion on MAP and Crohn's disease; *Risk ranking of biological hazards*; and *The safety of seaweed*.

The FSS functional team continued to expand its involvement in research, serving in an advisory capacity on five national research projects in the biological safety and chemical safety areas, including work to mitigate against cadmium in root vegetables and work to reduce *Campylobacter* in poultry.

We provided a comprehensive list of research priorities to the DAFM and we were successful in getting many research priorities adopted under the Food Institutional Research Measure funding round. In collaboration with *safe food*, the Authority funded research into the safety of *sous vide*

cooking and also directly funded a study into the reformulation of breakfast cereals. The FSS functional area also planned and coordinated focused studies under official controls with the official agencies on the composition of CBD oil, the bacterial safety of frozen fruit and vegetables, and levels of sulphites and nitrites in meat products. At European level, the FSS functional area became a partner in a Horizon 2020 project bid to develop food safety systems of the future. In addition, it agreed to become a member of the steering group for another Horizon 2020 project bid focused on food safety collaboration between China and the EU. The FSS functional area was also part of a Member State group advocating for a European toxicology programme funded under the Horizon Europe instrument.

Also in 2019, FSS Scientists attended 42 expert meetings to develop draft food legislation organised by the European Commission and Council and then provided the Department of Health with technical briefings to allow them to develop an Irish Governmental position on the introduction of the legislation.. FSS team members made 12 submissions to the European Commission on the provision of monitoring and exposure data on food additives, contaminants and food contact materials. Expert network meetings are also a feature of collaboration with EFSA, and in this context, the FSS team has actively participated in nine network meetings in the areas of emerging risks, zoonoses, microbiological risk assessment, GMOs, and

novel foods. FSS scientists also made two presentations to the RASFF working group in the European Commission. On the international stage, FSS team members have made detailed technical submissions to seven electronic working groups. They also participated in one plenary meeting of the committees under the Codex Alimentarius Commission, at which global food standards are agreed.

Industry and community engagement

The Authority provides an excellent advice line service for its stakeholders. The FSS team also receives many queries directly. In total, FSS team members responded to 1,034 external queries either directly or through the FSAI advice line; of these queries, 329 related to chemical safety matters, 232 related to nutrition, 117 related to biological safety, and 356 related to novel foods and other food science issues. In conjunction with the Training Unit, the FSS functional area updated the technical content of the *Safe Catering Pack* and was able to incorporate information on safe sushi production, as well as on allergen management and control of acrylamide. Technical input was provided for the National Standards Authority of Ireland's (NSAI's) update of its hygiene standard I.S. 342 for food processors. Guidance was also developed with the input of the food supplements industry to operationalise the recommendations in the Scientific Committee report on maximum safe limits for vitamins

and minerals in food supplements, which will be published in 2020. A major piece of compliance work was started in 2019; this involved looking at the barriers to compliance with the health claims legislation, and this will continue in 2020 with the development of a compliance enforcement approach.

The FSAI's commitment to engagement with the scientific community was expanded, with the presentation of nine papers at four international meetings and an additional 10 presentations at national meetings. The FSS functional area also contributed three posters and six abstracts to scientific meetings. In collaboration with *safe food*, FSS delivered seven allergen masterclasses at a number of third-level institutions involved in training catering professionals. As part of the Science Strategy, FSS scientists continued to support third-level institutions by delivering 22 lectures to a mix of undergraduate and postgraduate students at six universities and institutes of technology. The FSS team, along with other FSAI colleagues, organised and delivered a two-day training programme on regulatory affairs for food safety master's students studying at University College Dublin (UCD); in addition, the team continued its long-running commitment to provide training for UCD veterinary medicine students.

Scientific direction

The FSS team is committed to good corporate governance and to living the FSAI values. FSS staff are involved in teamwork and collaboration with internal and external

stakeholders, ranging from development and delivery of training to risk analysis and compliance building. The FSS team supports agency colleagues by providing high-quality technical and scientific advice about food safety and food law. FSS staff maintain their professional standards by attending scientific conferences and specific technical training under the European Commission’s Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) programme. During 2019, the Abbott Nutrition infant formula production plant in Cootehill hosted an event for FSAI scientists that was focused on understanding the challenges of implementing food safety in a factory environment.

In 2019, the FSS team continued to develop the science base at FSAI, guided by the three-year Science Strategy adopted in 2016. During 2019, the final year of the strategy period, the FSS team reviewed the 71 actions

in the implementation plan. The review process confirmed full achievement of 82% of the actions and partial achievement of 11% of the actions, with only 7% of actions not completed or deemed unnecessary. A new Science Strategy for the period 2020–2024 was developed following consultation in-house and with the Scientific Committee. Its goal is to “Build on our scientific and technical expertise to support and strengthen consumer protection.”

Most significantly in the science area, in 2019, the FSS team delivered the FSAI’s first international science conference, The Science of Food Safety – What’s our Future?, a two-day event at the Dublin Convention Centre which attracted more than 300 participants. Feedback from participants was positive. Moreover, the event was delivered at little financial cost to the FSAI, as participants paid a registration fee.



The FSAI held their first international science conference, The Science of Food Safety – What’s our Future?, in 2019

Corporate governance

In compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* (2016), the Authority has a Corporate Governance Framework in place. This Framework was developed in order to assist in improving efficiency and enhancing openness and transparency. The Framework provides guidance for the organisation, detailing aspects such as conducting Board business, strategic planning, operational processes, risk management, financial control, and standards of behaviour. During 2019, the Authority ensured and maintained compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* (2016).

The Board

The key functions of the Board include reviewing and guiding strategic direction and major plans of action, risk management policies and procedures, annual budgets, and business plans; setting performance objectives; monitoring implementation of the Authority's strategy and business plans; and overseeing major revenue and capital expenditure and investment decisions. The Board has a formal schedule of matters specifically reserved for its consideration. The Board commences each meeting with a private session of the Board where no members of the Authority are present.

Board Audit and Risk Committee

The Authority has a fully functioning Board Audit and Risk Committee which undertook the following audits during 2019: internal financial controls, food studies, and risk management. During 2019, the Board continued to review its effectiveness. It ensured that the actions identified in the 2018 review were enacted and it also commenced the process of a second independent review of effectiveness in late 2019. This was completed and will be considered by the Board in early 2020. The Financial Statements, as approved by the Board Audit and Risk Committee and the Board, were subject to audit by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General. Five Board Audit and Risk Committee meetings were held in 2019. The Board Audit and Risk Committee has an independent role in providing the Board with assurance on internal control, risk management, audit, and assurance matters as part of the systematic review of the control environment and governance procedures of the Authority. The Board Audit and Risk Committee operates under an agreed charter and prepares a formal annual report for the Board.

Number of meetings: Five

Chairperson: Ms Margaret Moran

Membership: Ms Ros O'Shea, Ms Mary Cullen and Mr Raymond Dolan

Nominations and Remunerations Committee

The Nominations and Remunerations Committee is appointed to devise and implement an appropriate mechanism to assess the performance of the CEO and, through the CEO, to review the performance of the FSAI Executive Team. As required, the Committee agrees remuneration with Government Departments, develops job descriptions, identifies the relevant competencies and ideal candidate profile for posts, agrees the recruitment and search process, and sets a specific timetable. The Nominations and Remunerations Committee convenes as required by the Board.

Number of meetings: Two

Chairperson: Mr Martin Higgins

Membership: Prof. Albert Flynn and Ms Ros O'Shea

Stakeholder Development Committee

The Stakeholder Development Committee advises the Board on matters relating to stakeholder identification, analysis and consultation. It convenes as required by the Board and reports to the Board after each meeting.

Number of meetings: Two

Chairperson: Mr Ciaran Byrne

Membership: Mr Martin Higgins, Mr Derek Cunningham and Mr Gerry McCurdy

Statutory and other notices

In accordance with Section 41 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act, 2001, members of the Authority's Board, Scientific Committee and Scientific Subcommittees, as well as designated Authority staff, are required to submit a declaration of interests annually. These are in turn submitted by the Authority to the Minister for Health and/or the Standards in Public Office Commission, as appropriate.

Protected Disclosures Act 2014

There were five protected disclosures made to the Authority in 2019 from employers or former employees of the food industry.

Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997

The FSAI's policy is to ensure that all payments are made promptly. Every effort, consistent with proper financial procedures, is being made to ensure that all suppliers are paid within the required time frame, in accordance with best practice. The FSAI publishes quarterly reports of compliance on its website.

Freedom of Information Act 2014

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 asserts the right of members of the public to access official information to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy of individuals. The Authority complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and publishes under Section 8 of the Act. This publication contains information about the services provided, or to be provided, to the public by the Authority, and it also features a disclosures log and financial information. During 2018, there were 41 Freedom of Information requests.

European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007

The European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 133/2007) gives legal rights to those seeking access to information on the environment from public authorities. During 2019, there were no requests under Access to Information on the Environment legislation.

Customer Charter

The Authority has a [Customer Charter](#) detailing its full commitment to providing customers with an efficient, timely, professional and courteous service. The Charter sets out the standards of service customers can expect to receive from the Authority.

Strategic goals and achievements

Goal 1 Enforcement and compliance

To enforce food law and increase compliance, in collaboration with our regulatory partners, through a world-class food control system

Objective 1.1 Lead and support Ireland's food safety regulators to implement a fair, consistent and effective system of enforcement

- Developed guidance documents on microbiological sampling and foods for specific groups to help inspectors interpret this legislation.
- Provided detailed proposals for the DAFM pesticides and HSE chemical safety official controls programmes 2020.
- Detailed technical input was provided for three agency documents on parasite control in fish, control of *Cl. botulinum* in smoked fish, and on testing for shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (STEC) in beef.
- Delivered training for DAFM inspectors on microbiological criteria.
- Agreed a first service contract with the State Laboratory to cover its activities as an official laboratory for the chemical analysis of foods.
- The service contract with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority was renewed for a five-year period, while the service contracts with the HSE, local authorities, and the DAFM were extended, pending the development of new official control regulations.
- Funded the food safety controls conducted by local authorities and the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI).
- Participated in a review with the County and City Management Association of local authorities' funding requirements.
- As part of the preparations for the new Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625, provided introductory training to the official agencies on the Regulation requirements, and conducted a survey on the readiness of the official laboratories and national reference laboratories for the stricter rules applicable to them in the Regulation.
- The FSAI continued the development of e-learning modules for official agency staff and food businesses. It also managed part of Ireland's participation the European Commission Better Training for Safer Food programme, as well as delivering face to face training for inspectors and food businesses.
- The Authority's extensive activities of engagement and support with the agencies included:
 - a bottled water training workshop for environmental health officers and HSE laboratory staff. The workshop gave attendees an overview of changes to EU and national legislation, changes to the Authority's Guidance Note on the subject, and a new sampling protocol. Presentation topics included learnings from recent food incidents, source protection for groundwater, food contact materials legislation, and microbiological and chemical parameters for bottled water.

- a workshop on geographical indications was held for the agencies involved in these controls, including Customs and Revenue staff.
- the management of technical and legal queries from agency and authority staff
- a training event for local authority veterinary inspectors on microbiological sampling; this event was held in February, prior to the commencement of the inspectors' sampling plan.
- *A national guide for Food Safety Management Systems in low-throughput red meat slaughterhouses* was completed and an associated training plan developed.

Objective 1.2 Manage risks in the food chain and respond effectively to any national or international food incident or crisis

- Eleven EU Administrative Assistance and Cooperation Food Fraud Notifications processed.
- A consistent theme for the official agencies during the year was the impact of Brexit preparations on official controls programmes carried out by the official agencies and the Authority. The preparations, particularly for enhanced import controls at Dublin Port and Rosslare Europort, presented practical challenges in delivering normal levels of official controls.
- In 2019 the authority dealt with 679 food incidents.
- The FSAI (supported by its official agencies) identified and reported 29 products to the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). This operates on a 24/7/365 basis.
- In 2019, 2894 food supplement notifications were submitted, 38 warranted follow up as incidents – mainly due to vitamins and minerals present at unsafe levels.
- A protocol was developed for the national food supplement survey which examined CBD food/food supplement products on the market to establish the levels of various cannabinoids including CBD (cannabidiol) and THC (D⁹ Tetrahydrocannabinol) in hemp/cannabis-based products (CBD oils and water-based liquid food/food supplement products). Some 37% (14/38) of samples were found to be unsafe due to the presence of THC.

Objective 1.3 Ensure the safety, integrity and authenticity of the food chain by detecting, deterring and preventing breaches of food law, and taking action to protect consumers

- A total of 107 public warnings about food being recalled or withdrawn from the markets were issued in the form of Food Alerts (55) or Food allergen alerts (52), a slight increase over the 102 in 2018.
- In support of food incidents, the Authority carried out 205 risk assessments, including 108 in the chemical safety area alone, and it provided more detailed advice for 10 food incidents and one significant outbreak of *Salmonella*.
- Fifty-two investigations carried out.
- Five protected disclosures conducted.
- In 2019, the Authority published 125 Enforcement Orders (including 108 Closure Orders, 13 Prohibition Orders and 4 Improvement Orders) served to food businesses for breaches in food safety legislation, representing an increase of 14% on 2018. Two prosecutions taken by the HSE during 2019 for breaches of food legislation were also publicised.

Objective 1.4 Strive for a world-class official food control system for Ireland which delivers the best outcomes for consumers

- Three health claims dossiers were processed and sent to EFSA. Notification of 308 foods for special medical purposes (up 100 on 2018 figures) and 10 infant formulas/follow-on formulas were assessed for safety and compliance with legislation.
- Health and nutrition claims checks were conducted on 1,219 food supplements, along with additives checks on 227 of these supplements.
- Under novel foods regulations, the Authority assessed eight notifications in relation to traditional foods from third countries; it provided a reasoned opinion on the novel food status of four consultation requests, and sent information on 10 novel foods applications to the DOH for voting at EU level.
- The Authority carried out three reviews of GMOs for food and feed following EFSA assessment.
- Five audit reports and action plans were published.
- Two audit projects to assess the effectiveness of official controls were commenced.
- During 2019, the Authority continued its preparations for the new EU legislation on official controls, Regulation (EU) 2017/625, which came into effect on 14 December 2019. This Regulation establishes the rules for the performance by EU Member States of controls in the agri-food sector and it replaces existing official controls legislation (Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 and Regulation (EC) No. 854/2004). Work included participation in a steering group comprising the Authority, the DAFM, and the DOH.
- Participated in the Heads of EU Food Agencies work on Regulation (EU) 2017/625, including chairing a working group producing guidelines on laboratory aspects of the new law.
- The Authority coordinated the preparation for, and follow-up to, two audits by the European Commission (DG-Santé) to assess the official controls on the production of horsemeat and on the use of geographical indicators (used to denote the qualities of foods from specific geographical areas, such as Irish whiskey). The reports on these audits are published and provide a useful benchmark of the official control systems in Ireland, with recommendations for their further development.



Goal 2 Science, expertise and evidence

To advance food safety and integrity through independent science, expertise and a strong evidence base

Objective 2.1 Support risk-based decision-making and policy with high-quality, independent expertise

- The Scientific Committee met five times in 2019.

- Three reports were published on the FSAI website: *Advice on shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (STEC) detection in food*, accompanied by a plain language infographic outlining the implications of the report for businesses; *Risk ranking model for chemical contaminants in food*; *Information required for the risk assessment of undeclared food allergens in Ireland*.
- A further three opinions were adopted by the Scientific Committee for publication in 2020: Scientific recommendations on healthy eating for toddlers and preschoolers; botanicals used in food supplements; and appraisal of new and emerging food processing technologies and their potential risks to food safety.
- Provided extensive advice to the DOH and the DAFM on the key issues to address during the development of national legislation to give effect to the new Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625.

Objective 2.2 Expand the evidence base through research, coordinated studies and scientific collaboration

- Expanded involvement in research, serving in an advisory capacity on five national research projects in the biological safety and chemical safety areas, including work to mitigate against cadmium in root vegetables and work to reduce *Campylobacter* in poultry.
- Provided a comprehensive list of research priorities to the DAFM, and we were successful in getting many of these adopted under the Food Institutional Research Measure funding round.
- In collaboration with *safe food*, the Authority funded research into the safety of *sous vide* cooking and it also directly funded a study on the reformulation of breakfast cereals.
- At European level, the Authority became a partner in a Horizon 2020 project bid to develop food safety systems of the future. It also agreed to join the steering group of another Horizon 2020 project bid focused on food safety collaboration between China and the EU; in addition, the Authority was part of a Member State group advocating for a European toxicology programme funded under the Horizon Europe instrument.

Objective 2.3 Advance risk assessment practice to promote trust and engagement

- Actively participated in nine EFSA network meetings in the area of emerging risks, zoonoses, microbiological risk assessment, genetically modified organisms, and novel foods; it also participated with RASFF in delivering two presentations.
- In 2019, 2 consultations were published by the FSAI, one on behalf of the Department of Health on proposed alcohol warning labelling and the other on the calculation of mandatory fees for official controls.

Objective 2.4 Grow our ability to identify emerging risks and threats to the food chain

- Participated in two European Commission Joint Research Centre meetings for food fraud and quality.

- Established an in-house Emerging Risk Screening Group to progress briefing notes developed around potential emerging issues. We continued to build our database of emerging risk issues published in peer-reviewed literature, and we explored the possibility of using several social media tools for early warning systems.
- Shared details of emerging risk issues with EFSA; also shared details of such issues and national emerging risk contacts with the food industry at two meetings of the Emerging Risks and Threats forum.
- Collaborated with the National Poisons Information Centre in Beaumont Hospital, Dublin to scope out a nutriviigilance system. The HSE will run a pilot of this system in 2020 in order to provide an early warning system of emerging toxicological risks.

Objective 2.5 Influence the development of food standards and enforcement approaches at European and international level

- Attended 42 expert meetings on legislation development organised by the European Commission and the European Council, as well as briefing the DOH for votes on the completed work.
- Made 12 submissions to the European Commission on monitoring and exposure data for food additives, contaminants and food contact materials.
- Submitted detailed technical submissions to seven electronic working groups and participated in one plenary meeting of the committees under the Codex Alimentarius Commission, at which global food standards are agreed.
- Continued to participate in a network of other Member States and in the European Commission, working on a standard format for producing National Control Plans for official controls across the EU and for reporting on them.
- Participated in an EU working group in relation to compliance with EU rules on olive oil monitoring and reporting.
- Provided input into the development of tertiary legislation (implementing and delegated EU Acts) in relation to Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625.
- With the support of Irish Aid and also with the cooperation of the official agencies, the Authority hosted a week-long study visit by delegates from a Vietnamese food safety agency (National Agro-Forestry-Fisheries Quality Assurance Department, (NAFIQAD)) to share Ireland's experience and expertise in official food control.
- In October the Authority hosted a delegation of 13 senior staff from Albania as part of The Food Safety Project, funded by EuropeAid. The staff from four Albanian State agencies attended a week-long workshop on national control plans and risk-based planning, to address the need for a more integrated control plan that describes the activities of all relevant authorities in Albania and the arrangements for coordination between them.

Goal 3: Engagement and Communication

To be a leader in the safety and integrity of food through communication, partnership, collaboration and advocacy

Objective 3.1 Provide clear and evidence-based advice and information to promote food safety and build compliance with food law

- The Authority's website, www.fsai.ie, was updated regularly and maintained in order to ensure accessibility for all users on all devices. Comprehensive customer feedback was collated during 2019; this feedback was used to improve users' experience of the website and will inform further development to be carried out in 2020. A Request for Tender was published on the e-Tenders website for development of a new Content Management System and redesign of the website, based on a detailed review of this feedback.
- During 2019, the FSAI website generated 2,724,816 page views, an increase of 16.5% on 2018. The food business section, publications, legislation, enforcement orders and FAQs continue to be the most visited sections of the site. A new Brexit section was added to the website during the year.
- Regular e-zines were distributed to subscriber groups during the year. The Authority continues to use webinars and e-learning tools to support increased compliance with food legislation.
- Active two-way engagement with our stakeholders was achieved. We recorded an increase in the number of followers on social media platforms, with 14,512 followers on Facebook (2018: 12,114); 8,579 followers on Twitter (2018: 7,663); and 16,984 followers on LinkedIn (2018: 12,272).
- Engagement with official agencies was facilitated through SafetyNet, an extranet between the FSAI and official agency staff. Documentation and meetings information was shared through this portal; the FSAI also provided access to online training for both internal and external users.
- The Authority responded to 1,034 technical queries which came either from direct contact or through the FSAI Advice Line; 329 of these queries were on chemical safety matters, 232 on nutrition, 117 on biological safety and 356 on novel foods and other food science issues.
- Updated the technical content of the Safe Catering pack and was able to incorporate information on safe sushi production, allergen management, and the control of acrylamide.
- As part of the introduction of the new Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625, the Authority organised a public consultation for the DOH on the FSAI website, in order to seek stakeholders' views on the general methods used to calculate the mandatory charges for certain official controls.

Objective 3.2 Work in partnership with Government, other State agencies, academia and civil society organisations to champion food safety within Ireland

- The Authority chaired three meetings of the multi-agency Food Fraud Task Force.
- Attended the Food Industry Intelligence Network (FIIN) and quarterly meetings.

- Engagement with the scientific community was progressed, with the presentation of nine papers at four international meetings and another ten presentations at meetings in Ireland. We also contributed three posters and six abstracts to scientific meetings.
- Collaborated in a *safe*food initiative that delivered seven allergen masterclasses at a number of third-level institutions involved in training catering professionals.
- As part of the FSAI's Science Strategy, FSAI scientists continued to support third-level institutions by delivering 22 lectures to a mix of undergraduate and postgraduate students at six universities and institutes of technology. We delivered a two-day training programme on regulatory affairs for Food Safety Masters students studying at UCD, and we continued our long-running commitment to provide training for veterinary surgeons studying at UCD.
- 2019 saw the launch of two new networks by the authority's training team; one for food safety trainers and another for Educational Institutes.
- The Authority hosted a meeting of interested stakeholders to examine the issue of ocean-borne microplastics and their potential as a food safety issue for seafood. The meeting was attended by people from a variety of State agencies involved in the issue, including the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT). GMIT has been actively involved in the monitoring and analysis of microplastics in the ocean, which have an increasing profile as both an environmental and food safety issue. The meeting reviewed the current state of the science and the work undertaken by EFSA, as well the monitoring of microplastics under the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (the 'OSPAR Convention').

Objective 3.3 Collaborate with key stakeholders to foster and promote a culture of food safety and compliance within Ireland's food industry

- Participated in a Garda-led operation targeting the illegal presentation of equines for slaughter.
- Provided technical input for the NSAI update of its hygiene standard I.S. 342 for food processors.
- Provided technical support to the DAFM Campylobacter Stakeholder Group, who are working to improve the safety of poultry in Ireland.
- The Service Contract Committee on Enforcement Consistency between the Environmental Health Service and the FSAI met three times in 2019.
- Supported the work of Food Drink Ireland by attending its regulatory affairs meetings with the manufacturing industry, where we delivered five presentations on food safety issues as well as updates on EU and FSAI legislative work.
- The FSAI's industry and food sector groups – the Retail Forum, Artisan Forum and Food Service Forum met regularly during the year.
- Meetings were arranged with the Irish Health Trades Association twice in 2019 to discuss matters relating to food supplements.
- Liaison meetings were also held with the Health Products Regulatory Authority and with industry representative groups.
- The cross-agency Committee on Import of Food of Non-animal Origin met three times in 2019 to co-ordinate and support the enforcement of import controls.

- Chaired four meetings of the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee, a collaborative forum with the Irish shell-fisheries industry.

Objective 3.4 Improve our capacity and capability by working with others to advocate for safe and trustworthy food for everyone

- Participated in the European Heads of Agency Working group on Food Fraud.
- The FSAI contributed to industry stakeholder initiatives such as quality assurance schemes of Bord Bia, the ACBI Butchery Apprenticeship scheme, the Irish Grain & Feed Association HACCP and worked with Country Sports Ireland on the new syllabus for wild game hunter training in 2019.



Goal 4 Organisational excellence

To empower our people, strengthen our systems, and develop our culture to achieve organisational excellence and maximise our impact

Objective 4.1 Ensure a high-performing and empowering culture for our people, built on innovation, shared values and teamwork

- A number of project briefings were held throughout the year. Project briefings are recognised as a key communication tool to inform staff about organisational activities that they may not be directly involved in.
- Work continued on embedding the Authority's values of integrity, respect, passion, transparency, teamwork and collaboration within the team.
- The Authority progressed a detailed programme seeking to further develop a positive, collaborative and high-performing working environment. This included actioning responses from the 2018 staff survey, organising themed workshops with all staff, and implementing a programme for staff, management and leadership development.
- The Authority's recruitment needs were reviewed, and recruitment progressed throughout the year in line with sanctions received from DOH. A skills gap analysis as well as staff learning and development plans were undertaken in order to plan for future organisational needs.
- Human resource (HR) policies were reviewed and updated in order to ensure compliance with relevant employment legislation and best practice.
- The Civil Service Performance Management and development system (PMDS) was implemented and the Authority engaged extensively with staff to provide guidance and training so as to ensure that the PMDS is embedded into the Authority's HR system and thus enhance organisational, team and individual performance.

- The Authority hosted a number of students throughout the year across all functional areas.
- A number of initiatives under the Life@FSAI Health and Wellbeing Framework, developed by the Staff Committee and endorsed by the Senior Leadership Team, took place during 2019. These initiatives included mindfulness sessions for staff, yoga, an Employee Assistance Programme, ergonomics checks, steps challenge, book club and team-building exercises.
- Regular staff meetings and quarterly staff seminars were held throughout the year. In addition, the Senior Leadership Team met twice a month on average to discuss issues and make decisions on key areas for the organisation. Functional area meetings, team meetings, and project meetings were also held with all teams on a monthly basis. Regular meetings of the Health and Safety Committee took place and the annual work programme was implemented. Staff Committee meetings were held regularly during 2019, thereby facilitating open discussions on numerous issues of relevance to staff.
- The internal communications strategy was further progressed throughout the year, and is key to the organisation's development.

Objective 4.2 Provide a robust and targeted information framework to deliver internal efficiencies and meet stakeholder and customer needs

- Software development applications to support business activities were updated in 2019 to meet increased and changing business needs.
- Implementation of the organisation's Data Strategy progressed in 2019, including the building of a comprehensive data warehouse. A number of IT projects were completed which supported the Data Strategy. Incoming data were collected, classified and managed, with timely reports provided to internal and external stakeholders, including EFSA.
- SAP Business Objects (analytical and report delivery) solutions were upgraded in order to enhance their functionality and meet increased business needs.
- Many of the key databases that the Authority requires in order to carry out its corporate functions were updated. They included the Internal Audit and Continual Improvement database, the database for managing FSAI Advice Line queries and the RASFF database, which is used to manage and collate food alerts and notifications. MenuCal, an innovative online tool for food businesses to calculate allergens and calories in menus, was also updated. The result was improved functionality and operational efficiencies throughout the organisation.
- The Authority implemented the redeveloped food notification system in line with the principles defined within the Authority's Data Strategy. The new food notification system offers improved end-user functionality and it includes a broader remit for the capture of notification information on food supplements and foods for special groups.
- Further implementation of the Authority's electronic document management system and intranet, 'Our Space', progressed during 2019. Additional sections and structures were added to Our Space and staff were trained on using the system. Document collaboration and engagement proved to be a major benefit to the organisation, and the system supports the Authority's paperless office policy.

- A review of the Authority's library resources was carried out, whereby resources were assessed and updated in line with organisational needs. The use of electronic resources increased within the organisation.
- During 2019, the FSAI Advice Line received 8,894 queries from people working in the food service sector, as well as manufacturers, retailers, researchers, and consultants. This represented an approximate decrease of 5% on 2018. Some of the most common queries were in relation to legislation on food labelling requirements; requests for FSAI publications, and requests for information from new food businesses setting up operations.
- Of the queries received, more than 3,460 were from consumers, with over half of those relating to complaints about unfit food and poor hygiene standards. Overall, the 2019 complaints saw a marginal increase on the 3,424 complaints reported in 2018, with the number of reports relating to non-display of allergen information up significantly, at 25%. A considerable increase in complaints was also noted, with issues relating to poor hygiene standards at 19% and suspected food poisoning incidents up 8%.
- All FSAI Advice Line queries were responded to in line with the Customer Charter.

Objective 4.3 Ensure that our governance structures support informed and accountable decision-making underpinned by responsive leadership, risk management processes and compliance

- The Authority continued to implement its 2019–2023 strategy, ensuring that its constrained resources were allocated in an efficient and appropriate manner in order to maximise the benefits and impacts of the strategy. The business plan for 2020 was also developed and submitted to the DOH for consultation and agreement.
- The 2019 business plan was substantially delivered by the end of the year and any deviations from the original plan were reported upon and discussed between the Board and the DOH during their quarterly governance meetings.
- The Authority operates under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). Under the guidance of the Board, the Authority continued to review, ensure compliance with, and report on its full compliance with the Code. The FSAI Oversight Agreement/Performance Delivery Agreement was agreed with the DOH.
- The Authority approved and implemented a new Risk Management Policy and a Risk Register, and it continued to embed risk management into all aspects of its business planning, delivery and alignment to appropriate decision-making.
- During 2019, there were 41 Freedom of Information requests and 13 Parliamentary Questions. Five protected disclosures were made under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014. All requests were answered in a timely manner and in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- The Authority continued to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and it processed four Subject Access Requests. All FSAI staff completed an online General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training course.

Objective 4.4 Embed a culture of quality through ensuring that systems, processes and procedures meet the highest standards

- The Authority operates a business management system in order to ensure organisational excellence, quality of service and compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and relevant legislation. The business management system ensures that risks and opportunities are identified and addressed, that a customer focus is maintained, and that a consistent, process-based approach underpins activities. Following an external audit in 2019, certification to the international quality standard ISO 9001:2015 was maintained.
- The core IT infrastructure was upgraded, thus ensuring that the Authority is using the most secure and stable software within its IT environment. IT security projects were delivered in order to mitigate against any cybersecurity threats.
- Through the delivery of new client computers, IT solutions were provided which embraced staff mobile work practices, streamlined access to corporate data and technology, and aligned with best practice industry standards.
- A robust corporate Wi-Fi solution was implemented for FSAI staff and visitors. Enhancements were also made to audio-visual services, including an electronic meeting room booking system.
- The Authority implemented state-of-the-art cloud-based technologies to include client hardware and software upgrades. This has increased efficiency and reliability and reduces the cost of operations while enhancing computing governance.
- A review of the 71 actions in the Science Strategy implementation plan was undertaken. It showed full achievement of 82% of actions and partial achievement of 11% of actions, with only 7% of actions not completed or deemed unnecessary.
- A new Science Strategy for the period 2020–2024 was developed for publication in 2020.

Objective 4.5 Enhance recognition of the FSAI's identity, influence and reputation among staff, stakeholders and customers

- The Authority organised its first international science conference, The Science of Food Safety – What's our Future?, a two-day event at the Dublin Convention Centre which attracted more than 300 participants.
- The Abbott Nutrition infant formula production plant in Cootehill hosted an event for FSAI scientists that was focused on understanding the challenges of implementing food safety in a factory environment.

Appendix 1 Industry fora members

Artisan Forum, 2019

Mr John Matthews (Chairperson) Food Safety Authority of Ireland	Teagasc	Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland
Ms Darina Allen Slow Food Ireland/Ballymaloe Cookery School	Mr William Cleary Beekeeper	Ms Jane Murphy Cáis
Ms Sally Barnes Woodcock Smokery	Ms Jeffa Gill Durrus Cheese	Ms Mary Regan Regan's Organic Farm
Mr Eoin Bird The Wooded Pig	Ms Simone Kelly The Rocket Man Café	Ms Dearbhla Reynolds The Cultured Club
Mr John Brennan Leitrim Organic Farmers Co-op	Mr Sean Kent Poultry Expert	Mr Declan Ryan Arbutus Breads
Mr Kevin Brennan	Mr Donal Lehane Chair of Community Food Group	Ms Elisabeth Ryan Independent Micro Breweries

Food Service Forum, 2019

Ms Dorothy Guina-Dornan (Chairperson) Food Safety Authority of Ireland	Restaurants Association of Ireland	Mr Conor O'Kane Irish Hotels Federation/Clayton Hotels
Ms Lana McGinn Gather and Gather	Ms Martina Donohoe Aramark	Mr Pat O'Sullivan Irish Prison Service
Ms Louise Collins Eddie Rocket's (IRL) Limited	Mr Adam Heyes Subway Ireland	Ms Manuela Spinelli Euro-Toques Ireland
Mr Pat Crotty Vintners' Federation of Ireland	Ms Louise Hickmott McDonald's Restaurants of Ireland	Ms Helen Statham (<i>joined September 2019</i>) KFC
Mr Adrian Cummins	Ms Mary Flynn Catering Management Association of Ireland	

Retail Forum, 2019

**Ms Dorothy Guina-Dornan
(Chairperson)**

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Mr Ray Bowe

Musgrave Retail Partners Ireland

Mr Stephen Browne

Retail Ireland/Ibec

Ms Katie Creamer

Aldi

Ms Tara Buckley

Retail Grocery Dairy & Allied
Trades Association (RGDATA)

Ms Jenni O'Brien (*replaced
Rachel Moran November 2019*)

Avoca

Mr Gareth Coburn

Pallas Foods

Ms Mary Daly

Dunnes Stores

Ms Elaine Clohosey

BWG Foods

Mr Jonathan Halls

Boots

Ms Aoife Noonan

Lidl Ireland

Ms Lynda Kenny

Musgrave Wholesale/Daybreak

Mr Rob McEvoy

Circle K

Ms Aisling McGough

Tesco Ireland

Ms Sharon Murphy

Barry Group

Mr Ben McGinn (*replaced
Caroline O'Connor May 2019*)

Gala Retail

Ms Trish Twohig

Iceland Foods

Mr Peter Wight

Marks & Spencer

Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee, 2019

Mr David Lyons (Chairperson)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

**Mr Dave Clarke/Mr Conor
Duffy/Dr Jeffrey Fisher/Dr
Sinead Keaveney/Mr Joe Silke**

Marine Institute

**Ms Patricia Daly/Ms Vicky
Lyons**

Bord Iascaigh Mhara

**Mr Paul Duane/Mr Brian
Nolan/Mr Bernard O'Donovan/Dr**

**Micheál O'Mahony/Ms Aileen
O'Sullivan**

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

**Ms Teresa Morrissey/Mr John
Harrington/Mr Ray Harty/Mr Pat
Mulloy/Mr Finian O'Sullivan**

Irish Shellfish Association and
Processing Industry

**Ms Valerie Hannon/Ms Kate
Harrington/Ms Maeve O'Reilly**

Irish Water

Mr Paul Hickey

Health Service Executive

Dr Sarah McLean

Loughs Agency

Ms Helen Carney

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Mr Liam Ó Súilleabháin

Environmental Protection Agency

Appendix 2 Scientific subcommittee members

Biological Safety Subcommittee, 2019

Dr Geraldine Duffy
(Chairperson)

Teagasc

Dr Declan Bolton

Teagasc

Prof. Martin Cormican

National University of Ireland,
Galway; Health Service Executive

Dr Bill Doré

Marine Institute

Ms Catherine Foye

Health Service Executive

Dr Patricia Garvey

Health Protection Surveillance
Centre

Dr John Griffin

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Ms Bernadette Hickey

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Dr Kieran Jordan

Teagasc (retired)

Dr Eleanor McNamara

Health Service Executive

Dr Joanne O’Gorman

Health Service Executive

Dr Micheál O’Mahony

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

Dr Helen O’Shea

Cork Institute of Technology

Dr Margaret O’Sullivan

Health Service Executive

Mr Ray Parle

Health Service Executive

Mr Kilian Unger

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Dr Theo de Waal

University College Dublin

Dr Paul Whyte

University College Dublin

Mr Vincent Young

Health Service Executive (retired)

Chemical Safety Subcommittee, 2019

Dr Michael O’Keeffe
(Chairperson)

Residues Expert

Dr Gabriel Beechinor

Health Products Regulatory
Authority

Mr Alan Breen

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Dr Finbar Brown

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Dr Nigel Brunton

University College Dublin

Dr Claire Chambers

Toxicology Expert

Ms Catherine Cosgrove

Health Service Executive

Dr Enda Cummins

University College Dublin

Dr Martin Danaher

Teagasc

Dr Edel Duggan

Beaumont Hospital

Mr John Keegan

Dublin Public Analyst’s Laboratory
(retired)

Prof. Joe Kerry

University College Cork

Dr Ita Kinahan

State Laboratory

Dr Evin McGovern

Marine Institute

Dr Declan McKernan

National University of Ireland,
Galway

Dr Tara McMorrow

University College Dublin

Dr Breige McNulty

University College Dublin

Dr John Moriarty

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Mr Joe Silke

Marine Institute

Dr Finbarr O’Regan

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Public Health Nutrition Subcommittee, 2019

Ms Ita Saul (Chairperson)

Children's Health Ireland at
Crumlin (retired)

Dr Teresa Bennett

Health Service Executive

Dr Clare Corish

University College Dublin

Prof. Albert Flynn

University College Cork

Dr Eileen Gibney

University College Dublin

Prof. Mairead Kiely

University College Cork

Prof. Barbara Livingstone

Ulster University (retired)

Prof. Fionnuala McAuliffe

University College Dublin

Dr Sinéad McCarthy

Teagasc

Prof. Malachi McKenna

St Vincent's University Hospital

Prof. Helene McNulty

Ulster University

Dr Emeir McSorley

Ulster University

Dr Anne Nugent

University College Dublin

Dr Claire O'Brien

Irish Cancer Society

Dr Dilip Rai

Teagasc

Dr Janette Walton

University College Cork

Prof. Mary Ward

Ulster University

Dr Katherine Younger

Technological University Dublin

Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Allergens

Mr Ray Parle (Chairperson)

Health Service Executive

Dr Pdraig Burke

Public Analyst's Laboratory,
Galway

Dr Orla Cahill

Technological University Dublin

Dr Ruth Charles

Consultant Paediatric Dietitian

Dr James McIntosh

safefood

Dr Ciara Walsh

Technological University Dublin

Dr Cristina Arroyo-Casabona

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Dr Pat O'Mahony

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Emerging Technology in Food Processing

Dr Mark Fenelon (Chairperson) Teagasc	Prof. Brian McKenna University College Dublin (retired)	Teagasc
Dr PJ Cullen Technical University Dublin	Dr Michael O’Keeffe Residues Expert	Dr Karl McDonald Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Dr Geraldine Duffy Teagasc	Dr Seamus O’Mahony University College Cork	Dr Cristina Arroyo-Casabona Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Prof. Alan Kelly University College Cork	Dr Patrycja Zakrys University College Cork	Dr Pat O’Mahony Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Dr James Lyng University College Dublin	Prof. Brijesh Tiwari	

Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Seaweed

Prof. Brian McKenna (Chairperson) University College Dublin (retired)	Ms Lucy Watson Bord Iascaigh Mhara	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
Dr Dagmar Stengel National University of Ireland, Galway	Dr Marco García-Vaquero Teagasc	Dr Pat O’Mahony Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Dr Jenny Smith Marine Institute	Dr Maria Hayes Teagasc	Ms Faye Clarke Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Dr Evin McGovern Marine Institute	Ms Mary Curran Public Analyst’s Laboratory, Cork	Dr Christina Tlustos Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Dr Liam Morrison National University of Ireland, Galway	Dr Willie Ryan Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Dr Cormac McElhinney Food Safety Authority of Ireland
	Mr Máirtín Walsh	Dr Cristina Arroyo-Casabona Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Map and Crohn's Disease

Dr Dónal Sammin (Chairperson)

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Dr Mark Fenelon

Teagasc

Dr Margaret O'Sullivan

Health Service Executive

Prof. Stephen Gordon

University College Dublin

Dr Glen Doherty

University College Dublin; St
Vincent's University Hospital

Prof. Tom Rogers

Trinity College Dublin; Irish
Mycobacteria Reference
Laboratory, St. James's Hospital

Dr Kevin Kenny

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Mr Joe O'Flaherty

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Dr Carina Brehony

Public Health Laboratory, Health
Service Executive

Dr Louise Britton

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Mr Timothy O'Donnell

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Mr John Matthews

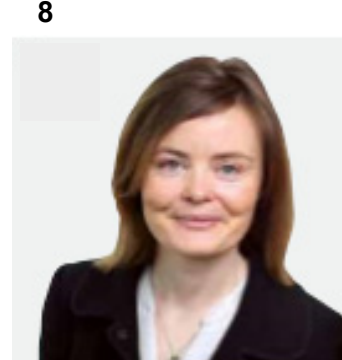
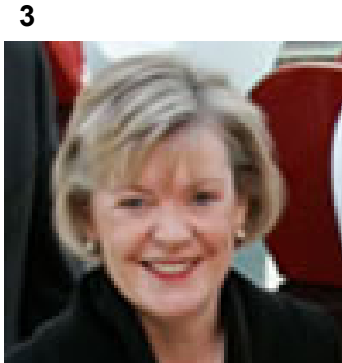
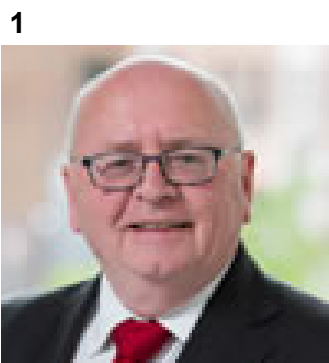
Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Appendix 3 Statement of Board members', Chief Executive Officer's, and Scientific Committee members' interests (1/01/2019 – 31/12/2019)

Board member	Commercial interest		Non-commercial interest	
	Name of organisation	Nature of interest	Name of organisation	Nature of interest
Prof. Francis Butler	Carroll's Cuisine, Tullamore, Co Offaly	Consultancy (four days)	None	–
	Saudi Food & Drug Authority, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	Consultancy (10 days)		
	Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food, Food Standards Agency, UK	Five meetings		
	Land ownership	Forestry		
Mr Ciaran Byrne	None	–	None	–
Ms Mary Cullen	None	–	None	–
Mr Derek Cunningham	None	–	None	–
Prof. Albert Flynn	None	–	International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) Europe	Member, Board of Directors
Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan	None	–	None	–
Mr Martin Higgins	None	–	None	–
Mr Gerard McCurdy	None	–	Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority	Board Member
			Charity Commission for Northern Ireland	Deputy Chief Commissioner
Ms Margaret Moran	None	–	Arthur Cox Solicitors	One family member employed as a partner by Arthur Cox (Legal Advisors to FSAI)
Ms Ros O'Shea	None	–	None	–
Dr Susan Quinn	None	–	None	–
Chief Executive officer				
Dr Pamela A Byrne	None	–	Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies in Ireland	Chairperson
			Institute of Public Administration	Director

Scientific Committee member	Commercial interest		Non-commercial interest	
	Name of organisation	Nature of interest	Name of organisation	Nature of interest
Ms Paula Barry Walsh	None	–	None	–
Prof. Kevin Cashman	None	–	None	–
Dr PJ Cullen	University of Sydney	Employment	Plasma Equipment Providers	One family member is employed by this company
	Plasma Equipment Providers	Company Director		
	PlamaLeap Technologies	CEO		
Dr Geraldine Duffy	None	–	None	–
Prof. Albert Flynn	None	–	ILSI Europe	Member, Board of Directors
Dr Mark Fenelon	None	–	None	–
Mr John Keegan	None	–	None	–
Prof. Brian McKenna	None	–	None	–
Dr Eleanor McNamara	None	–	None	–
Dr Michael O’Keeffe	None	–	None	–
Dr Margaret B O’Sullivan	None	–	None	–
Mr Redmond (Ray) Parle	None	–	None	–
Dr Dónal Sammin	None	–	None	–
Ms Ita Saul	None	–	Childcare Service, Preschool, After-school service, Marian Centre, Green Park Road, Bray, Co Wicklow	Honorary Chair, Board of Management

Appendix 4 Board members' biographies



1. Mr Martin Higgins

2. Mr Ciaran Byrne

3. Ms Mary Cullen

4. Mr Derek Cunningham

5. Prof. Albert Flynn

6. Ms Margaret Moran

7. Ms Ros O'Shea

8. Dr Susan Quinn

9. Mr Gerry McCurdy

10. Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan

11. Prof. Francis Butler

12. Professor Patrick Wall

1. Mr Martin Higgins (Chairperson)

Mr Martin Higgins was the founding Chief Executive of safe food, the all-Island food safety promotion board, and led the organisation from its foundation in 1998 until his retirement in 2014. Prior to that he was the first Director of Corporate Services in the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI), having previously been a Principal Officer in the Department of Health, specialising in finance and health agency regulation. He has professional qualifications in accountancy, international regulation and governance, and is a qualified mediator and executive and leadership coach. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute. He has in the past been a Board member of the Irish Medicines Board and of CORU, the health and social care professionals regulator. In 2015, he was appointed to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland. He currently chairs the Audit Committee of An Bord Pleanála, the Health Research Board (HRB), and the Central Statistics Office.

2. Mr Ciaran Byrne

Mr Ciaran Byrne has served as a member of the Health Service Executive's Dublin North East Regional Health Forum (2009–2011), the Governing Authority of Dublin City University (2011–2014) and the University's Risk Management Committee. A public representative on Fingal County Council (2001–2014), he was Mayor in 2009/10, a member of the Council's Audit Committee (2011–2014), and a member of the Corporate Policy Group. He chaired the Fingal County Development Board (2004–2009). He was also Chairman of the Fingal Leader Partnership (2009–2011). He was a founding member of the Board of the Balbriggan Enterprise and Training Centre (2000–2014). He has worked in Voluntary Service Overseas in London, in Glockenspiel software engineers and as a partner in STS Management Consultants in Dublin. He is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin (TCD) (Economic and Social Studies) and holds master's degrees in science, arts, and media from the Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT).

3. Ms Mary Cullen

Ms Mary Cullen is a chartered accountant. She attended Trinity College Dublin, where she studied Business, Economics and Social Studies (BESS), following which she joined Price Waterhouse, now PwC. She held a number of senior executive roles with PwC, including responsibility for partnership and company secretarial matters and partner affairs. She is a Trustee of the Royal Dublin Society (RDS) Pension Funds and is a former member of the Foundation Board of the RDS. Previously she was a Board Member of Temple Street Children's University Hospital, Dublin, Chairperson of the Board of Cappagh National Orthopaedic Hospital, Dublin and a Board Member of Beaumont Hospital, Dublin.

4. Mr Derek Cunningham

Mr Derek Cunningham is a communications consultant. Previously, he was Special Adviser to the former Tánaiste and Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney, and Head of Communications

with the Irish Farmers' Association. He is a former journalist with RTÉ television and radio. He is a graduate of TCD and has postgraduate qualifications from Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and Dublin City University. He served on an Advisory Group of the Information Society Commission and was Chairman of the RTÉ Audience Council.

5. Prof. Albert Flynn

Professor Albert Flynn, BSc, PhD (National University of Ireland, Galway) is Professor Emeritus in Nutrition at University College Cork. He has served on the faculty of the University since 1981, and from 1993 to 1996 he was Dean of the Faculty of Food Science and Technology. He has published widely on human nutrition, public health, and food safety on a range of topics, including nutritional intake and status of population groups, food safety risk assessment, food fortification, and risk benefit assessment of nutrients. He has extensive experience in providing scientific advice on human nutrition and food safety issues related to food policy and regulation. He is currently Chairperson of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's Scientific Committee. He has also served as a member of the European Food Safety Authority's Scientific Committee and as Chairperson of its Panel for Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies from 2003 to 2012, and was a member of the Scientific Committee on Food of the European Commission from 1997 to 2003. Professor Flynn was reappointed to the Board on 21 April 2015.

6. Ms Margaret Moran

Ms Margaret Moran was Head of the Home Economics Department and Lecturer in Food Studies in the former St Catherine's College of Education for Home Economics. For many years, she provided advisory services to Fáilte Ireland and worked as a Regional Food Advisor with Bord Bia. Her postgraduate qualifications include an MSc Agr (Food Science) from University College Dublin, a Certificate in Food Safety from University College Dublin, a Diploma in Food Policy from City, University of London, and Advanced Culinary Skills Certificates from Dublin Institute of Technology. She is a member of the International Federation for Home Economics and previously chaired the Food Security and Nutrition Programme Committee. She currently provides consultancy services to various institutions and organisations in the areas of teacher education, further education and consumer education.

7. Ms Ros O'Shea

Ms Ros O'Shea is an independent, non-executive director with a portfolio of board positions in the financial, public and charitable sectors, including with the Bank of Montreal Ireland plc, BlackRock's Irish funds and Pieta House. She also chairs the PwC Alumni Network in Ireland. She is a founding partner of Acorn Governance Solutions, a consulting firm providing advice and leadership training in governance, culture, risk, compliance and business integrity, and she lectures on these topics at the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School, the Institute of Directors in Ireland and the Institute of Banking. Previously, she enjoyed a highly successful executive career, spanning almost

20 years, and worked with two of Ireland's largest companies: CRH plc, where she was Head of Group Compliance & Ethics, and Smurfit Kappa Group plc. She has first class honours bachelor and master's degrees in business from UCD, a diploma in Corporate Governance from the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School, and is an associate of the Institute of Tax and a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, having trained with PwC. She has also completed the Master Trainer Programme at the Irish Management Institute (IMI), holds a diploma in Aircraft Finance and Leasing from the Law Society of Ireland, is a graduate of the Value Creation through Effective Boards programme at Harvard Business School, and is a Certified Bank Director as designated by the Institute of Banking. In addition, she is the author of the book *Leading with Integrity: A Practical Guide to Business Ethics* and is a regular contributor to news and print media on related topics.

8. Dr Susan Quinn

Dr Susan Quinn, MICI, MRSC is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Chemistry, UCD. She obtained her BSc honours degree in 1997 and her PhD in 2002 from UCD and carried out postdoctoral studies at TCD from 2002 to 2005. Dr Quinn has previously served on the governing authority and finance committee of UCD. She joined the School of Chemistry, UCD in September 2009, and she obtained tenure in 2012. Her current research interests lie in the areas of functional nanomaterials and the chemistry of DNA. She serves as an international adviser on the Facilities board of the Central Laser Facility, Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC) in the United Kingdom and is also a member of the STFC's Life Sciences and Soft Materials Advisory Panel.

9. Mr Gerry McCurdy

Mr Gerry McCurdy has more than 40 years' experience working in a regulatory environment dealing with food safety, public health and consumer protection. He qualified as an environmental health officer at the University of Ulster in 1978 and went on to attain a Master of Science Degree in 1991. He has held a number of senior positions in local and central government and was instrumental in setting up the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in Northern Ireland. As Northern Ireland Director of the FSA he developed close working relations with the FSAI and the Food Safety Promotion Board. Following his retirement in 2013, Mr McCurdy has worked as a food safety consultant for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Bank on projects in Bosnia and Bangladesh. Mr McCurdy has considerable experience at Board level working with the Regulation, Quality and Improvement Authority and is the Deputy Chief Commissioner for the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. He is also a member of their respective audit and risk committees.

10. Dr Cliodhna Foley-Nolan

Dr Cliodhna Foley-Nolan MB, BCh, BAO, DCH, DObs, MPH, FFPHM is a Consultant in Public Health Medicine. She has worked as Director of Human Health and Nutrition at *safe*food (Food

Safety Promotion Board) and as Specialist in Public Health Medicine in the Health Service Executive. Dr Foley-Nolan has a medical degree from University College Cork (UCC) and a Masters in Public Health from UCD, and is a Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. Dr Foley-Nolan holds a Senior Lecturer post at UCC and is a trainer and examiner at the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. She has served on a number of national advisory groups, including the National AIDS Advisory Group, as well as advisory groups on tuberculosis, immigrant health, food poverty, and antimicrobial resistance. She has served on the Boards of the Veterinary Council of Ireland; obesity policy groups in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland; the Faculty of Public Health Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland; and the HRB Centre for Health and Diet Research.

11. Prof. Francis Butler

Professor Francis Butler is a Principal Investigator in the University College Dublin (UCD) Institute of Food and Health and the UCD Centre for Food Safety. He is Head of Subject in Biosystems Engineering at UCD. His main research is in food safety with a particular focus on traceability systems and quantitative risk assessment of microbiological and chemical hazards in foods. Professor Butler coordinates the UCD MSc in Food Safety and Risk Analysis. He has led several large-scale quantitative microbial food risk assessments, and has made some novel contributions to the characterisation of microbial distributions in food and to the development of novel sampling strategies for contaminants in foods. He is currently leading projects using molecular microbiological techniques to identify the sources and routes of transmission of pathogens through the food chain. Other research interests include food chain integrity and the traceability of foods. Professor Butler has published more than 150 publications in refereed journals, as well as over 100 refereed papers in international conference proceedings and more than 150 additional national conference and other workshop presentations. He has coordinated or partnered in upwards of 30 research projects, including four European Union Framework projects. He has trained a substantial team of researchers and scholars, including 20 PhD students to completion and 13 research master's students, as well as 14 postdoctoral researchers. He has served on several Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and World Health Organization expert meetings on microbiological risk assessment. Prior to joining UCD, Professor Butler worked in production management in the Irish dairy industry.

12. Professor Patrick Wall

Professor Patrick Wall is Professor of Public Health in University College Dublin's School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science. He was the first Chief Executive of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) and he was the second Chairperson of the European Food Safety Authority. He is a member of the International Scientific Advisory Committee of the China National Center for Food Safety Risk Assessment. He is a member of the management board of the Mater

Foundation and Agri Aware. He qualified in veterinary medicine in University College Dublin and in human medicine in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He has an MSc in Infectious Diseases from the University of London, an MBA from the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School and a Diploma in Corporate Governance from University College Dublin. He is a Diplomat of the European College of Veterinary Public Health, a Member of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine of Ireland, a Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine in the UK and a Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. He is Chairperson of the management boards of Independent.

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Governance Statement and Board Members' Report

For the year ended 31 December 2018

Governance

The Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) was established under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The functions of the Board are set out in Section 31 of the Act. The Board is accountable to the Minister for Health and is responsible for ensuring good governance and performs this task by setting strategic objectives and targets and taking strategic decisions on all key business issues. The regular day-to-day management, control and direction of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland are the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the senior leadership team. The CEO and the senior leadership team must follow the broad strategic direction set by the Board and must ensure that all Board members have a clear understanding of the key activities and decisions related to the entity, and of any significant risks likely to arise. The CEO acts as a direct liaison between the Board and management of the Authority.

Board responsibilities

The work and responsibilities of all those associated with the operation of the Board are set out in the Code of Practice for Board members, Chairperson, Chief Executive Officer and Secretary. The Code also sets out the matters specifically reserved for Board

decision. Standing items considered by the Board include:

- declaration of interests,
- reports from committees,
- financial reports/management accounts,
- performance reports, and
- reserved matters.

The Food Safety Authority Act, 1998, Section 26 (5), requires the Board of the Authority to prepare financial statements in such form as may be approved by the Minister for Health with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, and to keep all proper and usual accounts of money received and expended by it.

In preparing these financial statements, the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Authority will continue in operation; and
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject

to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The Board confirms that it has complied with the above requirements in preparing the financial statements. The Board is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Authority and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 26 of the Act. The maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information on the Food Safety Authority's website is the responsibility of the Board. During 2019 the Board highlighted significant challenges in ensuring the FSAI meets all its statutory and regulatory obligations, within its funding allocation, to the Department of Health, with whom it continues to engage on the matter. The Board is responsible for approving the annual plan and budget. There is an on-going evaluation of the performance of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland by reference to its annual business plan and budget.

The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Board considers that the financial statements of the Authority give a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland at 31 December 2019 except for non-compliance with the requirements of FRS 102 in relation to retirement benefit entitlements, as directed by the Minister for Health. The Board approved the signing of this statement and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 on 24 June 2020.

The Board consists of a Chairperson and 9 ordinary members, all of whom are appointed/re-appointed by the Minister for Health. The members of the Board were appointed for a period of either 3 or 5 years and meet 6 times per annum.

The table below details the appointment period for members serving during the year:

Board Members	Role	Date Appointed	Latest	Additional detail
Mr. Martin Higgins	Chairperson	February 2013 (ordinary member)	Appointed Chairperson in February 2018	
Prof. Patrick Wall	Ordinary Member		February 2016	Term ended February 2019
Prof. Albert Flynn	Ordinary Member	February 2003	April 2015	
Dr. Susan Quinn	Ordinary Member	October 2013	October 2016	Term ended October 2019
Ms. Margaret Moran	Ordinary Member	June 2014	June 2017	–

Mr. Ciaran Byrne	Ordinary Member	July 2014	June 2017	–
Mr. Derek Cunningham	Ordinary Member	February 2013	June 2016	–
Ms. Ros O'Shea	Ordinary Member	June 2016	–	–
Ms. Mary Cullen	Ordinary Member	June 2016	–	–
Prof. Francis Butler	Ordinary Member	May 2019	–	–
Mr. Gerard McCurdy	Ordinary Member	May 2019	–	–
Dr. Clíodhna Foley-Nolan	Ordinary Member	October 2019	–	–

The Board engaged an independent specialist in early 2018 to complete an extensive review of the effectiveness of the FSAI Board and its committees – this included a survey and 1:1 interviews. In 2018 the Board reviewed the resulting report and identified actions to further enhance its effectiveness, which were progressed in 2019. The Board completed an additional review of effectiveness in Q4 2019 and the resulting report was reviewed in December 2019.

The Board has established three sub-committees, the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), the Performance & Development Committee (PDC) and the Stakeholder Development Committee (SDC).

The ARC comprises three Board members and one independent member. The role of the ARC is to support the Board in relation to its responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance and associated assurance. The ARC is independent from the financial management of the organisation. In particular the Committee ensures that the internal control systems including audit activities are monitored actively and independently. The ARC reports to the Board after each meeting.

The members of the Audit and Risk Committee are Ms. Margaret Moran (Chair), Ms. Ros O'Shea, Ms. Mary Cullen and Mr. Raymond Dolan (term ended January 2020). There were 5 meetings of the ARC in 2019.

The PDC comprises three Board members. The role of the PDC is to devise and implement an appropriate mechanism to assess the performance of the CEO and, through the CEO, to review the performance of the FSAI Executive Team. As required, the PDC agrees remuneration with Government Departments, develops the job description, identifies the relevant competencies and ideal candidate profile for the post, agrees the recruitment and search process, and sets a specific timetable. The PDC convenes as required by the Board and reports to the Board after each meeting.

The members of the PDC are Mr. Martin Higgins (Chair), Prof. Albert Flynn and Ms. Ros O'Shea. There were 2 meetings of the PDC in 2019.

The SDC is an ad hoc committee comprises four Board members. The role of the SDC is to advise the Board on matters relating to stakeholder identification, analysis and

consultation. The SDC convenes as required by the Board and reports to the Board after each meeting.

The members of the SDC are Mr. Ciaran Byrne (Chair), Mr. Martin Higgins, Mr. Derek Cunningham and Mr. Gerry McCurdy. There were 2 meetings of the SDC in 2019

Schedule of attendance, fees and expenses

A schedule of attendance at the Board and Committee meetings for 2019 is set out in Note 4(c) of the Financial Statements.

Key personnel changes

The terms of Prof. Patrick Wall and Dr. Susan Quinn ended during 2019. Prof. Francis Butler, Mr. Gerard McCurdy and Dr. Clíodhna Foley-Nolan were appointed as members of the Board to fill vacant positions.

Disclosures required by Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016)

The Board is responsible for ensuring that the Authority has complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies ("the Code"), as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

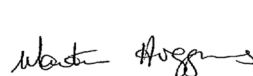
in August 2016. The following disclosures are required by the Code:

- employee short-term benefits breakdown - set out in note 4 (b) to the financial statements,
- consultancy costs - set out in note 4 (h) to the financial statements,
- legal costs and settlements - set out in note 4 (h) to the financial statements,
- travel and subsistence expenditure - set out in note 4 (a) and 4(c) to the financial statements, and
- hospitality expenditure - set out in note 4 (f) to the financial statements.

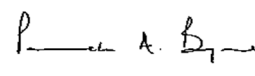
Statement of compliance

The Board has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and has put procedures in place to ensure compliance with the Code. The Food Safety Authority of Ireland operated in compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies for 2019.

On behalf of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland:



Mr. Martin Higgins
Chairperson



Dr. Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

19 August 2020

Statement on Internal Control

For the year ended 31 December 2019

Scope of responsibility

On behalf of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI), we acknowledge the Board's responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal control is maintained and operated. This responsibility takes account of the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

Purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a tolerable level rather than to eliminate it. The system can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or detected in a timely way.

The system of internal control, which accords with guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, has been in place in the Authority for the year ended 31 December 2019 and has been maintained up to the date at the time of approval of the financial statements. In addition, the Board is provided with further assurance as to the quality of the Authority's internal control as the FSAI is certified to the Quality Management System Standard ISO 9001:2015. This Standard confirms that the Authority operates a set of policies, processes and procedures

appropriate for planning and execution of its core business.

Capacity to handle risk

The FSAI has an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) comprising 3 Board members and 1 external member, with financial and audit expertise. The ARC met 5 times in 2019.

The FSAI has an internal audit function as defined in the Board's Charter for Internal Audit. The Authority has outsourced its Internal Audit Function to BDO Ireland. The work of the internal audit function is informed by analysis of the risk to which the body is exposed and annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. The analysis of risk and the internal audit plans have been endorsed by the ARC and approved by the Board. The Internal Auditor provides the Board with reports of internal audit activity.

The ARC has developed a risk management policy that sets out risk management processes and details the roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to risk. The policy has been issued to all staff who are expected to work within the Authority's risk management policies, to alert management on emerging risks and control weaknesses and assume responsibility for risks and controls within their own area of work.

Risk and control framework

The FSAI has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, to mitigate those risks.

A risk register is in place which identifies the key risks facing the Authority and these have been identified, evaluated and graded according to their significance. The register is updated by the Senior Leadership Team and presented to the ARC and Board as a standing item. The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level.

The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibility for operation of controls assigned to specific staff. We confirm that a control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- procedures for all key business processes have been documented,
- financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability,
- there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management,
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems,

- there are systems in place to safeguard the assets, and
- control procedures over the use of grant monies and the allocation of funding to outside agencies to ensure adequate control over approval of such monies so as to ensure grant funding has been applied for the purpose intended.

The FSAI makes payments to local authorities in relation to the provision of veterinary services. Annual service contracts are agreed with local authorities. Payments are based on quarterly claims from the local authorities based on activity levels.

Ongoing monitoring and review

Formal procedures which have been established for monitoring control processes and control deficiencies are communicated to those responsible for taking corrective action and to management and the Board, where relevant, in a timely way. We confirm that the following ongoing monitoring systems are in place:

- key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies,
- reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned, and
- there are regular reviews by senior management of periodic and annual

performance and financial reports which indicate performance against budgets/forecasts.

Procurement

We confirm that the FSAI has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines. Matters arising regarding controls over procurement are highlighted under internal control issues below.

Review of effectiveness

We confirm that the Authority has procedures to monitor the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures. The FSAI's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal and external auditors and the Audit and Risk Committee which oversees their work and the senior management within the Authority responsible for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

We confirm that the Board conducted an annual review of the effectiveness of the internal controls for 2019 in February 2020.

Internal Control Issues

Procurement

During 2019 expenditure of €189,000 was incurred in relation to seven contracts for services where the procedures employed did not comply with procurement guidelines:

- Approximately €35,000 relates to agency fees for temporary ICT staff.

The total cost of these contracts was €235,000, which comprises salary costs of €202,500 (including VAT). This was previously disclosed in 2018. FSAI expects to regularise these contracts in 2020, as part of capital project developments.

- Approximately €11,000 relates to the provision of office supplies. A new OGP Framework is expected to be established in Q3 2020, which will be used to regularise this contract.
- The remaining amounts, totalling €143,000, relate to expenditure incurred on expired contracts. The Office of Government Procurement has established Frameworks that may be used to address these services. The Authority is developing a procurement schedule with a view to addressing these contracts in 2020.

There were no internal control weaknesses identified during 2019 other than those disclosed above.

On behalf of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland:

Martin Higgins *Pamela A. Byrne*

Mr. Martin Higgins
Chairperson

Dr. Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

19 August 2020

Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General

Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas

Qualified opinion on financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2019 as required under the provisions of section 26 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 — The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland and comprise

- the statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves
- the statement of financial position
- the statement of cash flows and
- the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, except for the non-compliance with the requirements of FRS 102 in relation to retirement benefit entitlements referred to below, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland at 31 December 2019 and of its income and expenditure for 2019 in accordance with FRS 102.

Basis for qualified opinion on financial statements

In compliance with the directions of the Minister for Health, the Food Safety Authority

of Ireland accounts for the costs of retirement benefit entitlements only as they become payable. This does not comply with FRS 102 which requires that the financial statements recognise the full cost of retirement benefit entitlements earned in the period and the accrued liability at the reporting date. The effect of the non-compliance on the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's financial statements for 2019 has not been quantified.

I conducted my audit of the financial statements in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) as promulgated by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions. My responsibilities under those standards are described in the appendix to this report. I am independent of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the standards. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Report on information other than the financial statements, and on other matters

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland has presented certain other information together with the financial statements. This comprises the annual report, the governance statement and Board members' report and the statement on internal control. My responsibilities to

report in relation to such information, and on certain other matters upon which I report by exception, are described in the appendix to this report. I have nothing to report in that regard.



Andrew Harkin

For and on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General

25 August 2020

Appendix to the report

Responsibilities of Board members

As detailed in the governance statement and Board members' report, the Board members are responsible for

- the preparation of financial statements in the form prescribed under section 26 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998
- ensuring that the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with FRS 102
- ensuring the regularity of transactions
- assessing whether the use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate, and
- such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free

from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

I am required under section 26 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998 to audit the financial statements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and to report thereon to the Houses of the Oireachtas.

My objective in carrying out the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement due to fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

- As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. In doing so,
- I identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to fraud or error; design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks; and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement

resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- I obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal controls.
- I evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures.
- I conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, on whether a material uncertainty exists
- related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Food Safety Authority of Ireland to cease to continue as a going concern.

- I evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Information other than the financial statements

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information presented with those statements, and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, I am required under the ISAs to read the other information presented and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or with knowledge obtained during the audit, or if it otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

Reporting on other matters

My audit is conducted by reference to the special considerations which attach to State bodies in relation to their management and operation. I report if I identify material matters

relating to the manner in which public business has been conducted.

I seek to obtain evidence about the regularity of financial transactions in the course of audit.

I report if I identify any material instance where public money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them.

I also report by exception if, in my opinion,

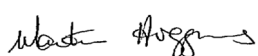
- I have not received all the information and explanations I required for my audit, or
- the accounting records were not sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited, or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records.

Statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves

For the year ended 31 December 2019

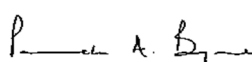
	Notes	2019 €'000	2018 €'000
Income			
Oireachtas Grant	2	16,357	15,779
Other Income	3	1,051	438
Operating Income		17,408	16,217
Total Income		17,408	16,217
Expenditure			
Administration, Operations & Promotion	4	9,723	9,973
Communications activities	5	449	589
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	6 & 14	642	594
Albanian Project	14	565	-
Local Authority Veterinary Service	7	6,205	6,248
Total Expenditure		17,584	17,404
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Appropriations		(176)	(1,187)
Transfer from/(to) the Capital Account	8	320	394
Surplus/(Deficit) for year after Appropriations		144	(793)
Balance at 1 January		(1,082)	(289)
Balance at 31 December		(938)	(1,082)

The Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 16 form part of these financial statements. On behalf of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland:



Mr. Martin Higgins
Chairperson

19 August 2020



Dr. Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

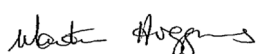
Statement of financial position

as at 31 December 2019

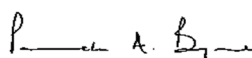
	Notes	2019 €'000	2018 €'000
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	6	1,577	1,973
Intangible Assets	6 (a)	95	19
Current Assets			
Receivables	9	584	609
Cash and Cash Equivalents		1,143	544
Net Current Assets		1,727	1,153
Current Liabilities (amounts falling due within one year)			
Payables	10	2,665	2,235
Net Current Assets / Liabilities		(938)	(1,082)
Total Assets less Liabilities before Pensions		734	910
Representing			
Capital Account	8	1,672	1,992
Retained Revenue Reserves		(938)	(1,082)
		734	910

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 16 form part of these financial statements.

On behalf of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland:



Mr. Martin Higgins
Chairperson



Dr. Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

19 August 2020

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2019

		2019	2018
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Net cash inflow from operating activities			
(Deficit)/Excess Income over Expenditure		(176)	(1,187)
Depreciation and Impairment of Fixed Assets	6 & 15	653	594
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	9	25	(361)
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	10	430	1,604
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities		932	650
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Payments to acquire Plant & Equipment	6	(184)	(196)
Payments to acquire Intangible Assets	6 (a)	(149)	(4)
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities		(333)	(200)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		599	450
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January		544	94
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December		1,143	544

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2018

1. Accounting policies

The basis of accounting and significant accounting policies adopted by Food Safety Authority of Ireland are set out below. They have been applied consistently throughout the year and for the preceding year.

a) General information

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland was set up under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, with a head office at The Exchange, George's Dock, IFSC, Dublin 1, D01 P2V6. The Food Safety Authority of Ireland's primary objectives as set out in Part II of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act are as follows:

To take all reasonable steps to ensure that:

- (a) food produced in the State (whether or not distributed or marketed in the State), and
- (b) food distributed or marketed in the State meets the highest standards of food safety and hygiene reasonably attainable and it shall, in particular, take all reasonable steps to ensure that such food complies
 - (i) with food legislation in respect of food safety and hygiene standards, or
 - (i) where appropriate, with the provisions of generally recognised standards or codes of good practice aimed at ensuring the

achievement of high standards of food hygiene and food safety

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland is a Public Benefit Entity (PBE).

b) Statement of compliance

The financial statements of Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2019 have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), as promulgated by Chartered Accountants Ireland. as modified by the direction of the Minister for Health in relation to superannuation. In compliance with the directions of the Minister for Health, the Authority accounts for the costs of superannuation entitlements only as they become payable (see 1 (i) below). This basis of accounting does not comply with FRS 102, which requires such costs to be recognised in the year in which entitlement is earned.

c) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the accruals method of accounting, except as stated below, and under the historical cost convention in the form approved by the Minister for Health with the concurrence of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform under Section 26(5) of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act,

1998. The accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's financial statements.

d) Capital funding

The fixed assets of the FSAI are funded from a combination of capital grants and allocations from current revenue. Funding sourced from grants is transferred to a capital account which is amortised in line with the depreciation of the related assets.

e) Revenue

Oireachtas Grants

Revenue is generally recognised on an accruals basis; one exception to this is in the case of Oireachtas Grants which are recognised on a cash receipts basis.

Deferred Income

Project income received in advance is treated as deferred income and reported as a payable falling due within one year. The income is released to the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Reserves in line with the expenditure incurred in the reporting period.

Other Revenue

Other Revenue is recognised on an accrual's basis.

f) Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation, adjusted for any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided on all plant and equipment at rates estimated to write off the cost less the

estimated residual value of each asset on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

(I) Leasehold improvements	15% per annum
(li) Computer equipment	33% per annum
(lii) Office furniture	15% per annum
(Iv) Office equipment	15% per annum
(V) Scientific equipment	15% per annum
(Vi) Motor vehicles	33% per annum

Residual value represents the estimated amount which would currently be obtained from disposal of an asset, after deducting estimated costs of disposal, if the asset were already of an age and in the condition expected at the end of its useful life.

If there is objective evidence of impairment of the value of an asset, an impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves in the year.

Intangible fixed assets are shown at their net book value having been depreciated at 33% on a straight-line basis.

g) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at fair value.

h) Operating leases

Rental expenditure under operating leases is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves over the life of the lease. Expenditure is recognised on a straight-line basis over the lease period, except where there are rental increases linked to the expected rate of

inflation, in which case these increases are recognised when incurred. Any lease incentives received are recognised over the life of the lease.

i) Employee benefits

Short-term Benefits

Short-term benefits such as holiday pay are recognised as an expense in the year, and benefits that are accrued at year-end are included in the payables figure in the Statement of Financial Position.

Retirement Benefits

A superannuation scheme has been approved by the Minister in accordance with Section 39 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The scheme provides for a contributory defined benefit pension scheme for all employees. Deductions from salaries are retained and are treated as income by the Authority. The Department of Health's annual grant to the Authority is net of the deductions retained. The Public Service pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act, 2012 became law on 28 July, 2012 and introduced the new Single Public Scheme ("Single Scheme") which commenced with effect 1 January 2013. All new employees to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, who are new entrants to the Public Sector, on or after 1 January 2013 are members of the Single Scheme. Single Scheme members' contributions are paid over to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

By direction of the Minister for Health no provision has been made in the Financial

Statements for future pension liabilities.

Payments under the schemes are charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure and retained reserves when paid.

j) Local authority veterinary scheme

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland provides funding to Local Authorities in relation to the provision of veterinary services. The Authority receives funding from the Department of Health (as part of its annual determination) in this regard.

Funding received from the Department of Health and amounts paid to Local Authorities are recognised on cash received and cash paid basis, in line with Section 34 of FRS 102.

k) Key estimates and judgements

The preparation of these financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities at the reporting date and the amounts reported for income and expenditure during the year. Judgements and estimates are continually evaluated and are based on historical experiences and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of estimation, by definition, means that the actual results may differ from the estimates made. The estimates and assumptions that can have a material effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are set out below:

- (i) **Establishing useful lives for depreciation purposes of equipment and leases** Equipment and leases comprise of a significant portion of the Authority's assets. The annual depreciation charge depends on the estimated useful lives of each type of asset. Given the relative short-term nature of the equipment assets, the estimation of the useful life of these assets is subject to regular review. Details of the useful economic lives is included in the accounting policies.

- (ii) **Establishing useful economic lives for amortisation purposes of capital grants** The annual amortisation charge depends primarily on the estimated useful lives of each type of asset. The useful economic lives are subject to regular review. Details of the useful economic lives are included in the accounting policies.

2. Oireachtas grants

The Oireachtas Grants voted to Food Safety Authority of Ireland from Vote 38 Department of Health as shown in the financial statements consist of:

	Sub-head	2019	2018
		€'000	€'000
Grants for current expenditure	E.1.	15,972	15,779
Grant for capital expenditure	L.1.	385	
		16,357	15,779

3. Other income

	Sub-head	2019	2018
		€'000	€'000
Superannuation Deductions		232	240
Sale of Publications		82	146
Sundry Income		172	52
Albania CE Fund	14	565	
Total		1,051	438

4. Administration, operations & promotion

	Sub-head	2019	2018
		€'000	€'000
Remuneration and Other Pay Costs	4(a)	6,307	6,162
Rent, rates, service charges and insurance		1,483	1,447
Research costs		40	227
Legal and consulting fees	4(h)	103	133
IT, telephone and internet		985	945
Operating expenditure	4(g)	805	1,059
		9,723	9,973

(a) Remuneration and other pay costs

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Staff Salaries, basic pay	4,932	4,540
Staff salaries, overtime	3	7
Retirement benefit costs	96	96
Retirement lump sum costs	-	-
Employer's contributions to social welfare	479	436
Staff training and development	129	177
Staff travel and subsistence cost - national travel	82	79
Staff travel and subsistence cost - international travel	101	187
Temporary staff	418	577
Board members' emoluments	4(c) 67	62
	6,307	6,162

Certain costs of international travel are reimbursed by the host organisation.

The FSAI paid €54,518 (2018: €36,852) to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in respect of employee contributions under the single pension scheme.

With effect from 1 January 2019 the Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) replaced the Pension Related Deduction from staff salaries. €218,376 was paid to the Department of Health in respect of ASC in 2019.

(b) Employee benefits breakdown

Range of total employee benefits		Number of Employees	
From	To	2019	2018
60,000	69,999	9	5
70,000	79,999	9	5
80,000	89,999	3	5
90,000	99,999	5	3
100,000	109,999	4	4
110,000	119,999	2	2
120,000	129,999	0	0
130,000	139,999	0	1
140,000	149,999	0	0
150,000	159,999	1	0

Note: for the purposes of this disclosure, short term employee benefits in relation to services rendered during the reporting period include salary, overtime allowances and other payments made on behalf of the employee, but exclude employers PRSI.

(c) Board members' attendance, fees and expense

Board Member		Board Fee	Travel Expenses	Meetings Attended Board	Meetings Attended Audit and Risk
		€	€		
Martin Higgins	Chairperson	11,970	452	6 of 6	
Derek Cunningham	(Re-appointed June 2019)	7,695		6 of 6	
Margaret Moran		7,695		6 of 6	5 of 5
Ciaran Byrne		7,695	140	6 of 6	
Patrick Wall	(Term ended Feb 2019)			2 of 2	
Susan Quinn	(Term ended Oct 2019)		48	4 of 4	
Albert Flynn		7,695	611	5 of 6	
Mary Cullen		7,695		5 of 6	4 of 5
Ros O'Shea		7,695		5 of 6	5 of 5
Gerard McCurdy		4,754	216	4 of 4	
Clíodhna Foley-Nolan		1,843	498	2 of 2	
Francis Butler				3 of 4	
		64,737	1,965		

During 2019, six Board meetings were held. Susan Quinn and Patrick Wall's terms ended during 2019. Gerard McCurdy, Clíodhna Foley-Nolan and Francis Butler were appointed in the year.

Three Board members did not receive a Board fee under the One Person One Salary Principle (OPOS), as they are employed by other State organisations.

All travel and subsistence relates to domestic travel in Ireland.

The Audit and Risk Committee included one external member, Ray Dolan, who attended 4 of 5 meetings. Ray Dolan did not receive a fee under the OPOS principle.

(d) Chief Executive Officer salary

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Chief Executive Officer, Pamela Byrne	154	139
	154	139

The CEO remuneration package for 2019 was annual basic salary of €153,700 (2018: €139,003) with standard public sector arrangements.

The above salary values do not include the value of retirement benefits earned in the period. The key management personnel (excluding Board members) are members of the FSAI's contributory defined benefit pension scheme.

(e) Key management personnel compensation

Key management personnel in the Food Safety Authority of Ireland consist of the CEO, five Directors and members of the Board. Total compensation paid to key management personnel, including Board members' fees and expenses and total CEO remuneration amounted to €770,073 (2018: €630,708).

(f) Hospitality expenditure

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Staff hospitality	3	2
Advisory Committee hospitality	0	11
Client hospitality	50	48
Board hospitality	2	3
Total	55	64

In 2018 a voucher for €100 was given to members of the FSAI Scientific and Consultative committees, and subcommittees, who work on a voluntary basis. No vouchers were provided in 2019.

(g) Operating expenditure

	Note	2019	2018
		€'000	€'000
Recruitment Expenditure		28	27
Stationery and Postage		27	29
Cleaning and Catering		50	78
Repairs and Maintenance		196	146
Audit Fee		15	14
Food Legislation Compliance		114	161
Training - Official Agency Staff		16	124
Food supplement database		24	181
Committee Expenses		5	19
Library Supplies		76	91
General Expenditure (including hospitality)	4(f)	254	189
		805	1,059

(h) Consultancy costs

Consultancy Costs include fees paid to external parties providing advisory services of any nature.

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Legal (i)	24	17
Consultancy	79	116
Total consultancy costs	103	133
Legal costs capitalised		-
Consultancy costs capitalised		-
Consultancy costs charged to income and expenditure	103	133
Total	103	133

(i) This refers to general legal advice. No expenditure was incurred in the reporting period in relation to legal costs, settlements

and conciliation and arbitration proceedings relating to contracts with third parties.

5. Communication activities

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Public Relations	214	278
Industry Events	50	125
Industry Liaison	8	11
Publications	177	175
	449	589

Public relations includes expenditure of €35,000 on the Food Science Conference 2019.

6. Tangible fixed assets

	Motor Vehicles	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Office Furniture	Leasehold Improvements	Scientific Equipment	Total
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cost:							
At 1 January 2019		927	129	323	2,123	311	3,813
Additions	22	153	3	6			184
Disposals		(151)	(1)				(152)
At 31 December 2019	22	929	131	329	2,123	311	3,845
Accumulated Depreciation							
At 1 January 2019		737	73	108	637	285	1,840
Charge for the year	7	178	15	47	318	15	580
Depreciation on Disposals		(151)	(1)				(152)
At 31 December 2019	7	764	87	155	955	300	2,268
Net Book Value							
At 31 December 2019	15	165	44	174	1,168	11	1,577
At 31 December 2018		190	56	215	1,486	26	1,973

The 2019 additions include motor vehicles, computer equipment, office equipment and office furniture assets, relating to the Albanian project, for which FSAI is receiving the benefit. The total value of these assets is €36,655 (2018: €Nil). These assets will transfer to the Albanian equivalent of FSAI at the end of the project. See note 14 for further information in relation to the project.

(a) Intangible Fixed Assets

	2019 €'000	2018 €'000
1 January, Opening Net Book Value	19	57
Additions at Cost	149	4
Less Depreciation Charge for the year	(73)	(42)
31 December, Closing Net Book Value	95	19

Intangible fixed assets consist of software licences which are written off over their useful life.

7. Local Authority Veterinary Service (LAVS)

	2019 €'000	2018 €'000
LAVS Payments	6,205	6,248

Payments are made to 25 Local Authorities for the provision of veterinary services, quarterly in arrears. Funding is channelled through the Department of Health and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and is included as part of the annual determination. The obligation to transfer funding to LAVS is only triggered when corresponding funding is received from the Department of Health.

8. Capital Account

	2019 €'000	2019 €'000	2018 €'000	2018 €'000
At 1 January		1992		2,386
Transfer from/(to) Income and Expenditure and Retained Reserves				
Additional funds allocated to acquire	184		196	
Funded through operations				
Funds allocated to acquire Intangible Assets	149		4	
Amortisation in line with asset depreciation	(653)	(320)	(549)	(394)
Balance at 31 December		1,672		1,992

9. Receivables

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Prepayments	584	603
Debtors		6
	584	609

10. Payables

Amounts falling due within one year.

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Trade Creditors	203	696
Accruals	230	210
Deferred Rent Accrual *	1,095	1,155
Payroll Accruals	134	(27)
Deferred project income		
Tax Creditor - VAT	4	27
Tax Creditor - PAYE/PRSI	154	134
Tax Creditor - PSWT	23	40
	2,665	2,235

* Under the terms of the lease agreement there was a provision for a rent-free period of one year, which occurred in 2018. FRS 102 requires that this rent-free period be recognised over the lifetime of the lease. The Deferred Rent Accrual represents the balance of the rent-free period, which will be recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves in future years.

11. Operating Leases

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland commenced a 20 year lease for the first floor of the Exchange Building, George's Dock, IFSC, Dublin 1 in October 2017. The lease is

subject to rental reviews every 5 years and includes a rent-free year from 1 January 2018. In accordance with FRS 102 lease incentives are released over the life of the lease. The annual effective cost of the lease, excluding service charge, is €1,147,000.

At 31 December 2019 the FSAI had the following future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases

	2019
Lease obligations falling due:	€'000
Within 1 year	1,147
Between years 2 to 5	4,587
After 5 years	14,620

12. Contingent Liability

A prior year contingent liability has been provided for in the 2019 financial statements.

The FSAI is in receipt of appropriate advice and is in consultation with other State Bodies to mitigate the risk.

An amount of €150,000 has been recognised in the financial statements in respect of this matter. Further disclosure is not prudent as it could impact on the outcome.

13. Board Members' Interests

The Board adopted procedures in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of Expenditure and Reform in relation to the disclosures of interests by Board Members and these procedures have been adhered to in the year.

During the year one of the Board members provided Nutritional Risk Assessment training to staff of FSAI. The amount charged for this service was €1,400, which was paid during 2019. This is included under Key Management Personnel Compensation, Note 4(e). Other than the above, there were no transactions in the year in relation to the Board's activities in which a Board Member had a beneficial interest.

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland commenced a 20 year lease for the first floor of the Exchange Building, George's Dock, IFSC, Dublin 1 in October 2017. The lease is subject to rental reviews every 5 years and includes a rent-free year from 1 January 2018. In accordance with FRS 102 lease incentives are released over the life of the lease. The annual effective cost of the lease, excluding service charge, is €1,147,000.

14. External Projects - The Food Safety Project, Albania

A consortium of Irish government agencies and their international partners has successfully tendered for a €5m EU grant to support Albania as a candidate for accession to the European Union, by strengthening its food safety, veterinary and plant health standards.

The project covers the period 14 Jan 2019 to 13 Jan 2022.

The consortium is led by FSAI and includes the Department of Agriculture, Food and the

Marine, Sustainable Food Systems Ireland, the Finnish Food Authority, and an Albanian partner, Creative Business Solutions.

FSAI received €1.387 million in 2019 to deliver the first year of this project. The expenditure incurred in 2019 is set out in the table below.

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Remuneration and Other Pay Costs	138	-
Project travel- national	5	-
Project travel - international	53	-
International Expert Support*	269	-
Rent, rates, service charges and insurance	16	-
Industry events	27	-
Publications	43	-
Depreciation of project assets	11	-
Other	3	-
	565	-

* International Expert Support represents the input of personnel with experience in relevant disciplines that have been engaged to enable the successful delivery of the Albanian project. This includes areas such as phytosanitary, senior legislation, veterinary and organisational development experts that have been identified by the FSAI or the consortium partners.

15. Events after the reporting date

There are no events between the reporting date and the date of approval of these

financial statements for issue that require adjustment to the financial statements.

The Board recognises that the Covid-19 pandemic is a significant event which has occurred since the reporting date. The Board is taking the situation seriously and is monitoring the situation, in conjunction with management, on an ongoing basis. The business continues to operate with measures in place to protect staff. Staff are working remotely and services continue to be provided. To date, the operations and most of the entity's activities are being maintained while adjusting to the different way in which the business is being delivered.

As the FSAI is funded by moneys provided by the Exchequer, through the Department of Health, the Board considers it appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

16. Approval of Financial Statements

The Financial Statements were approved by the Board on 24 June 2020.



Food Safety Authority of Ireland

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