

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Dedicated to protecting
consumers' health and
consumers' interests

Our Mission

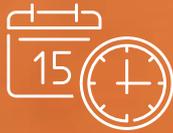
Our mission is to protect consumers' health and consumers' interests by ensuring that food consumed, distributed, marketed or produced in the State meets the highest standards of food safety and hygiene.

To the Minister for Health

The Board is pleased to submit to the Minister, its fourteenth annual report and accounts for the twelve-month period ended 31 December 2014, in accordance with Section 25 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998.



Prof. Michael Gibney
Chairman



24/7/365

The Authority maintains a 24/7/365 capability to manage incidents.

848



The number of queries received from official agency staff, handled by the Advice Line.



11

The Authority was notified by the Health Service Executive that they undertook 11 successful Prosecutions on food businesses in 2014.

81



In 2014, a total of 81 food samples were tested for irradiation by the Public Analyst Laboratories and only one (a food supplement) was found to have been irradiated and not labelled properly.

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2,946 

At the end of 2014, the Authority had 2,946 followers on Twitter.



1,196

The average number of queries per month handled by the Advice Line in 2014.

48,330 

The number of food businesses in Ireland inspected by the official agencies, under service contract to the Authority.



Chairman's Statement

During 2014, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland continued on an extensive programme of work to deliver on its ambition to protect consumers' health and interests in relation to food safety and hygiene. It is with pleasure that I present the Authority's Annual Report which details the scope of this activity, underpinned by the Authority's regulatory remit whilst aligned to its *Statement of Strategy 2012-2015*.

The Authority continued to place significant emphasis on ensuring the implementation and enforcement of food law to safeguard consumer health in relation to food. Some 48,330 food businesses were inspected in 2014 by staff in the official agencies, under service contract to the Authority. This robust inspection regime, in conjunction with the Authority's audit and monitoring programmes, seeks not only to check the robustness of the food chain, but to continue to highlight to the food industry, the legal onus for compliance with food law and adherence to the highest food safety standards in the best interests of their customers and business success.

Consumer confidence increased in 2014, in line with an upturn in the economic conditions prevailing in Ireland. This led to a growing interest from potential food entrepreneurs wishing to start their own businesses. To cater for this growing appetite for knowledge and support, the Authority initiated a programme of business start-up seminars which were held in various parts of the country. These seminars provided an important forum for the Authority's in-house experts, in partnership with colleagues in the Health Service Executive, to create understanding around the legal aspects of establishing a food business and how to comply with food safety legislation.



The new rules on the provision of food information to the consumer which came into effect in December 2014 represented one of the most substantial changes to the labelling laws for quite some time. Part of the changes now requires all food businesses to provide written allergen information for all foods and beverages they provide to consumers. The Authority provided the industry with significant support through information materials and direct advice to assist compliance with this new law which will have lasting benefit for consumers.

2014 also saw the culmination of a number of year's work that aimed to provide consumers with more meaningful information on the calorie content of the food they purchase in the food service sector. The Authority's free online calorie calculator MenuCal went live and became freely available to caterers, chefs, nutritionists and food businesses throughout the country to use as a tool to calculate the calorie content of their dishes which could then be displayed on their menus for consumers.

The Authority's science-based approach continued to underpin all deliberations and decisions during the year. There is no doubt that the global food chain and emerging risks will always be an area that will continue to require the best applied scientific thinking and evaluation to seek the more effective solutions to protect consumers. The Scientific Committee who give tirelessly of their expertise and time are to be commended and thanked for their meaningful contribution to the work of the Authority. Their work, in tandem with the Authority's in-house scientific experts and participation at EU level through pan-European forums, ensures that the Authority has leading-edge scientific knowledge on an ongoing basis, which enables the Authority to have a robust food safety surveillance and risk assessment programme in place.

The importance of the agri-food sector to the Irish economy cannot be understated. The value of the food and drink export sector alone has grown from €7.1 billion in 2005 to €10.5 billion in 2014 – a 48% increase. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's vision seeks to grow this to €12.6bn in 2020. A fundamental element to this continued success is confidence and trust in the food produced in Ireland. A critical part of securing that trust is demonstrating that a robust, effective, independent and science-based regulatory agency is in place. It is a reflection of the excellence of work carried out by the Authority over its 15 year existence, that it has secured an enviable reputation and profile both nationally and internationally for its highly effective operational structure, policies and work outputs. That reputation is a tribute to the staff of the Authority and our partners in the official agencies who work closely with us to provide a seamless food safety control inspectorate.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank the Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar, T.D., as well as the staff of his Department for their continued support of the Authority's work. We were delighted to welcome Minister Varadkar to our offices shortly after he took up his new Ministerial office in 2014. It reflected the keen interest the Minister has in our important public health role and the significance he places on the safety of the Irish food chain for all consumers both at home and abroad.

I would like to thank the members of the Scientific Committee and Sub-committees who, under the chairmanship of Prof. Albert Flynn, have continued to contribute to the scientific evidence-based work of the Authority. I am also grateful to the members of the Food Safety Consultative Council who provide direct knowledge of current industry and consumer issues in relation to food.

2014 was the last full year for our Chief Executive Officer, Prof. Alan Reilly who retires after six years in this role. On behalf of the Board, I would like to express our sincere gratitude and best wishes to Prof. Reilly. I am pleased to welcome Dr Pamela Byrne into this new role, and I am confident that under her leadership, the Authority will continue to be an exemplary regulatory agency that is held in such high regard nationally and internationally.

To the staff of the Authority, I would like to offer my sincerest thanks for their dedication and ongoing commitment to food control in Ireland. I would also like to acknowledge the sudden passing of Dr Iona Pratt, a treasured colleague of all staff of the Authority. She brought a wealth of experience in food toxicology and was forthright in ensuring the Authority took all necessary steps to ensure the integrity of our risk assessment work.

And finally, I wish to thank my fellow Board members for their continued support and commitment to the success of the Authority.



Prof. Michael Gibney
Chairman



Regulatory Review



The Authority is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of food legislation in Ireland. It carries out this enforcement function through service contracts with 33 official agencies and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 provides the legislative basis.



4 During 2014, the Authority continued a round of financial audits of the local authorities, with four audits and one follow-up review conducted.

The official agencies working under this service contract agreement in 2014 were: the Health Service Executive; the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; 28 local authorities; the National Standards Authority of Ireland; and the Marine Institute. 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 subject to the request of either the Authority or the official agency, may be reviewed during that time. Regular meetings were held with senior management in each agency and with the line managers responsible for the delivery of inspection and analysis. A particular focus of the meetings during 2014 was the preparation of the agencies for the enforcement of the legislation on Food Information for Consumers, Regulation (EC) No 1169/2011, which came into effect on 13th December 2014.

During the year, the service contract with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority was signed to run from 1st January 2014 to 31st December 2019. The contract includes the operation by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (with the Marine Institute) of the Shellfish Safety Monitoring Programme, to manage the safety of live bivalve molluscs harvested from Irish waters. Changes were made during the year to enhance the effectiveness and robustness of this programme.

The service contract with the Health Service Executive was due to expire at the end of 2014, and it was agreed with the Authority that the current contract would be extended by one year. During the period of the current contract, the Health Service Executive has implemented a new national data system and the longer period of the contract will permit more time to evaluate the operations of the current system of official controls undertaken by the agency and the data it reports to the Authority.

Schedule 1 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, which lists the food legislation to be enforced, was changed in September 2014 through an order (S.I. No. 390 of 2014) made by the Minister for Health under Section 5 of the Act. The new list of food legislation is being incorporated as required into Schedule 1 of the service contracts with the relevant official agencies.

The wider development of a shared provision of veterinary services within local authorities was discussed during the year within an inter-agency group established by the City and County Managers' Association. This should lead to more efficient and consistent service provision in the sector and more flexibility in staffing arrangements to cope when vacancies arise. The Authority participated with the City and County Managers' Association in the selection of lead authorities for the three regions through an open competition: Cork, Donegal and Louth were selected. In November, the City and County Managers' Association endorsed the implementation plan, including the proposed appointment of three Regional Chief Veterinary Officers to lead the veterinary service in each region.

The service contact activities of local authorities are financed directly by the Authority on submission of valid claims within set budgets. During 2014, the Authority continued a round of financial audits of the local authorities, with four audits and one follow-up review conducted, to strengthen the verification of the claims submitted. Recommendations from individual audits are used to advise other local authorities of good practices and improved financial controls to implement.

The Health Service Executive continues to provide chemical and microbiological laboratory analytical services under the terms of the service contract. The service is provided by three public analyst and six microbiological laboratories. In 2014, the chemical surveillance plan was agreed with the Health Service Executive. The Authority also provided scientific input into the Health Service Executive sampling of foods for analysis to detect food allergens, food irradiation, GMOs and to authenticate fish species. The results were published on the Authority's website and sent to the European Commission as required. A surveillance plan for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in smoked food was also agreed with all agencies.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine also provides considerable laboratory analytical services. In 2014, the Authority provided scientific input into the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's residue and pesticides testing programmes.

In common with all Member States of the EU, 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 parts of the plan and revised it for the period 2012-2016 in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, which is responsible for the non-food parts. The revised plan was published on the Authority's website.

Inspection of Food Businesses

Over 48,000 food businesses in Ireland are inspected by the official agencies, under service contract to the Authority. In 2014, about 92% of registered food businesses were inspected by the Health Service Executive; 5% by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; 2% by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and 1% by the local authorities. This distribution of percentage of food businesses inspected by the official agencies was similar over the last five years. There are a wide range of activities carried out by these food businesses, from importation and manufacturing, through to distributing, retailing and catering operations.

Number and Type of Food Businesses Inspected by Official Agencies, 2010 – 2014

Official Agency	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine					
Meat Processors	154	154	153	154	152
Egg Producers	285	376	354	369	401
Milk Processors	230	233	240	231	242
	669	763	747	754	795
Health Service Executive*					
Primary Producers	27	23	21	0	0
Manufacturers and Packers	1,921	2,253	2,534	2,956	3,139
Distributors and Transporters	1,370	1,487	1,472	1,162	1,270
Food Service Businesses	30,567	31,404	30,311	28,214	28,843
Retailers	10,732	11,166	10,978	10,972	11,259
Manufacturers Selling Primarily on a Retail Basis	1,738	724	695	0	0
Other				115	
	46,355	47,057	46,011	43,419	44,511
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority					
Approved Establishment	183	183	189	180	179
Aquaculture Sites**	86	0	0	0	0
Factory and Freezer Vessels (Approved - Irish)	23	23	34	36	45
Fishing Vessels	2,129	2,201	2,216	2,155	2,077
Ice Plants	13	12	12	12	10
Molluscan Production Areas	130	131	131	133	137
Registered Food Business on Land	45	56	81	75	89
	2,609	2,606	2,663	2,591	2,537
Local Authorities					
Slaughterhouses	219	212	206	202	205
Small Meat Manufacturing Plants	175	180	189	180	197
Poultry Plants	37	41	35	34	34
Other	20	17	26	24	51
	451	450	456	440	487
Total	50,093	50,853	49,877	47,204	48,330

* In 2013, the Health Service Executive introduced a new IT system for recording establishments and inspections which improved the reporting of its activities.

** Inspection of aquaculture sites transferred to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in 2010.

Staff Working in Official Control

The official agencies report annually to the Authority on the staff resources they have dedicated to official controls, under the service contracts. Recent years have seen a trend of a decrease in staff numbers as a result of the moratorium on public sector recruitment. The decrease has continued, with most agencies reporting reduced staff numbers in 2014 as per the previous year. The challenge is to ensure that effective official controls can continue to protect consumers' health and interests.

Number of Staff* By Official Agency, 2010 – 2014

Agency	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	% Change 2010-2014
Dept of Agriculture, Food and the Marine^a:						
Inspection Services	386	353	332	333	327	-15%
Laboratories	96	87	88	89	76 ^b	-21%
Health Service Executive:						
Environmental Health Service	361	333	344	307	305	-16%
Food Microbiology Laboratories	79	74	73	71	64	-19%
Public Analyst Laboratories	69	68	65	66	64	-7%
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	43	45	42	41	40	-7%
Local Authorities^a	72	72	71	73	68	-6%
Marine Institute	28	31	28	27	29	+4%
National Standards Authority of Ireland^c	0.1	0.1	0.1	1.1	1	+900%
Food Safety Authority of Ireland^d	75	74	72	71	68	-9%
Total	1,209	1,137	1,115	1,080	1,042	-14%

* Whole time equivalent

^a These figures do not include temporary veterinary inspectors engaged in meat inspection

^b Excludes the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory which did not provide data for 2014. In 2013, it reported 11.25 whole time equivalent staff working on food

^c The National Standards Authority of Ireland increased the number of staff engaged in food safety controls, to conduct official controls on food contact materials from 2012

^d Does not include consultancy staff or staff on short-term contract

Renewal of Service Contract with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

The Authority signed its third service contract with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority. The new contract runs from 2014 to 2019. Service contracts outline an agreed level and standard of food safety activity that the official agencies perform on behalf of the Authority. The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, under the service contract, is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of national and EU legislation that deals with the health conditions for the production and placing on the market of fish, shellfish and fisheries products. The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority carries out official controls along the seafood chain from primary production, up to, but excluding, retail stage. This includes fishing vessels, shellfish production areas and approved establishments handling and processing seafood.

Pictured at the renewal of the service contract are Dr Susan Steele, Chair, Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority and Professor Alan Reilly, Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.



Inspections

All official agencies operate risk-based programmes of official controls. Food businesses which carry out activities that present the greatest potential risk to human health are prioritised for inspection. Unannounced inspections in 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 has been a decline in recent years in the numbers of inspections, with an increasing focus on more thorough audits of food safety management systems in larger food businesses and of establishments presenting higher risks to public health. Most agencies reported higher inspection numbers in 2014 than the previous year, suggesting that the downward trend has ended.

Number of Inspections by Official Agencies, 2010 – 2014

Agency	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	% Change 2010-2014
Dept of Agriculture, Food and the Marine^a	13,169	11,495	10,830	9,547	10,202	-23%
Health Service Executive	41,966	37,973	36,584	33,971	35,053	-16%
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	2,521	2,330	2,386	2,114	2,821	+12%
Local Authorities^b	-	5156	4630	5,021	4,802	-7% ^b

^a Inspections in meat, milk and egg processors

^b Inspection activity before 2011 was recorded differently and the numbers are not comparable. The % change is for 2011-2014

Audits by the Authority

In 2014, the Authority carried out audits of official agencies to examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls and compliance with food law requirements. These audits also verify conformance with the terms and requirements of the service contracts and adherence by the official agencies to the Multi-Annual National Control Plan provisions relevant to their activities. The findings from the audits and any associated corrective actions are monitored by the Authority through the service contract monitoring process. The Authority's audit reports are published on the website.



The findings from the audits and any associated corrective actions are monitored by the Authority through the service contract monitoring process.



Official Control Audits

In 2014, the Authority carried out six external audits of official agencies to examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls. These audits also verify conformance with the terms and requirements of the service contracts and adherence by the official agencies to the Multi-Annual National Control Plan requirements relevant to their activities. The findings from the audits and any associated corrective actions are monitored by the Authority through the service contract monitoring process.

The European Commission is responsible for ensuring that European legislation on food safety, animal health, plant health and animal welfare is properly implemented and enforced. As a Commission service, the Food and Veterinary Office plays an important role in fulfilling this task through its audits, inspections and related activities. The Authority is subject to regular assessments of its work on food law enforcement by the European Commission. The Food and Veterinary Office carried out seven missions to Ireland to monitor the official controls. Two (on animal welfare during transport and bovine tuberculosis eradication programmes) were outside the Authority's remit and required little input from the Authority. Five missions fell within the remit of the Authority. Reports on each mission, together with the official response from the Authority and the official agencies, were published on the Commission's website.

35,053

The number of inspections on food premises by the Health Service Executive in 2014.



To address a recommendation from a 2013 EC Food and Veterinary Office audit, the Authority established a new working group with the official agencies (local authorities and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine) to produce guidance for the agencies on incorporating flexibility into the official controls. Flexibility is a key concept in the EU food hygiene package to permit a variety of ways that industry can comply with the requirements of the legislation; the challenge for inspectors is to ensure a consistent approach to it during enforcement. The group held three meetings during the year, examining specific instances with regard to structures, activities, and equipment, where flexibility can be applied.

In November 2014, the Food and Veterinary Office conducted a general review mission to follow up the implementation of the recommendations made in 26 previous specific missions, with the aim of updating the Food and Veterinary Office's country profile of Ireland. In total, progress on 220 recommendations, covering the food and non-food areas (feed, plant health, animal health and welfare) was examined. The Food and Veterinary Office concluded that most recommendations were closed out or in progress, with eight identified as still requiring action. These eight recommendations applied to controls on foods of animal origin and are being followed up by the Authority and the official agencies.

Audits of Food Businesses

As part of the Authority's audit function, targeted or focused audits are carried out to determine food business operators' compliance with respect to a specific aspect of food law. In 2014, the Authority completed an audit of food business operators to assess compliance with food additives legislation, e.g. nitrites, sulphites, phosphates and colourings in meat products/meat preparations.

During the audit, 16 food business operations were randomly selected to be visited. Of these, five were local authority supervised premises, four Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine supervised and seven by the Health Service Executive/Environmental Health Service. All food business operations audited were provided with an individual report a copy of which was forwarded to the relevant agency for follow-up where necessary. The audit verified how the businesses' food safety management system was used to control additives. Awareness of the legislative requirements on food additives and associated labelling requirements was in general good, but required improvement in some food businesses. Also the classification of products as either derogated or non-derogated also requires improvement. The need for improvements to recall and traceability systems to ensure they are commensurate with current operations were identified in some food businesses.

Food Safety Consultative Council Open Meeting on Food Addiction

The Authority's Food Safety Consultative Council hosted an open meeting to discuss the topic of food addiction and to explore the possibility of becoming addicted to certain food products. The event provided a platform for international and national experts to debate the attitudes and consumption patterns of consumers and whether food choices can lead to addictive behaviours.

Pictured are Dr Paula Mee, Paula Mee Practical Nutrition, Professor Julian Mercer, University of Aberdeen and Professor Mary Flynn, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.



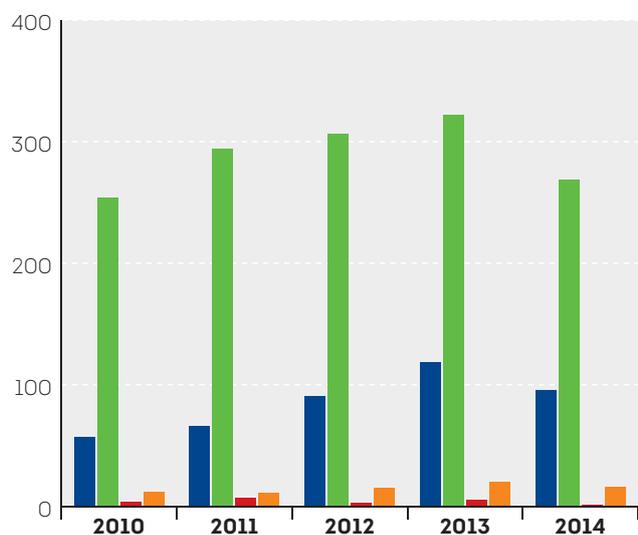
Enforcement Notices and Orders

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 is one of the pieces of legislation which gives authorised officers the power to inspect food businesses for compliance with food safety legislation. Under this Act, authorised officers may, if conditions present risks to public health, serve an Improvement Notice (requiring remedial work to be carried out); an Improvement Order (issued by the District Court as a result of non-compliance with an Improvement Notice); a Closure Order (closing a business down) or a Prohibition Order (placing restrictions or prohibitions on the use of food). The Health Service Executive has additional powers under the EC (Official Control of Foodstuffs) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 117 of 2010) to serve Closure Orders or Prohibition Orders for non-compliance with food legislation.

During 2014, 382 Enforcement Notices and Orders were served on food businesses. This is an 18% decrease on the number of notices and orders served in 2013, which is the first decrease in these enforcement actions since 2009. As with the trend in previous years, most were served by the Health Service Executive, which supervises the majority of food businesses in Ireland.

Enforcements Served, 2010 – 2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Closure Order	57	66	91	119	96
Improvement Notice	254	294	307	322	269
Improvement Order	4	7	3	5	1
Prohibition Order	12	11	15	20	16
Total	327	378	416	466	382



- Closure Order
- Improvement Notice
- Improvement Order
- Prohibition Order

Visit of Leo Varadkar T.D. Minister for Health to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland

One of the first ports of call for the new Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar, was the Food Safety Authority of Ireland on 30 July. The Minister's background as a medical doctor gives him a head start in understanding the importance of diet in public health and some of the key food safety challenges associated with the complexities of the global food chain. Issues discussed with the Minister were the role of the Authority in the enforcement of national food regulations and how official agencies work under the service contact programme of the Authority in ensuring that food produced and marketed in Ireland meets the highest standards of food safety and food hygiene. A priority for the Minister is tackling issues associated with obesity and the Authority can provide independent scientific advice to underpin policies and decisions in this area.

Pictured are the visit are Professor Mike Gibney, Chair of the Food Safety Authority Board, Leo Varadkar T.D. Minister for Health and Professor Alan Reilly, Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.



Enforcement measures under other food legislation are also taken by the official agencies; for example, compliance notices can be served which have the same effect as the enforcement measures under the Act or the Regulations.

In 2014, 96 Closure Orders were served. This is a 19% decrease on the number served in 2013 and the first decrease in these orders since 2007. Most Closure Orders are served in the service sector, which is expected as this is the largest category of food businesses.

Closure Orders Served, 2010 – 2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Service Sector	45	55	79	89	78
Retailers	9	7	9	19	10
Primary	1				
Manufacturer Selling Direct	1	1			1
Manufacturer /Packer	1	2	3	5	4
Distributors /Transporters		1		6	3
Total	57	66	91	119	96

Prosecutions

The Authority was notified of 11 successful prosecutions in 2014, all undertaken by the Health Service Executive, compared with 13 in the previous year. Most prosecutions were against food businesses in the service sector: four restaurants, three takeaways, two hotels and one public house. The remaining prosecution was of a distributor/transporter.

Provision of food hygiene training

Food businesses are responsible for ensuring that their staff are trained sufficiently in food safety and hygiene; additionally, the official agencies provide some training under the service contract with the Authority. In 2014, agencies reported the provision of 73 courses on food hygiene to 657 participants. Training is also required for the agencies' staff to ensure their continued competence: agencies reported provision of nearly 4,000 staff-days on training in 2014.

Monitoring

The Authority monitors the food chain for chemical and microbiological contaminants in order to protect public health and verify compliance with the food law. In 2014, the following monitoring reports were published on: verification of compliance with commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005, competent authority checks on irradiated foods, competent authority checks on GMOs in foods, results of official controls on fish speciation and results of salt survey of packet soups surveyed in 2014 and bread and snacks surveyed in 2013.

In addition, during 2014, the Authority developed a protocol for the Health Service Executive to enable them to survey the safety of ready-to-eat cakes, pastries and desserts with high-risk fillings. Testing of salt levels in ready meals and processed cheese was also carried out by the Authority in conjunction with Galway Public Analysts Laboratory. These studies allow the Authority to ensure that the food industry is meeting its obligations regarding the production of safe and healthier food.

2014 saw continued sampling and analysis for the 2nd National Total Diet Study along with the development of specifications for a more detailed analysis of fluoride intake from food which is being overseen by the Scientific Committee and will be reported separately.

Fish Speciation Monitoring

Every year the Authority coordinates the sampling and analysis of fishery products on sale through various outlets in Ireland. This work is carried out to ensure that consumers can have confidence that the species declared on the label or in associated advertisement material is actually contained in the product they purchase. Environmental Health Officers as well as officials from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority submit samples to the Public Analyst laboratory in Cork for DNA analysis. Samples are collected from restaurants, takeaways, retail outlets and fish processors on a random basis or from targeted businesses if specific information becomes available. Products labelled as cod or containing cod are primarily targeted in view of the results of previous surveys, but other fishery products are also sampled and analysed. In 2014, a total of 70 fishery products were sampled and all but two were labelled appropriately. One product sampled was labelled as "Fillet of cod" though it contained hake instead, while the other product was labelled as "Two square cod (battered)" and was found to contain smelt but not cod.

Development of Food Authenticity Analytical Methodologies

In 2014, the Authority, working with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority and the Marine Institute, explored a number of different analytical methodologies to determine if they could assist in identifying the geographical origin of mussel samples. The main techniques examined included stable isotope and trace element analyses as well as Fourier transform infra-red spectroscopy (FT-IR) which may be useful as a cost efficient screening tool. The initial results were very promising and the methodology was successful in differentiating mussels grown in two adjacent bays in the Cork area. Further development work is required on the use of the techniques individually and in combination as the ultimate goal is to validate the method(s) for possible use in a regulatory setting. Successful implementation would verify the growing area of mussel samples sent for biotoxin analysis.

Irradiated Food

The Authority is the competent authority for the enforcement of legislation governing irradiated food. It monitors the Irish market to ensure that only foods authorised for irradiation within the EU are on sale and that they are labelled correctly. In 2014, a total of 81 food samples were analysed by the Public Analyst Laboratories, and only one (a food supplement) was found to have been irradiated and not labelled appropriately. The results from Ireland are sent to the European Commission for incorporation into its annual report on food and food ingredients treated with ionising radiation, which is compiled for the whole of the European Union.

Food Tested for Evidence of Irradiation, 2014

Food Types Analysed	Number
Herbs/Spices/Seasonings	19
Cereals/Seeds/Fruit/Vegetables	7
Berries	8
Teas	8
Supplements	39
Total	81

Genetically Modified Food

The Authority is the competent authority for genetically modified food in Ireland. With the assistance of external scientific experts, the Authority reviewed applications for the approval of 12 genetically modified organisms for use as food and feed in the EU. These were: GM Maize x 2 (NK603, T25), GM cotton x 3 (T304-40, MON88913, LLcotton25xGHB614), Oilseed rape x 2 (GT73, MON88302), GM soyabean x 5 (MON87769, 305423, MON87705, BPS-CV127-9, MON 87708).

The conclusions of the Authority's reviews are relayed to the Department of Health, which is the competent authority for policy matters relating to genetically modified food.

The Authority also coordinated the sampling and analysis of 47 food samples by the Environmental Health Service of the Health Service Executive and the Public Analyst Laboratories respectively, for the authorised presence and appropriate labelling of genetically modified food ingredients. All samples analysed were found to be compliant with the relevant legislation.

Food Tested for Genetically Modified Ingredients, 2014

Food Types Analysed	Number
Maize/Maize Products	15
Soya/Soya Products	19
Rice/Rice Products	13
Total	47



The Authority monitors the Irish market to ensure that only foods authorised for irradiation within the EU are on sale and that they are labelled correctly.



2,166



The Authority received 2,166 notifications for food supplements in 2014, an increase of 28% on 2013 notifications and a 98% increase over 2012 notification numbers.

Novel Food

The Authority is the competent authority for novel food in Ireland and carries out safety assessments on novel foods or food ingredients and reviews those carried out by other Member States as part of the EU authorisation process. With the assistance of external scientific experts, the Authority conducted safety assessments on applications for the approval of six novel foods/ingredients in 2014 and sent the assessments reports to the European Commission for comment by other Member States. These were: EtroG-100, Milk Oligosaccharide 2'-FL, Milk Oligosaccharide (LNnT), Synthetic vitamin K, Orthosilicic acid-Vanillin complex and Krill oil.

The Authority also reviewed the safety assessments of six novel foods/ingredients carried out by other Member States and reverted to the Commission with comments. These were in respect of: ultra violet light treated bread, Phytosterol esters, DHA-rich oil from microalgae *Schizochytrium*, Sporopollenin Shells, Glavanoid extension of use and Tolerase.

Twelve applications were made to the Authority seeking opinion on the substantial equivalence of novel food ingredients compared to food ingredients already on the EU market. Following scientific assessment, the Authority provided substantial equivalence opinions on these applications in respect of: Chia seed X 8, Vitamin K, DHA rich oil, Astaxanthin and Inca Inchi oil.

Food Supplements, Food for Special Medical Purposes and Food for Particular Nutritional Use Notifications

Food legislation requires the food industry to notify the Authority when it is placing certain foods on the Irish market. The Authority maintains files on these notifications and in the case of food supplements, has an online notification process that populates a searchable database.

Work was started in 2014 to update the supplement notification database. In 2014, there were 13 foods for special groups (formerly PARNUTS) notifications and 269 food for special medical purposes notifications which in the latter case, is a 149% increase on 2013 notifications. Of these, 105 food notifications were assessed for safety and compliance using a risk-based selection criterion.

In addition, the Authority received 2,166 notifications for food supplements in 2014, an increase of 28% on 2013 notifications and a 98% increase over 2012 notification numbers. Of these, 1,728 have been checked for compliance with the supplements and nutrition and health claims legislation and 320 were found not to be supplements. Compliance continues to be a problem in this sector.

Food Contact Materials

The Authority is the competent authority for the enforcement of the legislation on food contact materials in businesses that manufacture, import, distribute and retail food packaging and other food contact materials. General rules exist at European level to control the use of all types of food packaging and there are also more specific laws on individual materials such as plastics or ceramics. The purpose of these regulations is to reduce the risk that the food packaging could release harmful substances into food. Inspections of Irish manufacturers and importers of food contact materials are done by the National Standards Authority of Ireland. The inspections of food businesses that use food contact materials are undertaken by the other official agencies operating under service contract to the Authority; these inspections include controls on the safe use of food contact materials.

The Authority provides on request, the provision of export certificates for food contact materials and in 2014, three certificates were issued.



Incident Management

The Authority is the national central control point for information and communication relating to food incidents and food alerts, and provides 24/7 emergency cover. The Authority is also the Irish contact point for the European Commission's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed.

494 

In 2014, the Authority handled 494 food incidents, which was an increase of 10% compared with 2013.

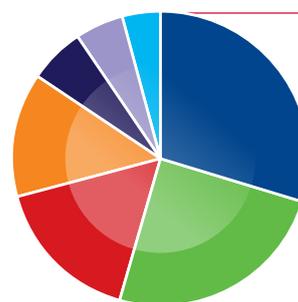
Food Incidents

A food incident may arise from a problem identified by a food business, by an official agency in the course of official controls, or from information received from other countries, usually through the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed.

In 2014, the Authority handled 494 food incidents, which was an increase of 10% compared with 2013 (n=449). The incidents were categorised as full food incidents, minor food incidents, cross-country food complaints and food fraud.

The Authority investigated 245 full food incidents (including 21 food fraud incidents) in 2014, a marked increase of 28 (13%), as compared to 2013. There was a total number of 271 hazards identified for the 245 incidents. Chemical hazards were most frequently identified (81); followed by other hazards (67); microbiological hazards (44); allergens (37); other biological hazards including mycotoxins (17); labelling (14) and foreign bodies (11). Twenty-three incidents had more than one associated hazard.

The 81 chemical hazards were as a result of composition/additives (44); pesticides/residues of veterinary medicines (13); migration from food contact materials (10); heavy metals (7); bio-contamination (4) and industrial contamination (3).



Hazard Categorisation of Full Food Incidents, 2014 (Total 271)

Chemical	81
Other	67
Microbiological	44
Allergen	37
Other Biological	17
Labelling	14
Foreign Body	11

The Authority operates to documented protocols involving partner organisations for the management of incidents, food crises and for the investigation of food outbreaks. The protocol for food crises was updated in 2014 and the Authority contributed largely to the development of such protocols on a European level.

A total of 160 minor incidents were investigated by the Authority in 2014. This was an increase of 19 (13.5%), as compared with 2013. The number of minor incidents in 2014 is consistent with previous years. In addition, the Authority managed 87 cross-country food complaints compared with 91 in 2013.

There were 44 countries of origin associated with the 494 incidents and 367 of these were European Union Member States. Ireland was the country of origin in 42.1% (208) of the incidents, followed by the United Kingdom 12.3% (61), Northern Ireland 5.3% (26), United States 4.7% (23); China 3.4% (17); France 2.6% (13) and Poland 2.4% (12).

3,157

A total of 3,157 original notifications were published on the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed.

Number of Food Incidents 2010-2014

Year	Full Incidents	Minor Incidents	Cross-Country Complaints	Food Fraud	Full Incident/Food Fraud	Minor Incident/Food Fraud	Supplement Notification Follow-up	Total
2014	224	160	87	19	1	1	2	494
2013	208	141	91	5	3	1	-	449
2012	162	167	75	-	-	-	-	404
2011	147	170	79	-	-	-	-	396
2010	130	165	60	-	-	-	-	355

National Food Alerts

Food incidents often result in the withdrawal or recall of foods which prompts the need to inform consumers, retailers and distributors. For this purpose, the Authority published 44 alerts during 2014 comprising 18 food alerts (five for action and 13 for information) and 26 food allergen alerts. A notable feature of this practice is that the allergen alerts continue to outpace the food alerts, indicating a growing awareness amongst producers of the need to be mindful of the population groups for whom allergens are a serious risk to health. Eight of these food alerts related to microbiological spoilage or possible presence of pathogenic organisms and under-processing. The remaining alerts related to chemical contamination including migration (6); the presence of foreign bodies (2) and mycotoxins (2).

Four of the recalls related to bottled water due to the presence of chemical residues and particulate matter and two recalls related to raw milk cheeses due to the presence of pathogenic microorganisms in 2014.

All food alerts were published on the Authority's website and text messages and email notifications were issued to subscribers.

In addition, the Authority published 26 food allergen alerts in 2014, twice the number issued in 2013. Twenty one of these related to undeclared allergens on the labelling, while five related to inconsistent/incorrect labelling. These products contained a range of allergens, sometimes more than one, including milk, wheat, gluten, soy, celery and sulphites, none of which were declared in the list of ingredients. Of particular concern is the high number of allergen alerts relating to the presence of allergens in products labelled and marketed as 'free from' e.g. milk protein in a 'no dairy' dessert and in 'dairy free' chocolate; wheat (gluten) in a 'gluten free' kebabs and corn flour and milk and soya in 'free from' biscuits. Food allergen alerts are not categorised. All food allergen alerts were published on the Authority's website. Text messages and email notifications were issued to online subscribers and Anaphylaxis Ireland was also informed.

Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed

The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed is a notification system managed by the European Commission to exchange information between members of the network including Member States, the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority on hazards identified in food, feed and food contact materials.

As the national contact point for the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, the Authority monitored the 3,157 original notifications published on the system in 2014, of which 751 were classified as alerts: 410 as information for follow-up; 623 as information for attention and 1,373 as border rejections. Forty one news items were circulated internally to members of the system. These original notifications gave rise to 5,910 follow-up notifications. Forty two of these original notifications were issued by the Authority. Of these 42 notifications, eight related to products originating in Ireland. Thirty four were for food; three for feed and five for food contact materials that were distributed to or from Ireland. In addition, the Authority responded with 130 follow-up notifications. One hundred and seventeen Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed notifications involved foods distributed to Ireland. The Authority maintains a 24/7/365 capability to manage incidents and operates in close cooperation with colleagues in other Member States and in Belfast and London.



Business Start-up Seminars Launch

Despite the economic downturn, there has been a 5% increase in the number of food businesses established in Ireland over the last five years, currently standing at over 48,000. Queries to the Authority's Advice Line service suggest a strong level of interest among people pursuing new food business ideas with 1,278 business start-up queries in 2014 - the majority of these coming from people wishing to start a food business from home.

To assist those working in small food businesses or those who are thinking of setting up a food business, the Authority launched a series of free 'Small Food Business Start-Up Seminars' with the aim of making it easier for new food businesses to get up and running and helping them to comply with all the relevant food safety requirements.

Pictured at the launch of the 'Small Food Business Start-up Seminars' are Ellen Kenny, Angelina Ryder and Jack Porter.

Risk Assessment

The Authority conducts scientific risk assessments on the identified hazards found in food as the basis for risk management decisions. This supports food control activities to ensure that actions are based on science. The Authority provides ad-hoc risk assessments to support incident management.

The Authority conducted 170 risk assessments in 2014. These were in the areas of: pesticide residues, veterinary drug residues, additives/contaminants/contact materials, microbiological safety, processing technology, food allergens, irradiated food and public health nutrition.

Foodborne Disease Outbreaks

When an outbreak occurs in which food is suspected to be a vehicle of transmission, the Authority works closely with the official agencies and the Health Protection Surveillance Centre, the Irish agency involved in the surveillance and epidemiological investigation of infectious diseases. Provisional data from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre indicate that in 2014, food was reported as the suspected cause of eight outbreaks of gastroenteritis (infectious intestinal disease): two salmonellosis outbreaks; two outbreaks of verocytotoxigenic *Escherichia coli* (VTEC) infection; three outbreak of acute infectious gastroenteritis and one outbreak of campylobacteriosis. In these eight outbreaks, 37 people became ill and three were hospitalised.

Food Crime Investigation

The Authority conducted special investigations in conjunction with competent authorities where serious breaches of food law or food fraud were detected. Investigations are designed to determine the nature and extent of non-compliance with food law and/or related food fraud. Outcomes of the investigations resulted in enforcement actions and criminal proceedings being taken against offenders.

In 2014, the Authority was involved in the investigation of 21 food fraud cases and work was also undertaken on three cases which carried forward from 2013. In addition, four other food incidents which had a fraud component, were investigated. The cases were varied in nature and included: soft drinks recoding and re-dating, the operation of unapproved meat establishments, sale and supply of counterfeit alcohol, re-dating of canned beer, mis-description of meat products (halal, lamb), shellfish placed on the market causing illness, stolen animals and illegally slaughtered animals.



The National Food Fraud Task Force, chaired by the Authority, consists of representatives from An Garda Síochána, the Health Products Regulatory Authority, the Health Service Executive, the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, local authorities, Food Standards Agency Northern in Ireland and the Revenue and Customs Service. The committee met twice in 2014 and it acts as a communications, coordination and networking group where intelligence and research are shared at national and international level.

Topics discussed by the Task Force included raising awareness of food fraud and improving mechanisms for monitoring, surveillance and training of enforcement officers. An information leaflet was developed on food fraud for enforcement officers such as Gardaí and customs officials who may not be primarily working with food. The task force has helped forge links between the various stakeholders, most of whom have worked with the Authority in food fraud investigations carried out in 2014.

Operation OPSON – Europol and Interpol

Operation OPSON, led jointly by Europol and Interpol, has in the last three years, grown from a European-based operation to encompass more than 50 countries across Asia, Africa, and North and South America. Its aim is to stamp out the production and sale of counterfeit 'protected food name' products, such as Cheddar or Champagne, to an international project routinely seizing hundreds of tons of fake and substandard food. As well as protecting the economic livelihood of genuine food producers, it is also tackling the very serious issue of public health and safety. In 2014, the Authority, in collaboration with control partners in the Gardaí, Customs and Revenue Service and official agencies, participated in Operation OPSON activities, code named OPSON IV. The Authority will report on the success of the operation which was coordinated and supported by Europol.



Science

Key to the work of the Authority is the identification and accurate assessment of risks associated with the food chain. Strengthening collaboration with official agencies in the employment of both a risk-based and evidence-based approach to the enforcement of food law is also important.

1,350  

By the end of 2014, there were 1,350 registered users of the Authority's web-based tool, MenuCal.

During 2014, the Authority provided the scientific evidence-base that underpinned advice to Ministers on the development of food safety policy, public health nutrition policy and associated legislation. The Authority also consulted with and availed of advice from the European Food Safety Authority.

The Scientific Committee is the statutory science body appointed by the Minister for Health to advise the Authority on scientific matters and food safety, nutrition and organisation of enforcement activities. One meeting was held in 2014 to progress opinions generated by the three standing sub-committees (Biological Safety, Chemical Safety and Public Health Nutrition) and the one ad-hoc sub-committee working on an Official Food Controls Review. There were nine meetings of these sub-committees along with many meetings of working groups set up under each sub-committee to progress specific scientific opinions.

One opinion of the Scientific Committee on microbiological criteria was published as an annex to *Guidance Note No. 27 on the Enforcement of Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on Microbiological Criteria for Foodstuffs*. Five draft opinions were progressed for further development in 2015.

Public Health Nutrition

The Authority provides advice to Government on issues of food safety and nutrition. During 2014, the Authority attended and contributed to four of the Department of Health's Special Action Group on Obesity meetings. Two documents from this working group were reviewed by the Authority. Technical and scientific support for the promotion of food-based healthy eating and infant feeding guidance continued to be provided to health and food sectors throughout 2014.

The Authority supported the Government's policy of supplementing all infants with vitamin D by assessing the suitability of vitamin D supplement products and advising the Health Service Executive. Many queries in relation to this were responded to, some of which involved full risk assessment of products on the market and enforcement action. The Authority attended and contributed to five meetings regarding the Health Service Executive Vitamin D supplementation programme.

The Authority also attended three meetings with Healthy Food for All and carried out a five year follow-up assessment of the affordability of healthy eating in Ireland which was presented and published in the peer reviewed literature. The Authority attended four meetings with the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute and presented on various public health nutritional issues.



MenuCal Launch

The Authority unveiled 'MenuCal' - a new online calorie calculator that the Authority made available to Ireland's 22,000 food service businesses free-of-charge to enable them to calculate the calorie values in the food they sell and serve to customers. The online tool, which was launched by Dr James Reilly, T.D., Minister for Health, was developed to address the food industry's concern about the lack of the expertise and resources to accurately calculate calories for display on menus and the associated costs involved. In response, the Authority brought together a team of nutritionists, computer scientists and food business trainers to create a bespoke, easy-to-use solution for the Irish market that would act as a resource to assist chefs and cooks identify calorie values, taking account of types and quantities of ingredients used, method of preparation and portion size. MenuCal is considered a first of its kind in Europe.

Pictured at the launch of MenuCal are Dr James Reilly, T.D. Minister for Health, Professor Mary Flynn, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Noel Marrey, Chef with the Moriarty Hotel Group.

Calories on Menu

The Authority's web-based tool, MenuCal, was launched by the Minister for Health in 2014. MenuCal is an innovative calorie calculator that guides food service personnel who have no nutrition background, through all stages of calorie menu labelling. The launch received significant media coverage. By the end of 2014, there were 1,350 registered users of MenuCal, most of whom were food businesses (39%), just under a quarter of users were consumers, highlighting the strong consumer interest in the calorific content of foods they consume, most of remaining users were researchers and students.

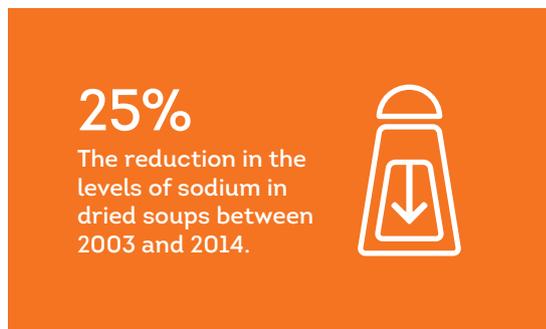
MenuCal is specifically developed for use in Ireland. It is available to use free of charge at www.menucal.ie. MenuCal has been developed with complex advanced features including a 'fat wizard' to estimate uptake of fat when frying, including when using batter/crumb coatings. MenuCal was developed by a multidisciplinary team. This work involved over 60 internal meetings, 16 external meetings and three stages of formal testing by food service personnel to ensure the tool the Authority developed was fit for purpose.

E-learning and video training packages were developed in conjunction with the Authority's training section. The excellence of this support material developed by the Authority was recognised externally when MenuCal was shortlisted for the Eircom 2014 Spider awards ('e-Learning and Education' category) and in the Web Awards, 2014 (Government and local Government category).

The Authority's staff has also worked closely with the Cherry Orchard Hospital staff and visitor canteen to support a calorie labelling initiative using MenuCal. Since December 2014, calories are displayed in accordance with best practice for all menu items offered in the staff and visitor canteen at Cherry Orchard. This work is a pilot site for the implementation of calorie menu labelling for staff and visitor food outlets throughout the Health Service Executive.

The Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland recognised the value of the MenuCal system and is negotiating purchase of the software. The Authority is working closely with the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland making the calorie menu labelling public health initiative an all-Ireland project, benefiting consumers and businesses across both jurisdictions.

Further development of MenuCal to include allergen labelling capability is on-going.



Salt Reduction Programme

In order to ensure that the food industry is meeting its obligations regarding production of safe and healthier food, studies into the sodium and potassium levels in ready-meals and soups were carried out by the Authority in conjunction with Galway Public Analysts Laboratory. The Authority published results for the period September 2003 to end December 2014.

In relation to the soups category, there were significant reductions in levels of sodium in dried and fresh soups -25% and 12% respectively, since 2004. In the ready-meals category, significant reductions of 26% and 22% in the sodium content of pasta and curry dishes respectively, were identified over the period between 2004 and 2014.

A new product line 'Pizza' was added to the ready-meals category for sampling purposes during 2014 and 45 samples of both frozen and chilled pizza were tested for sodium and potassium content. Mean sodium and potassium levels across the 45 pizza samples will be used as baseline values the next time pizza products are surveyed. There was no significant difference between levels of sodium and potassium in chilled or frozen pizza.

The Authority met with Food and Drink Industry Ireland to monitor progress on the salt reduction programme which is now being managed under the Livewell initiative.

Scientific Participation on Expert Working Groups

The Authority consults with Member States to ensure that legislation is workable, based on sound science and achieves the objectives for which they were conceived. The Authority provided technical input to a wide range of European Commission working groups, e.g. the Codex Alimentarius Commission. During 2014, the Authority acted as the head of Irish delegations and provided technical input into six of the Codex Alimentarius Commission committees: food hygiene, food additives, food contaminants, food labelling, food import and export and dietetic foods. In addition, more detailed technical input was provided through physical and electronic working groups meeting under the auspices of the main committees, e.g. low moisture food safety, HACCP re-evaluation. Over 90 working group and expert working group meetings were attended by Authority staff.

The Authority also supported the Food and Agriculture Organization in its project to facilitate the creation of a food safety agency in Bangladesh. The Authority provided advice on the creation of a risk-assessment function within the new agency at a Food and Agriculture Organization sponsored workshop and a report on the matter was sent to the project co-ordinator.

The Authority helped to finalise the outputs of the Food and Agriculture Organization/World Health Organization expert consultation on statistical considerations in Microbiological sampling. Two draft reports were reviewed and comments provided. As Chair of the group, the Authority signed off on the final version of the report. This report is due for publication by the World Health Organization/Food and Agriculture Organization in early 2015.



The Authority consults with Member States to ensure that legislation is workable, based on sound science and achieves the objectives for which they were conceived.



Scientific Support for Government Departments

The Authority provides expert support to the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine during discussions and negotiations on food related legislation and policy in the European Commission and the European Council.

The Authority contributes reliable, independent advice to the Government for the development of food safety and nutrition policy through the work of its Scientific Committee and through the Authority's participation on obesity and nutrition related Government working groups.

Scientific Collaboration with the European Food Safety Authority

The Authority has developed strong links with the European Food Safety Authority and acts as the National Focal Point. In this capacity, the Authority is involved in two way dissemination of information and data pertaining to risk assessment. An annual report on the activities of the Irish focal point was provided to the European Food Safety Authority. A Focal Point questionnaire for the European Food Safety Authority was also completed by the Authority.

The Authority contributes to the development of European risk assessments by participating in taskforces, network meetings and advisory forum meetings of the European Food Safety Authority.

The Authority also represents Ireland on the European Food Safety Authority's Advisory Forum, which is the European Food Safety Authority's main point of contact with the food safety agencies in the Member States. The Authority participated in four meetings of the Advisory Forum, including one in which the operation of the group was reviewed. The European Food Safety Authority also hosts a number of specific expert meetings and the Authority attended 11 of these in 2014.



Communication and Information

The Authority is committed to actively communicating with and providing 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 they may have. The Authority's two-way communication is facilitated by its Advice Line, website, library, facebook page, Twitter page, YouTube channel and extranet.



14,348 

Trained advisors on the Advice Line, supported by food scientists, dealt with 14,348 queries in 2014, an average monthly total of 1,196.

Advice Line

Trained advisors on the Advice Line, supported by food scientists, dealt with 14,348 queries in 2014, an average monthly total of 1,196. This represented an 8% increase from 2013. The Advice Line, which operates Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, is a valuable source of food safety information and is used by, amongst others, the food industry, people thinking of starting up a new food business, members of the public and enforcement officers.

Of the 14,348 queries received in 2014, 11,604 involved requests for advice across a range of food-related areas (Fig 1), an increase of 11% from 2013, while 2,738 related specifically to complaints by consumers about food and food premises (down 4% on 2013).

The majority of the calls to the Advice Line were seeking advice on food labelling, with labelling information requests up 100% on the previous year. The increased activity coincides with the introduction of new laws requiring the labelling of specific allergens on all loose food. Other key areas of advice sought included information on new business start-ups, training, standards and legislation, as well as requests for the Authority's publications. In addition, 848 queries were received from official agency staff (Fig 2).

Similar to the last few years, of the total requests to the Advice Line in 2014, approximately 60% were received by telephone and 30% were received by email. The remainder resulted from the website, walk-ins, attendance at exhibitions, staff requests and through the Authority's facebook and Twitter pages.

The most frequent requesters were caterers (32%) (Fig 2), many of whom had business start-up queries and questions about new allergen labelling requirements. Consumers (24% of all calls) contacted the Advice Line with complaints about food and food premises (see Table 1). Complaints received were followed up and investigated by environmental health officers throughout the country, or other enforcement officers, as appropriate.

The majority of queries from manufacturers and processors were on the new Food Information to Consumers legislation and the Authority's service contract personnel also had questions on new labelling requirements.

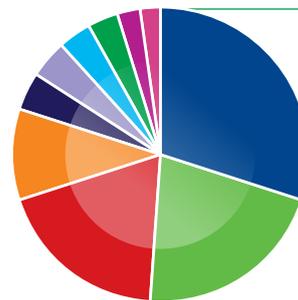


Figure 1: Category of Query (Top 10), 2014

Information Request	3,926
Complaints	2,738
Labelling	2,463
Business Set-up	1,291
Training	560
Standards	542
Legislation	478
Other	425
Allergy	323
Nutrition	271

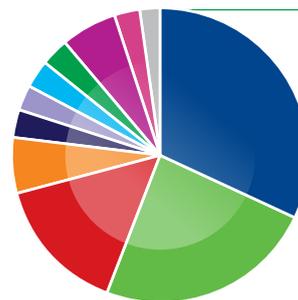


Figure 2: Category of Caller (Top 10), 2014

Caterer	32%
Consumer	24%
Manufacturer/Processor	15%
Service Contract Personnel	6%
Distributor	3%
Consultant	3%
Student/Researcher	3%
Retailer/Wholesaler	3%
Other	6%
Health Professional	3%
Education	2%

Table 1: Category of Complaints Received, 2014

Complaint Type	Number
Unfit food	1,199
Hygiene standards	566
Suspect food poisoning	529
Labelling	175



Advice Line Statistics

The number of queries and food-related complaints handled by the Authority's Advice Line increased by 8% in 2014, as compared with the previous year. Of the 14,348 queries and complaints, 2,738 related to complaints by consumers about food and food premises, while 11,604 included requests for advice from food businesses across a range of food related areas.

Calls to the Authority's Advice Line seeking advice showed a dramatic increase in requests for information on food labelling, coinciding with the introduction of new laws requiring the labelling of specific allergens on all loose food. Other key areas of advice sought included information on new business start-ups, training, standards and legislation, as well as requests for FSAI publications.

Picture at the launch of the Advice Line figures for 2014 is Edel Smyth, Information Manager, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

Website

The authority's website is a comprehensive source of information on all aspects of food safety and related guidance and legislation. In 2014, there were 785,485 visits to the website with a total of 2,101,712 page views (an increase of over 15% on 2013). 51% of visitors were from Ireland; 15% were from the UK and 8% from the USA which shows the international appeal of the information content that the Authority provides. The peak for the year was on Monday Oct 6th with 9,174 visits recorded on that day. The home page, food business section (HACCP and starting a new food business), publications and FAQ sections were popular on the site.

All of the Authority's publications are available to download on the website. Also, consumers who wish to make a complaint about a food or a food premises, can fill out an online 'make a complaint' form.

Other Resources

The extranet site, *Safety Net*, is a communication tool between the Authority and staff of the official agencies. This online resource allows for the sharing of internal documentation such as staff contact details, standard operating procedures and publications. In 2014, *Safety Net* recorded 14,061 visits to the site. The home page was the most frequently visited, followed by the contacts section and shared files.

During 2014, the Authority's library continued to develop its collection of resources of books, journals and online databases. The library is primarily a resource for staff of the Authority, consisting of a physical space housing print books, journals and newspapers. It also provides inter-library loans and a search facility for specific topics for research, videoconferencing facilities and study spaces. Staff working in the official agencies can also borrow books, avail of the journal updates and request articles.

Publications

New publications in 2014, all of which are available from the website, included: a guide to good hygiene practice for Country Markets Limited, guidance on food allergen information for non-prepacked foods in Ireland, information on nutrition and health claims, advice on hunting and processing of wild game for human consumption and a factsheet on food contact materials. Guidance was also published on starting a food business in the home.

Media Relations

The extraordinary interest in food matters means that a day does not pass without some comment in the media about food. The Authority's press office dealt with approximately 393 queries from the media and 26 press releases were issued. Press releases were issued on areas including: the authenticity of beef and lamb products, Enforcement Orders, the Authority's new online calorie calculator 'MenuCal', the recall of batches frozen Irish-cooked mussel meat and the number of queries and food-related complaints handled by the Authority's Advice Line.

The Authority's staff were regularly invited to speak on national and local radio and on occasions, the Authority was represented on national TV. The Authority continued its engagement with stakeholders through the social media sites facebook and Twitter, with an increase in the number of followers to 2,946 and 2,644 respectively.

785,485



In 2014, there were 785,485 visits to the website with a total of 2,101,712 page views. This was an increase of over 15% on 2013.

Training and E-Learning

Training is an important means of communicating food safety messages. The Authority's objectives for training are to provide relevant training for official agency staff on food control to reinforce enforcement activities and also to assist the food industry to understand and comply with the legal and technical requirements of food law. In 2014, as in past years, the Authority provided training on food control for official agency staff and for people working in the food industry. Training on food safety, food legislation and food controls serves to improve the effectiveness of food business operators in providing safe food and food inspectorates in ensuring compliance and safety.

The Authority's learning management system for staff in the official agencies, SafetyNet Learning, was further developed. The online learning management system continues to support the professional development of both the Authority's staff and in the official agencies. It provides people with a variety of learning resources such as e-learning courses, factsheets, videos and other digital resources. The online materials can be used to get up-to-date information on a topic relevant to a particular work area, refresh on a topic that was covered at recent training, or in some cases, just to broaden the knowledge base of a particular subject.

Two interactive training modules were developed to help enforcement officers understand the law with respect to food labelling. E-learning Labelling Modules 2 and 3 on General Labelling and Nutrition Information were completed by almost 500 environmental health officers. These modules were also added to the online learning resource section on the Authority's website to allow food businesses to access and complete them.

A webinar on the new requirements for declaring allergen information on loose foods was hosted for 100 environmental health officers in December.

The Authority is represented on the European Union Expert Group on Better Training for Safer Food and coordinates participation for official agency staff on training programmes run by the European Commission. During 2014, there was a significant increase in the number of European Union Better Training for Safer

Food courses being delivered. Staff from the official agencies took part in training courses on a variety of food control issues. More than 220 staff from the food control services in Ireland participated in Better Training for Safer Food training programmes in 2014.

A training aid for food businesses, 'Food Safety Level 1 Training Cards' was developed with an explanation sheet as training aid for food businesses. These cards were designed for use as the basis of a training programme, as a recap at the end of a course or as a refresher training exercise.

The well-established *Food Safety and You* training programme, which is aimed at managers or trainers working in the food industry, continued in 2014.

Seminars

In 2014, the Authority continued its programme of engagement with small food businesses and those thinking of setting up a small food business and hosted a number of small food business start-up seminars. These seminars aimed to demystify food safety and hygiene requirements for entrepreneurs wishing to start a food business. The Authority held small food business start-up events in Cork, Galway and Dublin. Over 100 people attended each event.

The Authority also hosted seven 'Breakfast Bites' seminars on the following topics: food labelling; how to manage food safety; what to expect from an inspector; how to develop a new food product; nutrition and health claims and allergen labelling on non-prepacked food.

The Authority continued its partnership with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation at the 'One Stop Shop' events in Limerick, Galway, Cork and Dublin aimed to help small and start-up businesses to understand and benefit from the services provided by State regulatory agencies. Other events in which the Authority participated during 2014, include the *Hospitality Expo* held at the RDS and the *Who to talk to Expo* which was held in Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

The Authority hosted a seminar in February for all the Irish National Reference Laboratories and official laboratories involved in microbiological testing of foods as part of official controls. These laboratories are appointed under Regulation (EC) 882/2004 on official controls. This includes laboratories from the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine, the Health Service Executive, the Marine Institute and Cork County Council. This is the only forum in which the official food laboratories meet as a group and such seminars enhance the cooperation and coordination between the laboratories and the Authority in discharging their legal obligations.

Industry Fora

The food industry is primarily responsible for the safety of food on the Irish market and the Authority's role is one of oversight and enforcement and consequently, the Authority engages with the industry to encourage compliance and make food businesses aware of their responsibilities. The Authority continued to engage with the food industry on many levels to reinforce the need for the sector to take responsibility for producing and marketing safe food and to improve standards of food safety and hygiene.

To this end, the Authority hosted a number of meetings with its four industry fora. These provide certain sectors of the food industry with a platform to raise pertinent issues and gain important information from the Authority.

Artisan Food Producers' Forum

The Artisan Food Producer's Forum brings together a diverse group of specialist food producers and provides them with an opportunity to discuss with the Authority, food safety issues concerning the artisan food sector. The Forum is a vehicle for the authorities and the producers to come to a mutual understanding of each other's role in the provision of quality food that is safe for the consumer. It creates a network of contacts that are used outside of formal meetings to resolve problems arising in the sector regarding enforcement of food law. In addition, the Forum allows for discussion on new legislative proposals and their possible impacts on artisans. It is a valuable resource for the artisan food producers and the authorities, and it helps everyone involved to approach consumer protection with regard to facilitating the production of the diversity of artisan food.

In 2014, the Forum members met twice and discussed a wide range of topics, including: raw milk, small slaughter of poultry; labelling; food marketing terms and control of *Campylobacter*. The meetings were also attended by Teagasc who provided information on PCR testing for VTEC in raw milk cheese and updates on training. The Taste Council is also represented as it is actively involved in promoting artisan food production through its advisory role with Bord Bia.

Retail Forum

The Retail Forum includes members from the main supermarkets and the major symbol groups. The Forum met three times in 2014. The Forum serves as a useful mechanism to increase understanding of food legislation, disseminate food safety advice and share best practice. During 2014, members were briefed on a wide range of topics, including: *Campylobacter* control in the poultry food chain, the Regulation on Food Information for Consumers: allergen labelling of non-prepackaged foods; labelling of 'gluten-free' foods; front of pack labelling, e.g. traffic lights; the EU Food and Veterinary Office mission on HACCP-based procedures; revision of the Official Controls Regulation; food donation; egg storage; outbreak investigations (in particular, the power of supermarket loyalty systems data in identifying possible sources of foodborne outbreaks); and revision of the Quality and Qualification Ireland food safety awards. The Retail Forum also discussed potential emerging food safety risks and information sharing.

Food Service Forum

The Food Service Forum draws its membership from catering businesses, food service businesses and representative organisations. The Forum is used to disseminate food safety advice, share best practice and improve understanding of relevant food legislation. The Forum met twice in 2014 and one of the main items discussed was the introduction in December 2014, of the new requirement for allergen labelling of non-prepacked foods. Other items included: sous-vide cooking; MenuCal – the free calorie calculator software developed by the Authority; the Authority's Advice Line; food contact materials; genetically modified organism labelling, food donation, the EU Food and Veterinary Office mission on HACCP-based procedures; and potential emerging food safety risks.

Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee

The Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee is the national stakeholder committee for the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme, which aims to ensure that only safe shellfish are placed on the market. The Committee, which is chaired by the Authority, includes representatives from the official agencies, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, the shellfish industry and other stakeholder groups. During 2014, the Committee met four times and a wide range of issues were discussed such as official controls, proposed changes to legislation, risk management of Norovirus in oysters, phytoplankton sampling and toxicity trends. Important changes to the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme were agreed by

the Committee and successfully introduced during the year. These changes strengthened the official control of biotoxin sampling and introduced a requirement for mandatory phytoplankton sampling.

Food Safety Consultative Council

Established under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, the Food Safety Consultative Council is an integral part of the Authority's structure. The Food Safety Consultative Council allows the Authority to meet its obligation to consult widely about its activities and the Council is a good sounding board for broad discussion with a cross section of stakeholders.

Four new members joined the Council in 2014 having been appointed by the Minister for Health. The Council met four times in 2014 and held an open meeting on the theme of 'food addiction'. The open meeting proved interesting and newsworthy. The Council also led a joint meeting with the Authority's Board. During the course of the year, the main issues discussed by the Council included quality schemes, MenuCal, allergens and Enforcement Orders on ethnic food businesses.

Collaboration with Other Organisations

The Authority continued its collaborations with a number of organisations both in Ireland and abroad during 2014. Its close cooperation and collaboration with the Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland continued and is supported by means of a memorandum of understanding that is designed to ensure rapid and effective co-operation in the event of a food incident and common enforcement matters in both jurisdictions.

Collaborative working continued through cooperation agreements with Teagasc and with the Health Protection Surveillance Centre in the Health Service Executive. The Authority also has a confidentiality agreement with the Food and Drugs Administration in the USA.

The Authority is an on-going active contributor on a number of other committees, the purposes of which are to raise and maintain standards in the food sector. Committees from these organisations include: Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland; Bord Bia; Broadcasting Commission of Ireland; Food and Drink Industry Ireland; Heads of European Food Agencies group; Global Trust Certification; National Heart Alliance; National Hygiene Partnership and the National Standards Authority of Ireland. It is also involved in the Healthy Food for All initiative which seeks to combat food poverty by promoting access, availability and affordability of healthy food for low-income groups.

The Authority chairs the Food Law Enforcement Practitioners, an EU group of inspectors and laboratory personnel engaged in food law implementation. The Authority participates in the relatively recently formed Heads of European Food Safety Agencies group which meets twice a year and mainly focuses on risk management issues.

The Authority assists agencies in other countries who regard it as a model for single national food control agencies. In 2014, the Authority became a member of Sustainable Food Systems Ireland, an initiative by Enterprise Ireland and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to make Ireland's food safety, scientific, technical, policy and agrifood expertise available to support development overseas.

Staff from the Authority are part of the International Commission for Microbiological Specifications for Foods. Staff from the Authority took part in expert consultations of the World Health Organization, and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations.

The Authority continued its involvement as the emergency contact point for Ireland in the International Food Safety Authorities Network. This network is a joint initiative between the World Health Organization and the Food and Agricultural Organization. It involves 177 Member States in the exchange of routine information on food safety issues, sharing experiences and expertise, and allows for rapid access to information in case of food safety emergencies.

The Authority chaired the Scientific Advisory Board of the European Food Information Council which is a non-profit organisation which communicates science-based information on nutrition and health, food safety and quality, to help consumers to be better informed when choosing a well-balanced, safe and healthy diet.



Corporate Management

Corporate functions of the Authority play a key part in ensuring the effectiveness of the systems and processes necessary to facilitate efficient delivery of the Authority's services to all stakeholders. They also ensure good corporate governance practices are developed, maintained and adhered to.



4 An internal audit programme was agreed and during 2014, four reviews were completed covering areas such as IT, payroll, external communications and internal financial controls.

While the main function of the Authority is to protect consumers' health and interests, unless the organisation is properly oriented and effective use is made of the principal resource which is at its disposal, namely the executive and staff, the Authority cannot meet its main function. For this reason, the Authority is committed to a quality management system 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 divisions and all staff; and regularly reviewing achievements. As part of continuous improvement, the quality management Share Point platform was further developed to enhance the quality management system and make it more user-friendly. The system is certified to the international standard ISO 9001:2008, against which the Authority is subject to an annual external audit. In 2014, a two-day surveillance audit was carried out and the Authority successfully retained certification.

A comprehensive Service Level Agreement, 2014 was developed detailing the planned work programmes for the year. The Authority's Service Level Agreement, 2014 identified the range of service deliverables as well as key programmes which formed the basis of the annual work plan. All staff members' individual work plans were agreed for the year ahead which also identified relevant training and development needs for the period. Each work plan is linked to team and divisional objectives, which in turn are linked to the organisation's Service Level Agreement. The Authority places a strong emphasis on training and continued professional development and during the year, a broad range of training programmes were delivered to support this. Planning, performance management and review are an integral part of the Authority and are supported by the quality management system.

An efficient finance function is in place which ensures that the highest accounting standards are met and that effective financial management systems and controls are operating. During the year, a review of the systems of internal financial controls was conducted by the internal auditors 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.



Hospitality Expo

The Authority had an information stand at 'Hospitality Expo, 2014'. 'Hospitality Expo' is a national exhibition for retailers and hospitality professionals. There were over 130 exhibitors, interactive workshops, live demonstrations, Chef Ireland competitions and free one-to-one mentoring.

Authority staff at the information staff advised visitors on starting up a food business, food labelling, food safety requirements, food safety legislation and HACCP.

Pictured at Hospitality Expo is Ediel Smyth, Information Manager, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

The audit programme conducted by the Authority to review financial claims submitted to the Authority by the local authorities for the provision of veterinary services, continued throughout 2014, with three audits and two follow-up reviews completed. A standard operating procedure in relation to this area was also developed and implemented.

The Authority's key resource continues to be its highly committed staff who are dedicated to delivering a top class service. There is a Staff Committee comprising of staff at all levels throughout the Authority which is consulted on many organisational issues, including the development of human resource policies. The Authority is fully committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its staff and to complying with the requirements of the relevant health and safety and legislation. The Authority's Health and Safety Committee met regularly in 2014 and their work programme was implemented, including updating the Authority's Safety Statement.



VTEC Workshop

In November, the Authority hosted a workshop on verocytotoxigenic *E. coli* (VTEC) and its significance for artisan cheese production. Dr Valérie Michel, Head of the Dairy Microbiology Laboratory in ACTALIA, an officially recognised agri-food technology institute in France which specialises in food innovation and food safety, was an invited speaker at the event. Her laboratory performs microbial analysis, including VTEC detection and VTEC genetic characterisation. She also works on microbial quantitative risk assessment and has extensive knowledge of the importance of hygiene practices at farm level in particular relating to bovine milk production.

Pictured at the workshop are Raymond Ellard, Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Elizabeth Bradley, Carlow Cheese, Dr Valérie Michel, ACTALIA and Dr Lisa O'Connor, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

Whilst maintaining services to the greatest extent possible, staff numbers continued to be managed within the context of the public sector embargo on recruitment and in line with the employment control framework for the health sector. Staff numbers have reduced by some 20% in the period since the imposition of the moratorium on recruitment in 2009, presenting continuing challenges for the Authority. However, sanction to recruit to fill a number of critical positions was received late in 2014 and recruitment for these has commenced.

Corporate Governance

In compliance with the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies, 2009, a review of the corporate governance framework was undertaken during 2014. As the Board and Committees reviewed and updated where necessary, the schedule of matters reserved for the Board, the Risk Register, Committee Charters and Terms of Reference, the corporate governance framework was updated accordingly. This framework was developed in order to assist in improving efficiency and enhance openness and transparency. The framework gives clear guidance for the organisation, detailing aspects such as: conducting Board business; strategic planning; operational processes; risk management; financial control and standards of behaviour.

In accordance with Section 41 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 and the Ethics in Public Office Acts, 1995 and 2001, members of the Authority's Board, Scientific Committee, Scientific Sub-committees and 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.

During 2014, membership of the Board and the Board Audit Committee fluctuated as new members were appointed and two existing terms came to an end. The Authority had eight Board members and a fully functioning Board Audit Committee and Remuneration and Nominations Committee. All new members were provided with an electronic version of the induction pack and given a comprehensive introduction to the workings of the Board, the Authority and their role and responsibilities.

The Board Audit Committee utilises the services of external professional auditors who conduct a programme of internal audits. Internal auditors were tendered for and appointed during 2014 by the Authority on a three year contract. An internal audit programme was agreed and during the year, four reviews were completed covering areas such as IT, payroll, external communications and internal financial controls. Where feasible, all improvements were implemented, although a small number are due to be completed in 2015. The Board Audit Committee audited the corporate governance structure of the Authority and no shortfalls were identified. The Matters Reserved for the Board and the Risk Register were reviewed and updated, as appropriate. The Board Audit Committee also reviewed and updated the Audit Committee Charter and its Terms of Reference. The Financial Statements, as approved by the Board Audit Committee and the Board were subject to audit by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General with no findings.

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During 2014, the Authority received 14 Freedom of Information requests. Requested topics included records relating to: Enforcement Orders, audits and food supplements.



The Remuneration and Nominations Committee appointed a recruitment firm to manage the recruitment process in relation to the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer. Dr Pamela Byrne was appointed as Chief Executive Officer.

Central Government frameworks were availed of where relevant and available. The Authority was also advised by the National Procurement Service that no new frameworks (other than those established by the National Procurement Service) should be established.

Internal Audit

The Board's Audit Committee utilises the services of external professional auditors who conduct a programme of internal audits. Internal auditors were tendered for and appointed by the Authority on a three year contract. An internal audit programme was agreed and during 2014, four reviews were completed covering areas such as IT, payroll, external communications and internal financial controls. Where feasible, all improvements were implemented, although a small number are due to be completed in 2015.

The Board Audit Committee audited the corporate governance structure of the Authority and no shortfalls were identified. The Matters Reserved for the Board and the Risk Register were reviewed and updated, as appropriate. The Board Audit Committee also reviewed and updated the Audit Committee Charter and its Terms of Reference.

Shared Services

In 2014, the Authority continued the provision of payroll and pension services for the Health and Social Care Professionals Council, in line with the Government policy on shared services. The Authority participated in the development of shared services across local authorities, including the selection of three lead authorities (Cork, Louth and Donegal) and the development of an Implementation Plan for the shared services.

Information and Communications Technology

Information and communications technology systems continue to be key in enabling the Authority to support and enhance service delivery. A number of core information technology and communication systems were enhanced and developed during 2014. A project to install a new storage area network, which hosts the essential business applications, was successfully delivered. The upgrade of the information technology backup system architecture also resulted in improvements for business continuity planning in the Authority.

In-house developed software databases and web applications used by staff and external stakeholders were redesigned and upgraded.

The Communications Room was enhanced to include the introduction of a redundant, energy efficient, air conditioning cooling system. Also, interactive voice response was added to the Advice Line telecommunications system to improve the service to those calling the Authority.

Freedom of Information and Parliamentary Questions

The Authority continues to meet its obligations in relation to responding to Freedom of Information requests and parliamentary questions. During 2014, the Authority received 14 Freedom of Information requests. Ten of the requests were from journalists, three from food businesses, and one from a solicitor on behalf of a client. Request topics included: records relating to Enforcement Orders; audits; food supplements; a novel food application and unlicensed abattoirs. The Authority provided advice in response to 30 parliamentary questions from various political representatives that were submitted to the Department of Health or the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in 2014. This is a decrease from 39 in 2013. Questions received included those on: financial and staffing arrangements; aspartame; genetically modified food; food allergies and raw milk.

Service Contracts and Memoranda of Understanding

The Authority is responsible for the enforcement of food legislation in Ireland and carries out this enforcement function through service contracts with official agencies. Section 48 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 provides the legislative basis for this. The contracts drawn up between the Authority and the official agencies outline the level and standard of food safety activity that the official agencies will perform, as agents of the Authority. Key clauses in these contracts require the agencies to undertake official controls under the following schedules:

Schedule 1: List of the food legislation that the agency agrees to enforce

Schedule 2: The details of what the agency is to undertake, with requirements for the agency generally and for the relevant inspectorates and laboratory services that agency operates. Monitoring arrangements are also included in this schedule

Schedule 3: The resources the agency is to commit to the contract, generally specified in terms of staffing levels in the inspectorates and the laboratories

Schedule 4: Reporting requirements for the agency

Schedule 5: Arrangements for auditing of the contract by the Authority, including the agency's agreement to cooperate with the audit programme

The Authority has also signed a memorandum of understanding with various other organisations both in Ireland and abroad, in order to facilitate cooperation and the exchange of information related to food safety.

A service contract is a legal agreement to enforce food safety legislation, whereas a memorandum of understanding sets out a framework for cooperation between organisations in their food safety activities.

Official agencies with which the Authority had Service Contracts in 2014

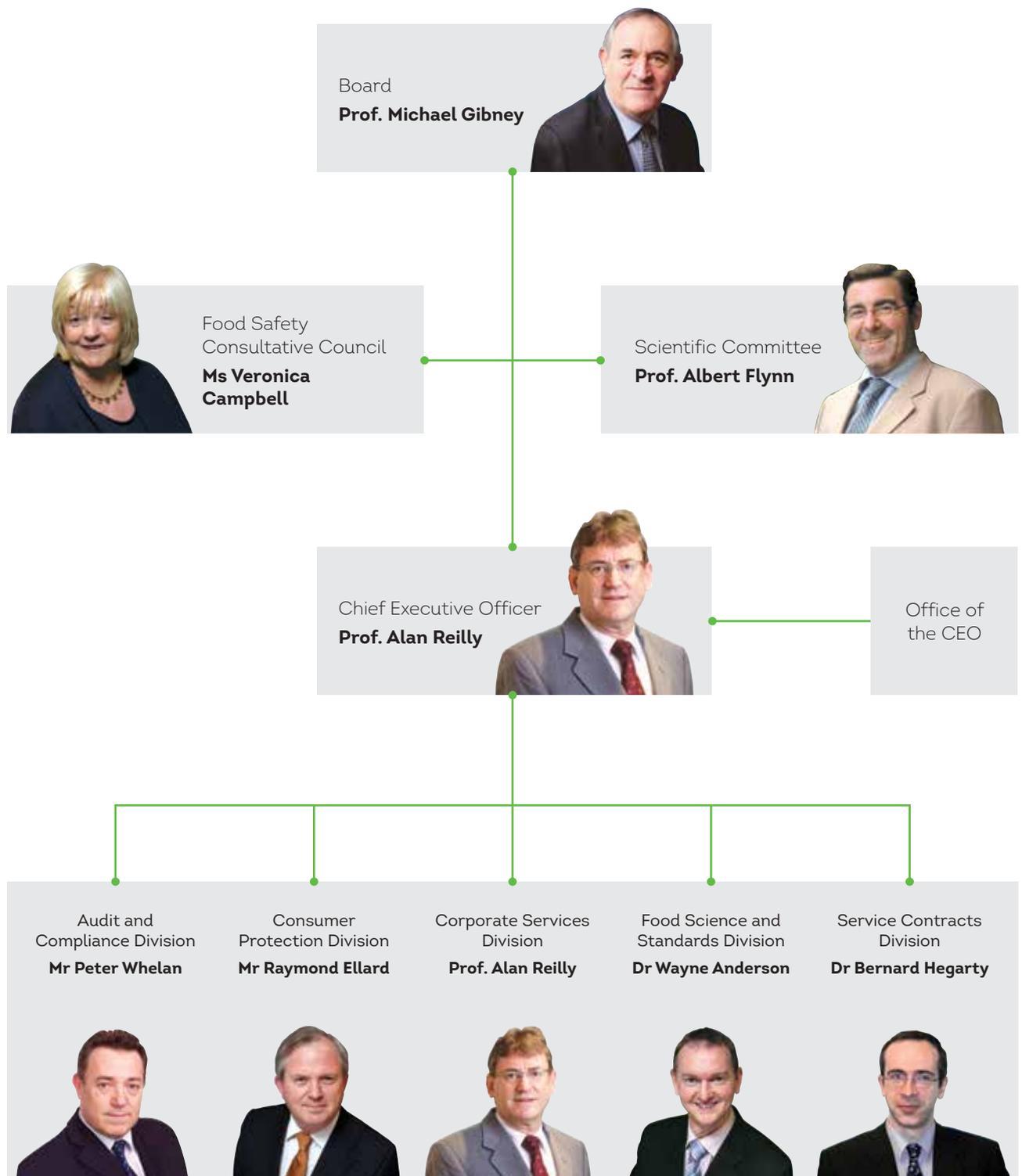


Organisations with which the Authority had a Memorandum of Understanding in 2014



Management Structure

AT 31 DECEMBER 2014



Board Members 2014



Professor Michael Gibney (Chair)

Professor Michael Gibney, MAgSc, MA, PhD, is Professor of Food and Health at University College, Dublin (UCD) a post he took up in 2006. He graduated from UCD with a MAgSc in 1971, and took up a teaching fellowship at the University of Sydney's Veterinary School and was awarded a PhD in 1976. From there, he moved to human nutrition, with a lectureship at the University of Southampton Medical School in 1977 and then returned to Dublin to take up a post at Trinity College, Dublin in the Department of Clinical Medicine as Professor of Nutrition. During that time, he served as Dean (Vice President) of Research. He served as President of the Nutrition Society from 1995-1998 and served on the EU Scientific Committee for Food from 1985 to 1997 and chaired the working group on nutrition. From 1997 to 2000, he served on the EU Scientific Steering Committee and was chair of its working group on BSE. He serves on the scientific committee of the Sackler, Institute of Nutrition at the New York Academy of Sciences and is a participant in the Google Food Experience Innovation Laboratory.

Professor Gibney attended six Board meetings in 2014.

Mr Ciaran Byrne

Mr Ciaran Byrne has served as a member of the HSE'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 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. Ciaran has worked in Voluntary Service Overseas in London, in Glockenspiel software engineers and as a partner in STS management consultants in Dublin. Ciaran is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin (Economic and Social Studies) and holds Masters Degrees in science, in arts and in media from TCD and IADT.

Mr Byrne attended three Board meetings in 2014.

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. He was also Head of Communications with the Irish Farmers' Association. He is a former journalist with RTE television and radio. He is a graduate in Economic and Social Studies from Trinity College, Dublin (TCD) and has post graduate qualifications from TCD and Dublin City University. He served on an Advisory Group of the Information Society Commission and was Chairman of the RTE Audience Council.

Mr Cunningham attended six Board meetings in 2014.

Professor Albert Flynn

Professor Albert Flynn, B.Sc., Ph.D. (NUI, Galway), is Professor in Nutrition in the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, University College, Cork. He has served on the faculty of the University since 1981 and from 1993-96 he was Dean of the Faculty of Food Science & 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 Chair 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 Chair of its Panel for Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies from 2003-12 and as a member of the Scientific Committee on Food of the European Commission from 1997-2003.

Professor Flynn attended one meeting as a Board member in 2014 (his term ended on 27th February 2014) but he attended the remaining five meetings as a representative of the Scientific Committee at the request of the Board



Ms Margaret Moran

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 post-graduate qualifications include M.Sc. Agr (Food Science) from University College, Dublin, Certificate in Food Safety from University College, Dublin, Diploma in Food Policy from City University, 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. Margaret currently provides consultancy services to various institutions and organisations within Teacher Education, Further Education and Consumer Education.

Ms Moran attended three meetings in 2014.

Mr Pat O'Mahony

Mr Pat O'Mahony, M.V.B., M.V.M., A.M.D., M.B.A., M.R.C.V.S., is Chief Executive of the Health Products Regulatory Authority, a position he took up in December 2002. Having spent a number of years in private veterinary practice and as technical manager in the pharmaceutical industry in Ireland and the UK, he worked in public health and was Director of Consumer Protection at the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. Mr O'Mahony was awarded an MBA degree from the Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business, University College, Dublin in 2001. He is a member of the Management Board of the European Medicines Agency and served as Chairman from 2007 to 2011. He is also a member of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the National Patient Safety Advisory Group and is Chairman of the Forum of Health, Social Care and Regulatory Agencies.

Mr O'Mahony attended five Board meetings in 2014.

Mr Raymond O'Rourke

Mr Raymond O'Rourke is a qualified barrister, and a specialist food regulatory and consumer affairs lawyer. He worked for many years in legal firms both in Dublin and Brussels and now has his own law practice. Author of European Food Law (3rd Edition), he is a member of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority; the Taste Council; the Irish Codex Committee; and is Chairman of the Consumers' Association of Ireland. He is a Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences, School of Biomedical Sciences, University of Ulster, Coleraine.

Mr O'Rourke attended five Board meetings in 2014.

Dr Susan Quinn

Dr Susan Quinn, MICI, MRSC is Lecturer in the School of Chemistry and Chemical Biology, University College Dublin. She obtained her B.Sc. honours degree (1997) and Ph.D. (2002) from University College, Dublin and carried out post-doctoral studies in Trinity College Dublin from 2002-2005. Dr Quinn has previously served on the governing authority and finance committee of UCD. In September 2009, she joined the School of Chemistry and Chemical Biology and she obtained tenure in 2012. Her current research interests lie in the areas of functional nanomaterials and the chemistry of DNA.

Dr Quinn attended five Board meetings in 2014.

Professor Patrick Wall

Professor Patrick Wall is Associate Professor of Public Health in University College, Dublin's School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Population Sciences. His teaching and research interests include foodborne diseases, lifestyle related diseases and health damaging consumer behaviour. He was the first Chief Executive of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and he was the second Chairperson of the European Food Safety Authority. He is a member of the management board of the Mater Foundation. He qualified in veterinary medicine in University College, Dublin and in human medicine in the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland. He has an MSc in infectious diseases from the University of London and an MBA from the Michael Smurfit School of Business. He is a Diplomate 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 board of Independent Milk Laboratories and Chairperson of Horse Sport Ireland.

Professor Wall attended three Board meetings in 2014.

Scientific Committee Members

AS AT DECEMBER 31ST 2014

Scientific Committee

Prof. Albert Flynn (Chair)

University College, Cork

Ms Paula Barry Walsh

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Colette Bonner

Department of Health

Prof. Martin Cormican

University College Hospital, Galway

Dr Geraldine Duffy

Teagasc

Prof. Peter Jones

University College, Cork

Prof. Brian McKenna

Formerly University College, Dublin

Dr Paul McKeown

Health Protection Surveillance Centre

Dr Michael O'Keeffe

Residues Expert

Dr Dan O'Sullivan

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Margaret O'Sullivan

Health Service Executive

Mr Ray Parle

Health Service Executive

Dr Iona Pratt*

Consultant Toxicologist

Dr Ita Saul

Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin

Biological Safety Sub-committee

Prof. Martin Cormican (Chair)

University College Hospital, Galway

Ms Paula Barry Walsh

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr William Doré

Marine Institute

Dr Theo de Waal

University College, Dublin

Dr Geraldine Duffy

Teagasc

Ms Catherine Foye

Health Service Executive

Dr John Griffin

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Montserrat Gutierrez

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Kieran Jordan

Teagasc

Prof. Simon More

University College, Dublin

Dr Paul McKeown

Health Protection Surveillance Centre

Mr 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

Dr Paul Whyte

University College, Dublin

Mr Vincent Young

Health Service Executive

* Sadly, Dr Pratt passed away in February 2014

Chemical Safety Sub-committee

Dr Michael O’Keeffe (Chair)

Residues Expert

Dr Thomasina Barron

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Pdraig Burke

Health Service Executive

Dr Claire Chambers

Consultant Toxicologist

Dr Mary Canty

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Colman Concannon

Environmental Protection Agency

Ms Catherine Cosgrove

Health Service Executive

Dr Martin Danaher

Teagasc

Dr John Keegan

Health Service Executive

Dr Peadar Lawlor

Teagasc

Dr Dave McGrath

Heavy Metals Expert

Dr John Moriarty

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Evin McGovern

Marine Institute

Dr Dan O’Sullivan

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Iona Pratt*

Consultant Toxicologist

Mr Joe Silke

Marine Institute

Public Health Nutrition Sub-committee

Ms Ita Saul (Chair)

Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital, Crumlin

Dr Teresa Bennett

Health Service Executive

Dr Clare Corish

Dublin Institute of Technology

Dr Eileen Gibney

University College, Dublin

Dr Hilda Griffin

Health Service Executive

Dr Tom Hill

University of Newcastle

Dr Mairead Kiely

University College, Cork

Prof. Barbara Livingstone

University of Ulster

Prof. Fionnuala McAuliffe

University College, Dublin

Dr Sinead McCarthy

Teagasc

Prof. Malachi McKenna

St Vincent’s Hospital

Prof. Helene McNulty

University of Ulster

Dr Anne Nugent

University College, Dublin

Dr Claire O’Brien

Nutrition Science Research Consultant

Dr Margaret O’Neill

Health Service Executive

Dr Kate Younger

Dublin Institute of Technology

* Sadly, Dr Pratt passed away in February 2014

Food Safety Consultative Council Members

AS AT DECEMBER 31ST 2014

Chair

Ms Veronica Campbell (Chair)

Campbell Bewley Group Ltd

Members

Mr Ray Bowe

Musgraves

Dr Susanne Boyd

Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland

Ms Sinead Finnegan

Beverage Council of Ireland

Ms Maree Gallagher

Solicitor

Mr Cormac Healy

Meat Industry Ireland

Mr Dermott Jewell

Consumers' Association of Ireland

Ms Margaret Leahy

Organic Farmer

Ms Paula Mee

Nutritionist

Mr Tim O'Brien

Restaurateur

Ms Breda Raggett

Consumer - Former President of the
Irish Countrywomen's Association

Mr Martin Roper

Excellence Ireland Quality Association

Industry Fora Members

AS AT DECEMBER 31ST 2014

Retail Forum

Dr Lisa O'Connor (Chair)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Mr Ray Bowe

Musgrave Group

Ms Selena McAndrew

ADM Londis Plc.

Mr Stuart Challenor

Tesco Ireland

Ms Elaine Clohosey

BWG Foods

Ms Suzanne Cullen

Superquinn/Musgraves

**Ms Mary Daly/
Ms Una Crilly**

Dunnes Stores

Mr Allan Davies

Tesco Ireland

Mr Jonathan Halls

Boots

**Ms Aoife Harrison/
Ms Orla McKeever**

Lidl Ireland

Mr Peter Jackson

Barry's of Mallow

Ms Lynda Kenny

Musgrave Group

Ms Denise Lord

Gala Retail Services Limited

Mr Shane Lyster

IBEC

Ms Paula McGrath

Aldi

Mr Rob McEvoy

Topaz

Ms Lucy Magner

Pallas Foods

Ms Roseanne Regan

RGDATA

Ms Trish Twohig

Iceland

Mr Peter Wight

Marks and Spencer

Artisan Food Producers' Forum

Dr Wayne Anderson (Chair)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Darina Allen

Ballymaloe Cookery School

Ms Myrtle Allen

Ballymaloe House

Ms Sally Barnes

Woodcock Smokery

Mr John Brennan

Leitrim Organic Centre

Ms Mary Burns

Ardrahan Cheese

Ms Jeffa Gill

Durrus Cheese

Mr Michael Gleeson

Beekeeper

Mr Michael Healy

Game expert

Mr Rupert Hugh Jones

Farmer and micro-brewer

Mr Frank Hederman

Belvelly Smokehouse

Mr Sean Kent

Poultry Expert

Mr Dave Lang

Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland

Mr Donal Lehane

Food-NPD Teo

**Mr Eddie O'Neill/
Mr Pat Daly**

Teagasc

Mr Raymond O'Rourke

Solicitor

Mr Declan Ryan

Arbutus Bread

Food Service Forum

Dr Lisa O'Connor (Chair)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Sinead Brennan

Subway Ireland

Ms Louise Collins

Eddie Rocket's (IRL) Limited

**Ms Pauline Cox/
Mr Nigel Staveley/
Mr Mark Anderson**

Compass Group

Mr Adrian Cummins

Restaurants Association of Ireland

Ms Martina Donohoe

Aramark

Ms Irene Gunning

Early Childhood Ireland

Ms Ruth Hegarty

Euro-Toques Ireland

Ms Stephanie Howard

Irish Hotels Federation

Ms Nicola McDonald

McDonalds Restaurants of Ireland

**Ms Helena O'Brien/
Ms Mary Dowling**

Catering Management Association

Mr Conor O'Kane

Maldron Hotel/Irish Hotel Federation

Mr Pat O'Sullivan

Irish Prison Service

Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee

Food Safety Authority of Ireland (Chair)

Ms Vicky Lyons

Dr Terence O'Carroll

Bord Iascaigh Mhara

Mr Paul Hickey

Health Service Executive

Mr Richie Flynn

Mr Jerry Gallagher

Mr John Harrington

Mr Pat Mulloy

Mr Finian O'Sullivan

Irish Shellfish Association

Dr Sarah McLean

Loughs Agency

Mr Dave Clarke

Mr Bill Doré

Mr Conor Duffy

Mr Aengus Parsons

Mr Joe Silke

Marine Institute

Mr Brian Nolan

Mr Daniel O'Callaghan

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

Board Members'/Chief Executive's Statement of Interests

FOR 1 JANUARY 2014 TO 31 DECEMBER 2014

Board Member	Commercial Interests		Non-Commercial Interests	
	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests
Mr Ciaran Byrne	None	-	None	-
Mr Derek Cunningham	None	-	None	-
Prof. Charles Daly	Clongeel Bia Ltd., Cork	Part Owner/Director	None	-
	Alimentary Health Ltd., Cork	Shareholder/ Non-Executive Director		
Prof. Albert Flynn	Tate & Lyle Americas LLC, USA	Scientific Advice	None	-
Prof. Michael Gibney	CremeGlobal Ltd.	Shares	ILSI Europe	Board of Directors
	Nestle Nutrition Consultative Council	Member	Google Food	Advisor
Ms Margaret Moran	None	-	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Two family members (currently a solicitor and a trainee Solicitor) are employed by Arthur Cox
Mr Pat O'Mahony	None	-	None	-
Mr Raymond O'Rourke	BWG Foods	Legal Services	Consumers Association of Ireland (CAI)	Chairman
	Country Markets Ltd. Kelkin Ltd.		Taste Council (c/o Bord Bia)	Board Member
	EFSA	Board Member	Irish Codex Committee	Member
	Agricultural Land	Part Owner		
Dr Susan Quinn	None	-	None	-
Prof. Patrick Wall	Aryzta, Switzerland (food company)	Shares	Mater Foundation	Director
	Luxcel	Director	Horse Sport Ireland	Chairman
	Independent Milk Laboratories	Director	European College of Veterinary Public Health	Director
			Agriaware	Director
Chief Executive Prof. Alan Reilly	None	-	None	-

Scientific Committee Members' Statement of Interests

FOR 1 JANUARY 2014 TO 31 DECEMBER 2014

Scientific

Scientific Committee Member	Commercial Interests		Non-Commercial Interests	
	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests
Ms Paula Barry-Walsh	None	-	None	-
Dr Colette Bonner	None	-	None	-
Prof. Martin Cormican	None	-	None	-
Dr Geraldine Duffy	None	-	None	-
Prof. Albert Flynn	Tate & Lyle Americas LLC, USA	Scientific Advice	None	-
Prof. Peter Jones	Not submitted	-	-	-
Prof. Brian McKenna	None	-	None	-
Dr Paul McKeown	Not submitted	-	-	-
Dr Michael O'Keeffe	None	-	European Food Safety Authority	Member, CONTAM Panel
Dr Dan O'Sullivan	Retired / Resigned from Committee	-	-	-
Dr Margaret B. O'Sullivan	None	-	None	-
Mr Redmond Parle	None	-	None	-
Ms Ita Saul	None	-	None	-

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Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General

FOR PRESENTATION TO THE HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

I have audited the financial statements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2014 under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The financial statements, which have been prepared under the accounting policies set out therein, comprise the statement of accounting policies, the income and expenditure account, the balance sheet, the cash flow statement and the related notes. The financial statements have been prepared in the form prescribed under Section 26 of the Act, and in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in Ireland as modified by the directions of the Minister for Health in relation to accounting for superannuation costs.

Responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer and of the Board of the Authority

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. The Board of the Authority is responsible for ensuring that they give a true and fair view of the state of the Authority's affairs and of its income and expenditure, and for ensuring the regularity of transactions.

Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements and report on them in accordance with applicable law.

My audit is conducted by reference to the special considerations which attach to State bodies in relation to their management and operation.

My audit is carried out in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and in compliance with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of Audit of the Financial Statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of

- whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Authority's circumstances, and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed
- the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made in the preparation of the financial statements, and
- the overall presentation of the financial statements.

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

In addition, I read the Authority's annual report to identify if there are any material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies, I consider the implications for my report.

Opinion on the Financial Statements

In compliance with the directions of the Minister for Health, the Authority recognises the costs of superannuation entitlements only as they become payable. This basis of accounting does not comply with Financial Reporting Standard 17 which requires costs to be recognised in the period the entitlements are earned.

In my opinion, the financial statements which have been properly prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in Ireland except for the non-recognition of the Authority's superannuation costs and liabilities, give a true and fair view of the state of the Authority's affairs at 31 December 2014 and of its income and expenditure for 2014.

In my opinion, proper books of account have been kept by the Authority. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

Matters on which I Report by Exception

I report by exception if

- I have not received all the information and explanations I required for my audit, or
- my audit noted any material instance where money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where the transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them, or
- the information given in the Authority's annual report is not consistent with the related financial statements, or
- the Statement on Internal Financial Control does not reflect the Authority's compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, or
- I find there are other material matters relating to the manner in which the public business has been conducted.

I have nothing to report in regards to those matters upon which reporting is by exception.



Patricia Sheehan

**For and on behalf of the
Comptroller and Auditor General**

30 June 2015

Statement of Responsibilities of the Authority

The Authority presents its report for the year ended 31 December 2014.

Responsibilities of the Board Members

Section 26(5) of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, requires the Authority to prepare financial statements in such form and manner as may be specified by the Minister for Health. In preparing those financial statements, the Board 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
- disclose and explain any material departures from applicable accounting standards.

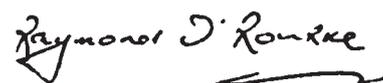
The Board members are responsible for keeping proper books of account which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Authority and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 26(5) of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The Board is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Authority and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Health and Safety

The well-being of Authority employees is safeguarded through the strict adherence to health and safety standards in accordance with the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.



Prof. Michael Gibney
Chairman
17th June 2015



Mr Raymond O'Rourke
Board Member

Statement on Internal Financial Control

Responsibility for system of Internal Financial Control

On behalf of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland I acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated.

The system can 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 would be detected in a timely period.

Key Control Procedures

The Board has taken steps to ensure an appropriate control environment by:

- clearly defining management responsibilities
- establishing formal procedures for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action.

The Board has established processes to identify and evaluate business risks by:

- identifying the nature, extent and financial implication of risks facing the body including the extent and categories which it regards as acceptable
- assessing the likelihood of identified risks occurring
- assessing the body's ability to manage and mitigate the risks that do occur
- assessing the costs of operating particular controls relative to the benefit obtained.

The system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures including segregation of duties, and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- comprehensive budgeting system with an annual budget which is reviewed and agreed by the Board
- regular reviews by the Board of monthly and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance
- clearly defined capital investment control guidelines
- formal project management disciplines.

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland has outsourced the internal audit function, which operates in accordance with the Framework Code of Best Practice set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The work of internal audit is informed by the 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 were endorsed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board. The Internal Auditor provided the board with a report of internal audit activity.

This report included the Internal Auditor's opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal financial control.

The Board's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control is informed by the work of the internal auditor, the Audit Committee which oversees the work of the internal auditor, the executive managers within the Food Safety Authority of Ireland who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the financial control framework, and comments made by the Comptroller and Auditor General in his management letter or other reports.

Annual Review of Controls

I confirm that for the year ended 31st December 2014 the Board carried out a review of internal financial controls.



Prof. Michael Gibney

Chairman

17th June 2015

Statement of Accounting Policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the financial statements.

A. Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are 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 of Public Expenditure and Reform in accordance with Section 26(5) of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998.

Financial Reporting Standards recommended by the recognised Accountancy Bodies are adopted, as they become operative, with the exception of FRS 17 (Retirement Benefits) see note E below.

B. State Grants

Grants from the Department of Health are accounted for on a cash receipts basis.

C. Taxation

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland is exempt from Corporation Tax.

D. Assets and Depreciation

(1) Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets are shown at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is charged in the income and expenditure account, on a straight line basis, at the annual rates as set out below, so as to write off the assets, adjusted for estimated residual value, over the expected useful life of each appropriate category.

(i) Leasehold Improvements	15%
(ii) Computer Equipment	33%
(iii) Office Furniture	15%
(iv) Office Equipment	15%
(v) Scientific Equipment	15%

(2) Intangible Fixed Assets

Intangible fixed assets are shown at their net book value having been depreciated at 33% on a straight line basis. The depreciation for the year is charged to the Income and Expenditure Account.

A full year's depreciation is provided for in the year of acquisition.

E. Superannuation

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-in-aid to the Authority is net of the deductions retained. By direction of the Minister for Health no provision has been made in the Financial Statements for future pension liabilities. Payments under the scheme are charged to income and expenditure account when paid.

F. Capital Account

The Capital Account represents the unamortised value of income used by the Authority to acquire fixed assets.

G. Operating Leases

Rental payments under the operating leases are charged to the Income and Expenditure Account on an accruals basis.

H. Local Authority Veterinary Scheme

The Authority 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 the Local Authorities are recognised on cash received and cash paid basis.

Income and Expenditure Account

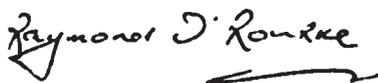
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

	Notes	2014 €	2013 €
Grant Income	1	15,303,000	15,775,000
Sundry Income	2	515,805	502,692
		15,818,805	16,277,692
Transfer (to)/from Capital Account	9	(134,032)	96,306
(Loss) on Disposal of Fixed Assets		(278)	(86)
Total Income		15,684,495	16,373,912
Salaries, Pensions and related expenses	3	4,975,540	5,324,446
Other Operating Costs	4	3,877,806	3,879,741
Local Authority Veterinary Service	5	6,852,410	7,107,355
Total Expenditure		15,705,756	16,311,542
Surplus for the year		(21,261)	62,370
Balance at 1 January		384,555	322,185
Balance at 31 December		363,294	384,555

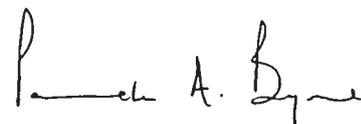
The Statement of Accounting Policies on page 47, and notes 1 to 15 form part of these Financial Statements. The Authority has no recognised gains or losses other than those dealt with in the Income and Expenditure Account.



Prof. Michael Gibney
Chairman
17th June 2015



Mr Raymond O'Rourke
Board Member



Dr Pamela Byrne
Chief Executive

Balance Sheet

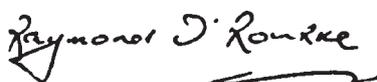
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2014

	Notes	2014 €	2013 €
Intangible Assets	10	49,326	56,366
Tangible Assets	6	330,409	189,339
Current Assets			
Debtors and Prepayments	7	454,932	480,636
Cash at Bank and on Hand		118,815	144,321
		573,747	624,957
Current Liabilities			
Creditors - Amounts falling due within one year			
Creditors and Accruals	8	210,451	240,402
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		363,296	384,555
Total Net Assets/(Liabilities)		743,031	630,260
Financed by			
Income and Expenditure Account		363,294	384,555
Capital Account	9	379,737	245,705
		743,031	630,260

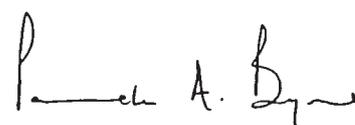
The Statement of Accounting Policies on page 47, and notes 1 to 15 form part of these Financial Statements.



Prof. Michael Gibney
Chairman
17th June 2015



Mr Raymond O'Rourke
Board Member



Dr Pamela Byrne
Chief Executive

Cash Flow Statement

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

	Notes	2014 €	2013 €
Reconciliation of Surplus for Year to Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities			
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		(21,261)	62,370
Transfer to/(from) Capital Account		134,032	(96,306)
Depreciation charge			
- Intangible Fixed Assets	10	77,184	71,714
- Tangible Fixed Assets	6	154,817	145,358
Decrease/(Increase) in Debtors		25,705	14,986
(Decrease)/Increase in Creditors		(29,950)	63,082
Loss on disposal of fixed assets		278	86
Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities		340,805	261,290
Cash Flow Statement			
Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities		340,805	261,290
Return on Investments and Servicing of Finance			
Capital Expenditure			
Payments to Acquire Intangible Fixed Assets	10	(70,144)	(2,146)
Payments to Acquire Tangible Fixed Assets	6	(296,167)	(118,707)
Increase/(Decrease) in Cash		(25,506)	140,437
Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net funds			
Net funds at start of year		144,321	3,884
Net cash inflow/(outflow)		(25,506)	140,437
Net funds at end of year		118,815	144,321

Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

1. Grant Income	2014	2013
	€	€
Department of Health Grant - Vote 38 Subhead E.1	15,303,000	15,775,000
	15,303,000	15,775,000

2. Sundry Income	2014	2013
	€	€
Superannuation Deductions	268,190	305,582
Sale of Publications	152,675	127,114
Sundry Income	94,940	69,996
	515,805	502,692

3. Salaries, Pensions and Related Expenses	2014	2013
	€	€
Staff costs comprise		
Salaries	4,584,614	4,905,019
Pensions	20,944	36,075
Social Welfare Costs - Employers' Contribution	369,982	383,352
	4,975,540	5,324,446

The average number of staff employed during the year 77 79

Salaries costs comprise the gross cost per employee plus employer's PRSI.

A Pension Levy deduction of €263,347 was made from staff salaries and paid over to the Department of Health.

Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

4. Other Operating Costs	Notes	2014 €	2013 €
Recruitment Costs		49,720	559
Board Members Fees and expenses	12	36,625	27,903
Travel Expenses		202,430	182,976
Insurance		52,406	37,450
Stationery, publications and postage		482,157	374,556
Telephone and Internet		124,994	94,580
Research costs		170,961	205,279
Cleaning and Catering		98,500	99,602
Repairs and maintenance		34,031	51,468
Rent and rates		1,072,351	1,108,866
Legal and consulting fees		451,657	634,125
Communications activities	4(a)	224,394	288,885
Audit Fee		14,200	14,000
Depreciation Tangible Assets		154,817	145,358
Depreciation Intangible Assets		77,184	71,714
* Other operating costs	4(b)	631,379	542,421
		3,877,806	3,879,741

* Other operating costs includes €NIL entertainment expenditure (2013 : €780)

4(a). Communications activities	2014 €	2013 €
Public Relations	83,940	110,725
Industry Events	89,091	146,849
Industry Liaison	51,363	31,311
	224,394	288,885

4(b). Other operating costs	2014 €	2013 €
Staff - Training and Conference attendance	172,078	112,395
Software licences, fees and support	118,629	60,885
Food legislation compliance	103,713	193,936
Training - Official Agency staff	79,424	10,347
General expenditure	157,535	164,858
	631,379	542,421

Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

5. Local Authority Veterinary Service	2014	2013
	€	€
LAVS Payments	6,852,410	7,107,355

Number of Local Authorities paid 26 26

Payments are made to 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.

6. Tangible Fixed Assets	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Office Furniture	Leasehold Improve.	Scientific Equipment	Total
	€	€	€	€	€	€
Cost						
At 1 January 2014	721,625	159,360	376,665	129,855	208,788	1,596,293
Additions	188,257	5,901	176	00	101,833	296,167
Disposals	(65,598)	(38,777)	(2,105)	(00)	(00)	(106,481)
At 31 December 2014	844,284	126,484	374,736	129,855	310,621	1,785,979
Accumulated Depreciation						
At 1 January 2014	646,740	135,260	356,305	88,903	179,747	1,406,955
Charge for the year	103,394	6,783	6,721	11,754	26,165	154,817
Depreciation on Disposals	(65,350)	(38,747)	(2,105)	(00)	(00)	(106,202)
At 31 December 2014	684,784	103,296	360,921	100,657	205,912	1,455,570
Net Book Value						
At 31 December 2014	159,500	23,188	13,815	29,198	104,709	330,409
At 31 December 2013	74,885	24,100	20,360	40,952	29,041	189,339

Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

7. Debtors & Prepayments

	2014	2013
Amounts falling due within one year	€	€
Sundry Income	1,646	4,061
Prepayments	428,403	476,575
Salaries	6,855	0
Local Authority Veterinary Service	18,028	0
	454,932	480,636

8. Creditors and Accruals

	2014	2013
Amounts falling due within one year	€	€
Trade Creditors	53,028	86,690
Accruals	18,668	20,400
Payroll Accruals	4,382	3,233
Pension Levy	21,585	(00)
Tax Creditor PAYE/PRSI	(489)	(488)
Tax Creditor - VAT	71,324	95,476
Tax Creditor - PSWT	41,953	35,092
	210,451	240,402

9. Capital Account

	2014	2014	2013	2013
	€	€	€	€
At 1 January		245,705		342,011
Transfer from/(to) Income and Expenditure Account				
Funds allocated to acquire Fixed Assets	296,167		118,707	
Funds allocated to acquire Intangible Assets	70,144		2,146	
Amount released on Disposal	(278)		(86)	
Amount amortised in line with asset depreciation	(232,001)	134,032	(217,072)	(96,306)
Balance at 31 December		379,737		245,705

Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

10. Intangible Fixed Assets	2014	2013
	€	€
1 January, Opening Net Book Value	56,366	125,934
Additions at Cost	70,144	2,146
Less Depreciation Charge for the year	(77,184)	(71,714)
31 December, Closing Net Book Value	49,326	56,366

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

11. Operating Leases

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland occupies premises at Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1 under three leases.

- (a) The Food Safety Authority of Ireland has two commitments in respect of leases on office accommodation at Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

These leases are held by the Office of Public Works and by way of the following:

- (i) A 20 year lease which commenced in 1997 with five yearly rent reviews
- (ii) A 20 year lease which commenced in 1997 with five yearly rent reviews

The annual cost of the leases excluding service charges is €583,000 (2013: €583,000)

- (b) The third lease is between The Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Irish Life Assurance plc for an 18 year 7 month term commencing October 1998 with five yearly rent reviews. The current annual rental charge of this lease amounts to €211,000.

	2014	2013
	€	€
Expiring within 1 year	0	0
Expiring during the years 2 to 5	211,000	211,000
Expiring thereafter	0	0

Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014

12. Board Remuneration	2014	2013
	€	€
Michael Gibney - Chairman	11,970	5,813
Charles Daly - Board Member	840	6,855
Raymond O'Rourke - Board Member	7,695	6,855
Derek Cunningham - Board Member	7,695	6,737
Margaret Moran - Board Member	4,319	0
Ciaran Byrne - Board Member	3,767	0
	36,286	26,260
Expenses paid to the Chairman & Board members	339	1,643
	36,625	27,903

One Board member was inadvertently overpaid in 2014. The Authority does plan to recover the overpayment.

13. CEO Remuneration	2014	2013
	€	€
Chief Executives Remuneration	143,564	147,894
Pension - Lump Sum Payment	0	113,968
	143,564	261,862

The CEO did not receive any Performance Related Award in 2014 in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (No 2) Act, 2009.

The pension entitlements of the CEO do not extend beyond the standard entitlements of the Public Sector Defined Benefit Scheme.

The CEO retired on 24 November, 2013. He was retained on a 1 year contract from 25 November, 2013 which was further extended up to a date not exceeding 31 March 2015.

14. Board Members' Interests

The Board adopted procedures in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of Finance in relation to the disclosure of interests by Board Members and these procedures have been adhered to in the year. There were no transactions in the year in relation to the Board's activities in which a Board Member had any beneficial interest.

15. Approval of Financial Statements

The Financial Statements were approved by the Board on 10th March, 2015.



Food Safety Authority of Ireland

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