



ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Safe and trustworthy
food for everyone



2018 HIGHLIGHTS

2,500

More than 2,500 notifications of food supplements placed on the market during 2018 were received and assessed for compliance with composition, labelling, nutrition and health claims legislation.

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95

In 2018, food inspectors served 95 Closure Orders, 5 Improvement Orders and 10 Prohibition Orders on food businesses and took 9 prosecutions against food businesses throughout Ireland.

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49,268

In 2018, 49,268 food businesses were under the supervision of official agencies that have service contracts with the Authority.

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799

The Authority issued 96 food alerts and allergen alerts, and identified and managed 799 food incidents in 2018.

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5

During 2018, there were five protected disclosures made under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014.

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9,434

The Authority's Advice Line dealt with 9,434 requests in 2018; 3,424 of these were complaints about food or food premises, labelling, or allergens.

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220

The Authority responded to 220 media queries and issued 21 press releases during 2018.

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49,846

Official agency staff carried out 49,846 inspections of food businesses in 2018.

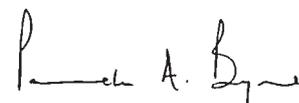
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TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH

The Board is pleased to submit to the Minister of Health its Annual Report and accounts for the 12-month period ending 31 December 2018, in accordance with Section 25 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998.



Mr Martin Higgins
Chairperson



Dr Pamela A Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

Chairperson's Statement

The Authority completed an extensive programme of work in 2018 and this Annual Report provides both an overview and a detailed account of the team's activities. The information contained in the report demonstrates the significant role that the Authority plays in ensuring that Irish food businesses are complying with food law in relation to food safety, hygiene, integrity and authenticity.



In order to assess the food industry's compliance with European food law, the Authority oversees the enforcement of a strong regulatory framework that is based on the best science and information available as well as robust enforcement powers – all of which underpin the delivery of the Authority's vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone. Ensuring that risks to consumers' health and interests are removed or minimised requires a robust system of official food controls. Through the service contract model and other collaborations, the Authority is in a strong position to monitor and intervene across the food chain as necessary – from farm gate to fork – in order to manage risks. This involves monitoring for chemical and microbiological contaminants, carrying out risk assessments on food hazards, inspecting the food sector, and managing food incidents that are related to issues that have occurred either in Ireland, in other European Union (EU) countries, or in countries beyond the EU.

In 2018, the Authority's Advice Line dealt with 9,434 requests – a similar number to 2017 – and there was no significant increase in any particular category of request. Complaints about food or food premises, labelling, and allergens remained similar to the number in 2017, at 3,424. During the year, the Authority issued 51 food alerts, an increase from the number issued in 2017 (24), and it dealt with 799 food incidents throughout the year, which was an increase on 2017 (640).

Consumers are continuing to contact the Authority regularly about the lack of allergen labelling or incorrect allergen labelling in food businesses. Since 2013, a growth in the number of food allergen alerts has been observed, with 45 food allergen alerts issued in 2018, which was an increase from the number issued in 2017 (30). In September, we ran our allergen campaign for the second consecutive year, and this led to an increase in the number of enforcement actions taken by food inspectors against those food businesses that ignored their legal obligations and increased risks to consumers.

In 2018, the Authority continued to deliver against its Strategy 2016–2018 and was in a position to undertake and complete a number of projects in regulatory science, food law enforcement and the training of inspectors. In the final year of its strategy, the Authority worked towards delivering on its ambitions, ensuring that it retained its focus on the areas of highest risk in order to protect consumers from any impact on their health due to unsafe food being placed on the market.

During 2018, the Authority also developed its Strategy 2019–2023. Over the next five years, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) will be operating in an evolving and increasingly challenging environment. This dynamic environment is being driven by regulatory changes in official controls, an industry that continues to innovate

and expand, and an increasingly complex global food system in which food safety risks continue to exist and become more challenging to pre-empt and manage. In addition, Brexit poses its own unique challenges, and how the shape of our new relationship with our nearest neighbour, the United Kingdom (UK), will impact on food safety controls, logistics and the regulatory arena will be an area of focus for us.

Access to robust data, evidence and science is key to delivering on the Authority's ambitions, and I am confident that through the Authority's Scientific Committee, talented scientific staff and collaboration with scientists in Ireland and internationally, the Authority has the ability to ensure that all their decisions are based on the best scientific information available. The Scientific Committee and its Subcommittees are essential in assessing risks to consumers from food, which underpins strong risk management decisions and the development of policies that ultimately benefit public health. The Board and I fully endorse and support the Authority in the ongoing implementation of the Science Strategy, which will be reviewed in 2019.

Data from food business inspections, audits, food incidents (nationally and internationally), and website analytics will continue to drive business decisions and inform our approach to minimising risks to public health.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognise and thank all those involved in Ireland's food control system for their hard work and commitment to protecting consumers. It is a credit to the people in this system that we are able to remove or mitigate risks in a timely manner so that consumers do not become ill. However, we must never become complacent. The food system is becoming more complex as the industry in Ireland sources its supplies both from within Ireland and from across the world, and with the potential for vulnerabilities within our food system to become even more compromised due to events such as climate change or fraudulent and deceptive practices, the risks are becoming greater than ever. We must ensure that we continue to work in collaboration and partnership in order to deliver effective and efficient food controls. I would like to congratulate the work of the inspectorate and laboratories within the State in delivering on a significant programme of work during the year, particularly as many of the agencies were working with constrained resources.

As the Chairperson of the Board, I am proud to say that the Authority has a great reputation across the world, which is due to its highly skilled and experienced staff's dedication to protecting consumers. The food inspectors of the official agencies and the food testing laboratories that work under service contract to the Authority, as well as those organisations that work in collaboration with the Authority, are vital to achieving our goal of ensuring safe and trustworthy food for everyone, and I thank and commend them for their ongoing diligence, commitment and dedication.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Health, Simon Harris, TD; Minister of State with responsibility for Health Promotion and the National Drugs Strategy, Catherine Byrne, TD; and the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed, TD, as well as the staff of their respective Departments and agencies, the Health Service Executive (including the Environmental Health Service and the laboratories) and the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, which have been proactive and supportive of the Authority in its endeavours and actions in 2018. I would also like to thank the veterinarians in the local authorities and those working in the Marine Institute and the National Standards Authority of Ireland for their ongoing contributions to ensuring that Ireland has a fit-for-purpose official controls system in place. In addition, I would like to recognise the increased engagement between the Authority and the State Laboratory.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the outgoing Chairperson, Professor Michael Gibney, for his outstanding contributions to food safety over the course of his time on the Board. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank the many scientific experts who participate in our scientific advisory structure. We have access to some of the best scientific experts in their various specialist fields in Ireland. The Authority is very grateful for the time and effort that these scientists contribute on a voluntary basis. I would also like to recognise the contribution of the Food Safety Consultative Council in developing our thinking on key areas of interest, such as the use of food supplements in the context of fitness.

Finally, it has been a busy and very productive period; I have enjoyed my first year as Chairperson of the Board and I wish to thank my Board colleagues for their continued support of the executive, the Scientific Committee and the Food Safety Consultative Council. I know that the Board looks forward to supporting Dr Pamela Byrne, the Chief Executive Officer, and the Authority in fully delivering on its new Strategy 2019–2023.



Martin Higgins
Chairperson



Chief Executive's Overview

I am pleased to present the 2018 Annual Report and accounts for the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. This report covers my fourth year as Chief Executive Officer of the Authority and I would like to thank my team for their ongoing commitment and dedication to delivering on our ambitious vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone. I remain inspired by the professionalism and passion of the team in delivering on our legislative mandate.

Protection of public health is the ultimate objective of the Authority and it is this purpose that guides how we oversee and coordinate the official food control system in Ireland. The Authority regulates and oversees a dynamic and globally trading food industry. Therefore, our role in the protection of public health in Ireland also extends to the consumers of Irish food in 180 markets that we export our products to. Having a robust system of official controls in place is also a key factor in accessing new, and maintaining existing, market access.

Through data provided to us from the official inspection agencies, we have identified a slight decrease (1.2%) in the number of food business operators in Ireland in 2018, which can be explained by decreases in the number of businesses in the food service sector, the retail sector, and the distributors and transporters sector. However, there has been an increase in the number of primary producers and manufacturers. Overall, in 2018 there were 606 fewer food business operators in Ireland compared with 2017. Overseeing a system of controls in a dynamic environment like this poses challenges for the Authority; however, we work closely with our official agency partners in order to ensure that all businesses are inspected at a frequency that minimises the food safety and public health risk. That said, the food industry in Ireland is very ambitious and the sector is expected to expand even further, as outlined in

the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's *Food Wise 2025* strategy, which has set significant growth targets and aspires to deliver this growth through dairy, beef, seafood, consumer food and drink exports. Therefore, an independent, robust, respected and well-regarded food safety control system is a tremendous asset for Ireland's economic reliance on the food sector. However, we must continue to receive the required resources in order to ensure that we can deliver against the challenges and risks associated with this dynamic environment.

We have a strong regulatory system in place, but the expansion in the food sector places a renewed onus on food businesses to ensure that the highest standards in food safety are in place. We must all work together to achieve the highest possible level of compliance within this exciting, dynamic and growing industry and to ensure that the system of controls that is in place is constantly evaluated in order to deliver the best possible outcomes for consumer protection. There is no market for unsafe food and it is incumbent on all involved in Ireland's food system, especially the food industry, to ensure that consumers' health and interests with regard to food are protected insofar as is reasonably possible.

180

Irish food companies export to 180 countries.

606

Overall, in 2018 there were 606 fewer food business operators in Ireland compared with 2017. However, there has been an increase in the number of primary producers and manufacturers.

ISO 9001:2015

In 2018, the FSAI gained certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard for business management systems.

Our mission is to “protect consumers by leading a collaborative food safety community to continuously raise food standards and create a culture of excellence” within the food industry in Ireland.

Our mission is to “protect consumers by leading a collaborative food safety community to continuously raise food standards and create a culture of excellence” within the food industry in Ireland. To achieve this mission, the Authority worked tirelessly in 2018 in order to continue providing the resources and tools required to support the food inspectorate to assess industry compliance with food law, and also to support the industry to comply with the law. While the legal responsibility for putting safe food on the market rests with the food industry, the Authority and its partners in the official agencies are responsible for providing the evidence to demonstrate that the industry is fulfilling its legal obligations.

The Authority does not work in isolation. Collaboration and partnership are key values of the Authority, and in order to fulfil our mission we have to work in partnership with the official agencies and in collaboration with others. Our relationships with our regulatory partners are key to Ireland's success in protecting consumers. Through our service contracts, as well as through senior management meetings with the Health Service Executive, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, and the Local Authority Veterinary Service, we ensure that we are in a position to direct our limited resources to focus on the areas of highest risk to consumers. However, further reduction in resources will

challenge our ability to achieve our vision and indeed carry out our mission. We leverage our relationships with other organisations in order to facilitate a partnership approach to the enforcement of food legislation and to the assessment and management of risks.

There is no doubt that interagency cooperation leads to greater consistency in enforcement and enhanced integration of the national food safety control system. Our close working relationships with those further afield also ensure that we can share and exchange critical information in a timely manner where there is a risk to consumers from food either produced in Ireland or imported into Ireland that the official agencies in Ireland have detected as being unsafe.

Partnerships and engagements with agencies such as the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland, the European Food Safety Authority, and our counterparts in Europe and across the world enable us to access timely, accurate and robust information which supports us in our role. I will continue to assess and monitor our partnerships in order to ensure that they are relevant, robust and deliver added value to our activities.

Ireland has excellent food businesses that are producing food for the domestic and export markets, and through the work of Government Departments and other State agencies, Ireland is recognised as 'the food island'.

2018 proved to be a very busy but fruitful year, as we settled into our new premises, further strengthened our corporate risk management systems and gained certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard for business management systems, in addition to our continued delivery on our regulatory functions.

However, the regulatory landscape for food is evolving globally and it is critical that the Authority stays connected to other regulatory authorities across the world as they develop their systems, so that we can leverage best practice and embed those practices, where relevant, into our system. We are also working on Ireland's future regulatory approach for food safety and authenticity as we prepare for the implementation of the new European legislation on official controls, Regulation (EU) 2017/625. We hope to use this unique opportunity in Europe's history of food controls to develop an evidence-based, world-class system of controls that stands up to scrutiny.

Our work in the management of food incidents never ends, but we are preparing ourselves to ensure that we can act fast if we have a food safety crisis either due to contaminated food produced here in Ireland or due to a contamination of imported food. Crisis simulation exercises allow us to practise our response, and these exercises will allow us to build capacity and capability to respond in a timely manner so that we can protect consumers. We hope that we will never have to deal with a crisis, but we need to be prepared, so we will continue to monitor and intervene as necessary across the food chain from farm gate to fork. This will involve monitoring for chemical and microbiological contaminants, carrying out risk assessments on food hazards, inspecting food businesses, and managing food incidents that are related to issues that have occurred in Ireland or those which have originated in other EU countries. We will prioritise areas which could have the greatest effect on protecting consumers. This includes ensuring industry compliance with its legal obligations to produce safe food, as well as monitoring those areas of greatest food safety risk in the food chain.

Ensuring that we can deliver on our legislative mandate requires a team, and I am privileged to have a very professional and committed team within the Authority. My team in the FSAI is a key part of being ready and able to protect consumers. In 2018, we commenced a detailed programme of work which sought to further develop a positive, collaborative and high-performing working environment, building on the preparatory work we did when we relocated to our new open-plan office space. This included a staff survey, themed workshops with all staff, and senior leadership development.

Throughout the year, I continued to observe the commitment, dedication and passion of the team, and this was key to enabling the development of our new strategy and preparing for our 20-year anniversary in 2019. In consultation with the team, the Board, the Scientific Committee, the Food Safety Consultative Council, industry fora and our key stakeholders in Government and the official agencies, we drafted our new five-year strategy. We also engaged an international panel of food safety experts from North America and the UK in order to ensure that our strategy was aligned to global best practice and the evolving regulatory landscape. This strategy will serve as a roadmap for the Authority from 2019 to 2023, and is in line with our obligations under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

I am really looking forward to working with the Authority to deliver our strategy over the coming years and to demonstrating, through scientific evidence, the impact of our activities on protecting consumers. Ireland has excellent food businesses that are producing food for the domestic and export markets, and through the work of Government Departments and other State agencies, Ireland is recognised as 'the food island'. This position brings with it the responsibility to produce the safest food we possibly can, and it is the Authority's role, through working in partnership with official agencies and food business operators,

2018

Professor Michael Gibney's term as Chairperson of the Board ended in February 2018.

20

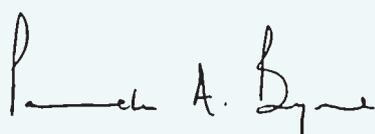
The Authority is celebrating its 20-year anniversary in 2019.

to demonstrate that we have the most robust official food control system possible. I believe that this will become even more important in the context of Brexit.

I would like to thank the Department of Health, particularly the Food Unit, for its continued support of the Authority, and in particular for providing sanction for the recruitment of staff to fill vacancies as they have arisen.

Finally, I would like to recognise the significant contribution and support of Professor Michael Gibney, whose term as Chairperson of the Board ended in February 2018. During his time as Chairperson, and through his previous work on the FSAI Scientific Committee, Professor Gibney was a strong influence on the work of the Authority, and we are grateful for his unyielding support and expertise. Mr Martin Higgins replaced Professor Gibney in February and I would like to thank him and the other Board members for their continued support and guidance during the year. I am looking forward to continuing to work closely with the Board and the new Chairperson, the team within the Authority, the Scientific Committee, the Food Safety Consultative Council, the official agencies, the staff in the laboratories and the industry fora as we work towards delivering on our new strategy over the next five years.

The Authority does not work in isolation. Collaboration and partnership are key values of the Authority, and in order to fulfil our mission we have to work in partnership with the official agencies and in collaboration with others.



Dr Pamela A Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

About the Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Legal basis

The Authority was established in 1998 under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 (S.I. No. 29 of 1998 as amended) as an independent Government agency responsible for the enforcement of food legislation in Ireland. This Act was enacted in July 1998 and came into effect on 1 January 1999.

The principal function of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) is to take all reasonable steps to ensure that food consumed, produced, distributed or marketed in the State meets the highest standards of food safety and hygiene reasonably available, and to ensure that food complies with legal requirements or, where appropriate, with recognised codes of good practice. During 2018, the Authority carried out an extensive consultation to define its new strategy for the next five years.

The Authority is a statutory, independent and science-based regulatory enforcement body dedicated to protecting public health and consumer interests in the area of food safety and hygiene. It comes under the aegis of the Minister for Health and currently has a 10-member Board. It also has a 15-member Scientific Committee that assists and advises the Board. Therefore, decisions relating to food safety and hygiene take account of the latest and best scientific advice and information available.

Everything the Authority does is about ensuring that people in Ireland have access to a safe food supply and truthful information about the food that they eat. By doing what it does, the Authority is also protecting the consumers of Irish food abroad. The Authority's activities are key to underpinning the health of Irish society and Ireland's economic growth.

The foundation of a healthy society and a functioning economy is healthy people making informed choices about the food that they eat. *The Department of Health Statement of Strategy 2016–2019* recognises the importance of ensuring that the appropriate legal frameworks, policies and relevant structures are in place in order to achieve the highest standards of food safety and to achieve its overall objective of supporting people to lead healthy

and independent lives. For individuals, unwanted bacteria, viruses and chemicals in food can have acute health effects (e.g. gastroenteritis) and chronic health effects (e.g. cancer), and these impact considerably on quality of life. In addition, the consequences of food poisoning at a societal level impact on the economy through inability to work as well as through healthcare costs and social welfare costs. According to the World Health Organization report *WHO Estimates of the Global Burden of Foodborne Diseases*, 31 foodborne hazards caused 600 million (95% uncertainty interval [UI] 420–960) foodborne illnesses and 420,000 (95% UI 310,000–600,000) deaths in 2010. Consequently, a safer food supply means improvements in the lives of people in Ireland through reduced illness rates, lower health and welfare costs, and increased economic productivity.

Food and drink manufacturing is the largest indigenous sector in Ireland, with exports of more than €12.1 billion in 2018. Ireland's food and drink export success is underpinned by meat and dairy exports, which accounted for 66% of total exports in 2018. Both employment and exports have now recovered to, or exceeded, 2009 levels. Additionally, 173,000 jobs are linked directly to the agri-food sector. The manufacture of food and drink products is Ireland's most important indigenous industry, with an average annual turnover of €27.5 billion.

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

The food and drink sector is dispersed throughout Ireland and is a strong driver of regional development, accounting for 9.7% of total employment in the four economically weakest regions (Mid-East, Border, Midlands and South-East). In addition to servicing the domestic grocery and food service markets, the industry is highly internationalised and exports to 180 countries. It maintains substantial market positions in the United Kingdom (UK), other European Union (EU) markets, and international markets.

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

Food Wise 2025, the report of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's 2025 Agri-Food Strategy Committee, sets out a cohesive, strategic plan for the development of the agri-food sector over the next decade. On the basis of available data and by taking the actions identified in the report, the Committee set out the following growth projections, which it believes are achievable by 2025:

66%

Meat and dairy exports accounted for 66% of total food and drink exports in 2018.

85%

Increase the value of agri-food exports by 85% to €19 billion.

€13bn

Increase value added in the agri-food, fisheries and wood products sectors by 70% to in excess of €13 billion.

65%

Increase the value of primary production by 65% to almost €10 billion.

23,000

Create an additional 23,000 direct jobs in the agri-food sector all along the supply chain, from primary production to high value-added product development.

As 2018 drew to a close, Brexit was a significant strategic threat to the Irish food and drink industry. Growth in food exports requires a high level of international confidence in the Irish food safety system. Simply put, there is no market for unsafe food. The work of the Authority in ensuring the safety of the Irish food supply will become even more significant if the *Food Wise 2025* projections are realised.



What the Authority does

The Authority is responsible for:

- Putting consumer interests first and foremost
- Providing advice to Ministers, regulators, the food industry and consumers on food safety issues
- Ensuring the coordinated and seamless delivery of food safety services to a high standard agreed by the various State agencies involved
- Ensuring that food complies with legal requirements or, where appropriate, with recognised codes of good practice
- Working with the food industry in order to gain its commitment in the production of safe food
- Setting food standards based on sound science and risk assessment
- Managing risk in association with front-line agencies and the food sector, and communicating risks to consumers, public health professionals and the food industry.

The Authority's key remit is the enforcement of food law, which is coordinated through working in partnership with other food regulatory authorities. Food legislation is enforced on behalf of the Authority by a network of official agencies through a service contracts programme, which the Authority monitors. The Authority also reports on the agencies' activities and seeks continuous improvement and accountability through a programme of regular audits.

Staff from the official agencies who work under service contract to the Authority carry out inspection and oversight functions in more than 49,000 food businesses, in order to ensure compliance with legal standards and codes of best practice. Inspection officers have a range of control measures at their disposal in the event of non-compliance with food law, including business closure and detention of food. The Authority also oversees a national monitoring and surveillance programme in collaboration with the official agencies and external bodies that measure exposure to harmful microorganisms and chemicals in the Irish diet. Data from these programmes form the basis of the Authority's control and prevention strategies, ensuring that consumer interests are first and foremost.

The Authority managed more than 700 food incidents and emergencies in 2018, and ensures that it keeps all stakeholders informed through regular communications and alerts on food recalls and withdrawals in the event of risk to consumers' health. As the national contact point for the European Commission's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) and for the World Health Organization's International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), the Authority deals with thousands of alerts annually. This work also includes tackling food crime, which involves extensive investigations in collaboration with a number of external bodies, including Revenue's Customs Service, An Garda Síochána, and the competent authorities with roles in official controls for food safety.

Science remains at the heart of the Authority. Independent scientific evidence underpins the Authority's advice to Government Ministers on food safety and nutrition issues. The scientific staff and members of the Authority's Scientific Committee and Subcommittees ensure that all work, from the day-to-day decision-making to work on risk assessment, is evidence based. The Authority follows and contributes to global developments in food science and technology, risk assessment, risk management, and official food control services.

The Authority works in partnership with the agri-food industry in order to gain the industry's commitment to the production and marketing of safe and correctly labelled foods. It works in collaboration with Bord Bia and the National Standards Authority of Ireland to establish standards and schemes in order to ensure the highest levels of food safety and hygiene in Irish food production. The Authority manages an Advice Line service for all stakeholders, which is available five days a week and took approximately 9,000 calls in 2018.

The Authority has a strong commitment to communicating the importance of food safety and the associated risks, and to providing people with timely, meaningful and tailored information. The Authority's website is its shop window for the world and received 2.2 million page views and 1.1 million visits in 2018. The Authority's enforcement activities and information resources are complemented by awareness campaigns, as well as practical advice and guidance for the food industry in order to make it easier for businesses to understand and abide by regulations, with an emphasis on minimising the burden of compliance for small food businesses.

The Authority is responsible for putting consumer interests first and foremost.

How the Authority operates

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

The official agencies working under this service contract agreement in 2018 were the Health Service Executive (HSE), the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, 26 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 are held with senior management in each agency and with the line managers responsible for the delivery of inspection and analysis services.

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



Industry engagement

The food industry is primarily responsible for the safety of food on the Irish market, whereas the Authority's role is one of oversight and enforcement. Consequently, the Authority engages with the food industry to encourage compliance and to make food businesses aware of their responsibilities. During 2018, the Authority continued to engage with the food industry on many levels in order to reinforce the need for the sector to take responsibility for producing and marketing safe food and to improve standards of food safety and hygiene.

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



BREAKFAST BITES

Each year the Authority hosts a series of informal meetings for food businesses called Breakfast Bites. These events provide expert information on the topics people want to know more about. They are very helpful for those who own or work in a small food business and also for those who want to get a new food business off the ground. During 2018, the topics covered included an introduction to food labelling and food business start-up information.

ARTISAN FORUM

The Artisan Forum brings together a diverse group of artisan, small-scale and domestic specialist food producers and provides them with an opportunity to discuss with the Authority food safety issues concerning the sector. The Forum is a vehicle for the Authority 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 is used outside of formal meetings to resolve issues arising in the sector regarding compliance with food safety legislation. In addition, the Forum allows for discussion on new legislative proposals and their possible impacts on artisan and small-scale food producers. It is a valuable resource for artisan food producers and the Authority, and it helps everyone involved to approach consumer protection with regard to facilitating the production of the diversity of artisan food. The Artisan Forum met three times in 2018. Some of the issues discussed at the meetings included the provision of 'local' slaughterhouses (particularly for poultry); consistency in the enforcement of food legislation; the regulation of artisan cheese producers; the need for guidance on producing fermented foods; the use of glyphosate and neonicotinoids; membership of the Forum; the Forum's terms of reference; updates on Teagasc activities of interest to the artisan food sector, and Brexit.

The Authority engages with the food industry to encourage compliance and to make food businesses aware of their responsibilities.

RETAIL FORUM

The Retail Forum includes representatives from both the main supermarket chains and the major symbol groups operating in Ireland. The Forum serves as a useful mechanism to increase understanding of food legislation, disseminate food safety advice, and share best practice. The Retail Forum met three times in 2018. The main issues discussed were antimicrobial resistance; spirits drinks legislation; the FSAI Strategy 2019–2023; Brexit; *Campylobacter*; allergen information on non-prepacked foods; single-use plastics; country-of-origin claims; enforcement consistency; boil water notices; and blockchain.

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 Food Service Forum met once in 2018. The main issues discussed were antimicrobial resistance; serving burgers that are safe to eat; acrylamide; review of the *FSAI Safe Catering Pack*; country-of-origin labelling; MenuCal; the allergen information requirements for 'drive-through' businesses; online meal ordering and delivery services; and frozen berries.

MOLLUSCAN SHELLFISH SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee is the national stakeholder committee for the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme. The aim of the Programme is to ensure that only safe shellfish are placed on the market. The Committee is chaired by the Authority and includes representatives from the official agencies, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, the shellfish industry, and other stakeholder groups. During 2018, the Committee met four times and discussed a wide range of issues, including sample coordination, biotoxin events and shellfish water quality. The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority and the Marine Institute kept the Committee up to date in relation to the ongoing EU baseline survey on norovirus, research into the possible presence of tetrodotoxin, and developments regarding shellfish safety within Europe. The Committee oversaw reviews of both the biotoxin and microbiological codes of practice under the Programme. The Committee members provided user feedback to the Marine Institute as phases of the new harmful algal blooms biotoxin database were launched, and stakeholders also supported the Marine Institute in its hosting of the International Conference on Molluscan Shellfish Safety.



Food Safety
AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

Educators' Workshop
Does your syllabus deliver for food safety and food law?

EDUCATORS' WORKSHOP

The Authority hosted an educators' workshop in 2018. This was aimed at staff and lecturers responsible for the curriculum development of food-related courses. The workshop explored how food safety and food law can be implemented in higher and further education courses, and it also outlined the importance of including these elements in such courses.

Collaborations

The Authority recognises and values the importance of its collaborators and partners in delivering a system of controls for food safety and authenticity that ensure we can achieve our vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone. Collaboration is one of the core values of the FSAI, and we fully believe that our ability to protect consumers can only be achieved through working in partnership and collaboration within the FSAI and with our key stakeholders.

During 2018, the Authority continued its collaborations with a number of organisations both in Ireland and abroad. Its close cooperation and collaboration with the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland is also enabled through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that is designed to ensure rapid and effective cooperation in the event of a cross-border food incident and to address issues related to consistency of enforcement in both jurisdictions. The MoU between the Loughs Agency and the Authority covers assistance provided by the Loughs Agency to facilitate the operation of the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme in Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough. In 2018, the Authority continued to work with *safe*food on areas of mutual interest and to identify opportunities for future collaboration. We also worked with other regulators in Ireland, including the Health Products Regulatory Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency. From a global perspective, we shared ideas with Canada and New Zealand with a view to developing a more formal

working relationship in the future. The Authority also has a confidentiality agreement with the United States (US) Food and Drug Administration. And we continue to host foreign delegations who wish to learn more about the Authority's strategy and operations.

The Authority contributes to the HSE's Scientific Advisory Committee of the Health Protection Surveillance Centre and to the Health Advisory Committee of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Authority is an ongoing active contributor on a number of other committees from other organisations, the purposes of which are to raise and maintain standards in the food sector. These organisations include: Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland; Bord Bia; Broadcasting Authority of Ireland; Food Drink Ireland; Global TRUST Certification; National Heart Alliance; National Hygiene Partnership; and the National Standards Authority of Ireland.

The Authority is an active member of the European Food Safety Authority and the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies, and it also chairs Food Law Enforcement Practitioners, an EU group of inspectors and laboratory personnel engaged in food law implementation. In addition, the Authority participates in a global government-to-government meeting on the use of private certification schemes in the context of official controls and is an active member of the International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods (ICMSF).

The Authority is an ongoing active contributor on a number of other committees from other organisations, the purposes of which are to raise and maintain standards in the food sector.

€5m

In 2018, the Authority, along with a consortium of Irish Government agencies and their international partners, applied for a €5 million EU grant to support Albania as a candidate for accession to the EU, by strengthening its food safety, veterinary and plant health standards over the next four years.

The Authority assists agencies in other countries which regard it as a model for single national food control agencies. In addition, it continues to be a member of Sustainable Food Systems Ireland (SFSI) – an initiative by Enterprise Ireland and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to make Ireland’s food safety, scientific, technical, policy, and agri-food expertise available to support development overseas. In 2018, the Authority, along with a consortium of Irish Government agencies and their international partners, applied for a €5 million EU grant to support Albania as a candidate for accession to the EU, by strengthening its food safety, veterinary and plant health standards over the next four years. The consortium would be led by the Authority and includes the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, with project management by SFSI. Other partners are the Finnish Food Authority and an Albanian not-for-profit partner, Creative Business Solutions.

Discussions with the food agencies in Vietnam and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade took place in 2018, in order to plan further engagement and support from the Authority as part of the Irish Aid international development programme in Vietnam. This followed a training and scoping visit to Vietnam by Authority staff members in 2017. A proposal was developed for a reciprocal training visit to Ireland for Vietnamese food safety officials in 2019.

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

The Authority collaborates with Food Drink Ireland (FDI) on horizon scanning through the Emerging Risks and Threats Forum, which has members from the FSAI, FDI and the larger multinational food manufacturers.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS EVENT

In 2018, the Authority joined more than 25 State bodies and services in coming together to offer advice to small businesses in the Mid-West. The event was organised by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation in conjunction with the FSAI and the Health and Safety Authority. This annual event is very useful for the Authority, as it allows it to provide direct guidance to small businesses based in the Mid-West.



Food Safety Authority of Ireland Strategy 2016–2018

In 2016, following substantial internal and external stakeholder consultations, the Authority launched a new Strategy which sets out its new vision, mission, values, and strategic goals and objectives for 2016–2018. The vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone clearly articulates the Authority's ambition, and the delivery of the Strategy builds upon the work undertaken in the past, fostering a partnership approach by delivering a strategically planned food safety regulatory system that continues to be relevant, progressive and robust for the future.

The Authority's success is firmly based on working collaboratively with those in the food safety community, and its commitment to protecting consumers is the foundation of its mission, which states:

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

The following values underpin how the Authority works:

- **Integrity** – We are honest, open and independent in all that we do.
- **Passion** – We are passionate about protecting consumers.
- **Respect** – We act with respect and personal responsibility.
- **Innovation** – We change in order to do things better in pursuit of excellence.
- **Collaboration** – We recognise and value our partners.
- **Teamwork** – We develop and inspire our people to build a better organisation.

These values guide the Authority's decisions and interactions as the organisation strives to achieve its vision and deliver on its mission and strategic goals. In 2018, the Authority devised a new strategy and mission statement to guide its vision for the next five years.



The Food Safety Authority of Ireland Strategy 2016–2018 document.

Corporate social responsibility

The Authority is dedicated to operating in a socially responsible manner. As a public agency, we are aware of the impact that our activities have on our staff, our stakeholders, the general public and the environment. In 2018, fundraising, education, and environmental savings were identified as key areas for corporate social responsibility (CSR) development.

The Authority is committed to carrying out its statutory duties in an environmentally friendly manner. In late 2017, the Authority moved into a new building called 'The Exchange'. The building holds LEED Gold Standard accreditation due to its emphasis on sustainability and energy efficiency. This has allowed the Authority to minimise both its environmental impact and operational costs. The building is also rated BER A3. By comparison with buildings which have a BER C1 rating, this allows a 50% reduction in energy consumption, a 51% reduction in carbon emissions, and a 30% reduction in water usage. In addition to this, the Authority has undertaken specific measures to reduce printing and increase light savings; these measures include reducing the number of printers and utilising LED lighting throughout the building.

As an information-led organisation, we understand that our staff are our most important asset and we are committed to making the Authority a fulfilling place to work. In 2018, staff upskilling and wellness were selected as key areas for development, including supporting staff initiatives such as mindfulness, yoga, a book club and other social activities. Following a staff engagement survey, several opportunities were identified, and further initiatives will be rolled out in 2019. The Authority also provides excellent upskilling opportunities for the team, with numerous staff members having availed of online learning, training courses and further professional development opportunities in 2018.

The Authority continued to place an emphasis on contributing to the education of the future generation of food scientists, food safety inspectors and those studying for a career in regulatory agencies through lectures and seminars across Ireland. During 2018, the Authority developed a teaching lesson for the Science and Technology in Action initiative to increase the uptake of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects at second level. Student training was provided both by student placement in the FSAI and by the organisation of a regulatory training course for master's students in the FSAI in conjunction with the other functional areas. Further outreach at third level included 66 hours of lectures in four institutions of higher education and the creation of a Newman Fellowship in the area of molecular microbiology at University College Dublin, funded by the FSAI.

The Authority is also committed to supporting communities both locally and nationally. During 2018, the FSAI team engaged in fundraising initiatives for several charities. In addition, FSAI Chief Executive Officer Dr Pamela Byrne took part in Focus Ireland's Shine A Light Night to sleep out in solidarity with homeless people and those at risk of homelessness.

Operating in a socially responsible manner is an ethos which permeates throughout the core of the Authority, and we will continue to build upon this work in 2019 and beyond.



FOCUS IRELAND SLEEP-OUT

During 2018, the FSAI team engaged in fundraising initiatives for several charities. In addition, FSAI Chief Executive Officer Dr Pamela Byrne took part in Focus Ireland's Shine A Light Night to sleep out in solidarity with homeless people and those at risk of homelessness.



Life@FSAI

The LIFE@FSAI Health and Wellbeing Framework focuses on enhancing life for staff at the FSAI. It has resulted in a number of new initiatives being set up within the organisation, such as book clubs, yoga and mindfulness classes.

INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY 2018

To mark International Men's Day 2018, Professor Niall Moyna, Dublin City University, gave an insightful talk to FSAI staff on the importance of health and fitness.

Governance and management

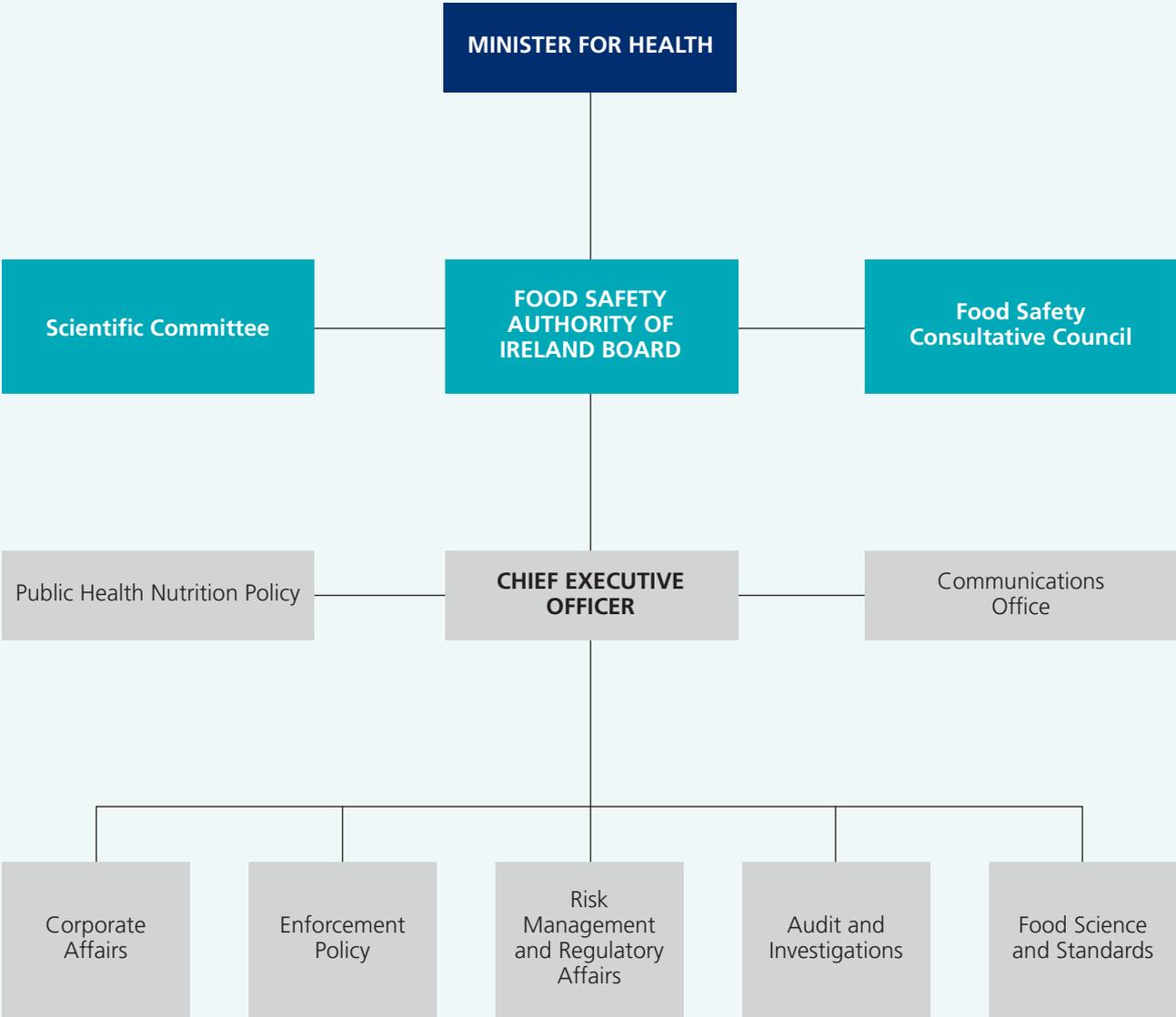
The Authority has a non-executive Board, appointed by the Minister for Health, which is responsible for the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer and for oversight of corporate governance in accordance with Government guidelines. Two independent bodies advise the Board: the Food Safety Consultative Council, comprising stakeholders in the food chain (e.g. food industry, consumers), and the Scientific Committee, comprising scientists. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

The Scientific Committee comprises 15 independent scientists appointed by the Minister for Health in consultation with the Board. The Chairperson of the Scientific Committee must be a member of the Board. The Scientific Committee advises the Board on scientific matters underpinning food safety and nutrition, and the Authority may not act on an issue referred to the Scientific Committee until such time as its opinion is provided to the Board. The Scientific Committee establishes subcommittees of independent scientists to progress its advice; consequently, the Authority is advised by the work of approximately 60 scientists.



Figure 1: Management structure

Government
Advisory
Executive



FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND BOARD, 2018

Prof. Michael Gibney
(Chairperson until February 2018)

Mr Martin Higgins
(Board Member and then Chairperson from February 2018)

Mr Ciaran Byrne

Ms Mary Cullen

Mr Derek Cunningham

Prof. Albert Flynn

Ms Margaret Moran

Ms Ros O'Shea

Dr Susan Quinn

Prof. Patrick Wall

FOOD SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL, 2018

Mr Ray Bowe (Chairperson)
Musgrave Retail Partners Ireland

Mr Pat Daly
Teagasc (retired)

Ms Una Fitzgibbon
Bord Bia

Ms Maree Gallagher
Food Law Solicitor

Mr Dermot Gates
Boxmore Plastics Ltd.

Mr Cormac Healy
Meat Industry Ireland

Mr Dermot Jewell
Consumers' Association of Ireland

Mr Jamie Knox
Britvic Ireland

Mr Brendan Kehoe
Dairy farmer

Mr Donal Maguire
Bord Iascaigh Mhara

Ms Siobhan Murphy
Health Service Executive

Mr James McCrudden
Country Markets

Mr Tim O'Brien
Restaurateur

Mr Eamonn Quinn
Kelsius

Mr Martin Roper
Food Safety Consultant

Ms Annette Sweeney
Dublin Institute of Technology
(Technological University Dublin)

FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE, 2018

Prof. Albert Flynn (Chairperson)
University College Cork

Dr Paula Barry Walsh
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Prof. Kevin Cashman
University College Cork

Dr PJ Cullen
Dublin Institute of Technology
(Technological University Dublin)

Dr Geraldine Duffy
Teagasc

Dr Mark Fenelon
Food Research Centre, Teagasc

Mr John Keegan
Dublin Public Analyst's Laboratory

Prof. Brian McKenna
University College Dublin (retired)

Dr Eleanor McNamara
Health Service Executive

Prof. Simon More
University College Dublin

Dr Michael O'Keeffe
Residue Specialist

Dr Margaret O'Sullivan
Health Service Executive

Mr Ray Parle
Health Service Executive

Dr Donal Sammin
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Ms Ita Saul
Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin
(retired)



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dr Pamela A Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Authority as well as for providing leadership among her peers in food safety agencies across Europe and beyond. She is supported by the Senior Leadership Team, which oversees operations within the Authority's five functional areas. The CEO's office is also responsible for liaison with the Authority's Board and the coordination of the communications function, as well as stakeholder management and engagement; the organisation of events; the design and publishing of the Authority's publications; the promotion of the work of the Authority in the media; and the representation of Ireland at the European Food Safety Authority's Communications Experts Network. In 2018, due to the increasing focus of the Irish Government on the delivery of Healthy Ireland and the need to coordinate scientific evidence to underpin Public Health Nutrition Policy, the Public Health Nutrition Policy team was reassigned to the CEO's office. This team is responsible for providing the secretariat to the Authority's Scientific Public Health Nutrition Subcommittee and to various national working groups in the area of nutrition. The Public Health Nutrition Policy team also chairs the Codex Alimentarius Electronic Working Group to develop an international nutrition standard for older infants and young children.

The CEO is the Irish representative to the European Food Safety Authority's Advisory Forum and the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies group. She is a member of the Irish delegation to the Codex Alimentarius Commission; the Chairperson of the European Joint Programming Initiative 'A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life' (until July 2018); a member of the Board of the Agri-Food Graduate Development Programme; a member of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's Research Advisory Committee; and Chairperson of University College Dublin's Institute of Food and Health Advisory Board. The CEO is also the Chairperson of the Board of the Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies.

The CEO is the Irish representative to the European Food Safety Authority's Advisory Forum and the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies group.



CORPORATE AFFAIRS

Kevin Roantree

Director, Corporate Affairs

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

Corporate Affairs has responsibility for the human resources (HR), finance, information technology (IT), information and data management, organisational development, Freedom of Information, corporate governance, and general facilities management functions of the organisation. This functional area is key to ensuring that the Authority achieves its business objectives internally and externally and utilises innovative approaches to constantly improve its services and ensure the optimal utilisation of resources. The Corporate Affairs team also leads the Authority's ISO 9001:2015 compliance for its Quality Management System and works with colleagues across the organisation in developing and delivering upon the FSAI's business planning and reporting mechanism.



ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Dr Bernard Hegarty

Director, Enforcement Policy

The Enforcement Policy functional area, led by Dr Bernard Hegarty, is responsible for the enforcement of food legislation in Ireland. A key activity is the management of the service contracts with the Authority's official agencies, which carry out the enforcement activities. The service contract mechanism for the enforcement of food safety legislation was mandated under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 and has been in place since 1999. Service contracts are in place with 31 official agencies. Most of the team's activities are focused on supporting the strategic goal of enforcing food legislation with our regulatory partners. The Enforcement Policy team also provides advice on proposed legislation to Government Departments and operates one of the Authority's consultative fora (the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee). There are four main official agencies, and the structure of the Enforcement Policy functional area reflects this operating model. The team also organises the preparation and follow-up for the cross-agency audits carried out by the European Commission and other bodies.



RISK MANAGEMENT AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Raymond Ellard

Director, Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs

Mr Raymond Ellard leads the Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs (RMRA) functional area, which has two main roles within the Authority: risk management and regulatory affairs. It is responsible for leading on risk management decisions required in relation to food incidents and food alerts. The risk management decisions taken by the Authority are based on risk assessments, often provided by the staff in the Authority's Food Science and Standards group. In addition, the RMRA group is the national contact point for the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), a network managed by the European Commission to exchange information between members of the network – including EU Member States, the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority – on hazards identified in food, feed, and food contact materials. RMRA is also responsible for the development of the Authority's regulatory strategy. This is achieved through consultations with veterinary, agricultural and environment health experts within the team. RMRA also manages the Authority's food supplement notification system, which was redeveloped in 2018. RMRA's training and compliance team ensures that the right tools are developed and in place to enable food safety inspectors' understanding of, and industry compliance with, the law. The team is also responsible for the management and coordination of the Food Safety Consultative Council, the Artisan Forum, the Retail Forum, and the Food Service Forum.



AUDIT AND INVESTIGATIONS

Peter Whelan

Director, Audit and Investigations

Mr Peter Whelan leads the Audit and Investigations functional area, which is responsible for audits and investigations into protected disclosures, and food fraud. The team carries out audits of the official controls systems and targeted audits of food businesses, all of which are in accordance with the Authority's legal mandate. They also provide support during third-country and European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (SANTE F) audits in Ireland. The annual risk-based audit programme is designed to ensure adequate coverage of all relevant areas of activity and all official agencies over a period not exceeding five years. Audit reports and their corrective action plans are published on the Authority's website. The team also conducts special investigations in conjunction with competent authorities where serious breaches of food law have been alleged or food fraud has been detected. These investigations are designed to determine the nature and extent of non-compliance with food law and/or related food fraud. Outcomes of such investigations may result in enforcement actions and criminal proceedings being taken against offenders.



FOOD SCIENCE AND STANDARDS

Dr Wayne Anderson

Director, Food Science and Standards

The Food Science and Standards functional area is led by Dr Wayne Anderson and provides scientific expertise to underpin the Authority's risk management activities. As well as carrying out in-house risk assessments, it manages and supports the work of the Authority's Scientific Committee, which comprises 15 independent scientists appointed by the Minister for Health. Experts in the Food Science and Standards functional area also provide scientific and technical input into the development of legislation at the European level through work on expert groups within the European Commission. Additionally, the team provides Government Departments with sound scientific advice for food safety and nutrition policy development. It also provides technical guides and tools for the food industry in order to help the industry produce safe food. The Food Science and Standards functional area is also involved in international standards setting through the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Food Science and Standards staff organise and conduct food monitoring studies in order to assess the safety of food, provide input into national and European food safety research policy, maintain expert networks with third-level institutions throughout Ireland and beyond, and communicate the Authority's scientific findings at national and international meetings. The team's aim is to provide the scientific basis for the Authority's activities.

The FSAI's directors oversee the Corporate Affairs, Enforcement Policy, Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs, Audit and Investigations and Food Science and Standards functional areas.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

In compliance with the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies (2016), the Authority has a Corporate Governance Framework in place. This Framework was developed in order to assist in improving efficiency and enhancing openness and transparency. The Framework provides guidance for the organisation, detailing aspects such as conducting Board business, strategic planning, operational processes, risk management, financial control, and standards of behaviour. During 2018, the Authority ensured and maintained compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

THE BOARD

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

The Corporate Governance Framework in place at the Food Safety Authority was developed in order to assist in improving efficiency and enhancing openness and transparency.

BOARD AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

The Authority has a fully functioning Board Audit and Risk Committee which undertook the following audits during 2018: internal financial controls, food studies, and risk management. During 2018, the Board continued to review its effectiveness. It also commenced the process of having an independent assessment of the Board's (and of the Board Audit and Risk Committee's) effectiveness. This was completed and will be considered by the Board in early 2019.

The Financial Statements, as approved by the Board Audit and Risk Committee and the Board, were subject to audit by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General. Four Board Audit and Risk Committee meetings were held in 2018. The Board Audit and Risk Committee has an independent role in providing the Board with assurance on internal control, risk management, audit, and assurance matters, as part of the systematic review of the control environment and governance procedures of the Authority. The Board Audit and Risk Committee operates under an agreed charter and prepares a formal annual report for the Board.

Number of meetings:

Four

Chairperson:

Ms Margaret Moran

Membership:

Mr Ray Dolan, Ms Mary Cullen,
Mr Ciaran Byrne (replaced by
Ms Ros O'Shea in September 2018)

29

During 2018, there were 29 Freedom of Information requests.

THE NOMINATIONS AND REMUNERATIONS COMMITTEE

The Nominations and Remunerations Committee is appointed as an independent subcommittee of the Board to manage the Chief Executive Officer or senior management recruitment process. As required, the Committee agrees remuneration with Government Departments, develops the job description, identifies the relevant competencies and ideal candidate profile for the post, agrees the recruitment and search process, and sets a specific timetable. The Nominations and Remunerations Committee convenes as required by the Board. No meetings were held in 2018.

Chairperson:

Mr Martin Higgins

Membership:

Prof. Albert Flynn, Prof. Patrick Wall

STATUTORY AND OTHER NOTICES

The Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act, 2001.

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

PROTECTED DISCLOSURES ACT 2014

There were five protected disclosures made to the Authority in 2018 from employers or former employees of the food industry.

PROMPT PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS ACT, 1997

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

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2014

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 asserts the right of members of the public to access official information to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy of individuals. The Authority complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and publishes under Section 8 of the Act. This publication contains information about the services provided, or to be provided, to the public by the Authority, and it also features a disclosures log and financial information. During 2018, there were 29 Freedom of Information requests.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT) REGULATIONS 2007

The European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 133 of 2007) gives legal rights to those seeking access to information on the environment from public authorities. During 2018, there was one request under Access to Information on the Environment legislation.

CUSTOMER CHARTER

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

1

During 2018, there was one request under Access to Information on the Environment legislation.

5

There were five protected disclosures made to the Authority in 2018 from employers or former employees of the food industry.

Key highlights of the Authority's activities

The Official Food Control System: the numbers at a glance

INSPECTIONS OF FOOD BUSINESSES

In 2018, 49,268 food businesses were under the supervision of official agencies that have service contracts with the Authority (Table 1). This represents a small (1.2%) decrease from 2017. Of the registered food businesses inspected, about 92% 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 local authorities. This distribution of food businesses inspected by the official agencies has been similar over the past five years. A wide range of activities is carried out by these food businesses, from importing and manufacturing through to distributing, retailing and catering operations.

Table 1: Number and type of food businesses under supervision by official agencies, 2014–2018

Official agency	Premises type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Primary producers	313	311	114	123	337
	Manufacturers and packers	373	383	297	352	441
	Distributors and transporters	107	120	411	419	236
	Total	793	814	822	894	1,014
Health Service Executive	Service sector	28,843	29,222	28,933	29,177	28,676
	Retailers	11,259	11,362	12,950	13,529	13,336
	Not assigned		39	23	46	46
	Importers/exporters	79	57			
	Manufacturers	3,039	3,110	2,109	1,437	1,436
	Packers	100	108	117	121	120
	Transporters	80	105	123	132	144
	Wholesalers/distributors	1,111	1,183	1,138	1,158	1,183
	Third-country importers/exporters			37	41	41
	Administrative food businesses			102	162	208
	Total	44,511	45,186	45,532	45,803	45,190
Local authorities	Slaughterhouses	205	205	201	195	182
	Small meat manufacturing plants	197	200	204	209	211
	Poultry plants	34	38	40	38	40
	Cold stores	29	31	36	43	45
	Butcher shops	7	8	9	8	9
	Mobile businesses	15	16	21	33	34
	Total	487	498	511	526	521

Official agency	Premises type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	Fishing vessels	2,077	2,077	2,195	2,079	1,912
	Approved establishments on land	179	195			
	Molluscan production areas	137	141	2	182	185
	Registered food businesses on land (including ice plants)	99	110	8	10	11
	Food broker					1
	Freezer and factory vessels	45	52	40	60	65
	Processing plants			111	121	124
	Fresh fishery products plants			60	60	72
	Importers			53	58	64
	Cold stores		16	15	16	15
	Shellfish farmers			17	33	35
	Purification plants			16	17	20
	Dispatch centres			12	14	15
	Mobile businesses			9		7
	Transporters					8
	Wholesalers/distributors					8
	Auction halls					1
Total		2,537	2,591	2,539	2,651	2,543
Total number of food premises		48,328	49,089	49,404	49,874	49,268

STAFF WORKING IN OFFICIAL CONTROLS

The official agencies report annually to the Authority on the staff resources they have dedicated to official controls, under the service contracts. In 2018, 1,152 whole time equivalents (WTEs) were involved in carrying out official controls in Irish food businesses (Table 2). 2018 saw an increase of six WTEs over the number in 2017; however, the number of WTEs in the food safety inspectorate in Ireland has decreased from a high of 1,280 in 2011. The food safety inspectorate continues to develop its expertise through training courses. In 2018, 678 courses were taken by the inspectorate.

Table 2: Whole time equivalents by official agency, 2014–2018

Official agency	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine					
Inspection Service	315	319	319	338	345
Laboratory Service	76	84	79	82	82
Health Service Executive					
Environmental Health Service	305	304	336	339	339
Laboratory Service	128	128	104	130	124
Food Safety Authority of Ireland	68	72	70	73	79
Local authorities	98	101	116	104	101
Marine Institute	29	38	41	41	41
National Standards Authority of Ireland	1	1	1	1	1
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	40	43	42	36	40
Total number of whole time equivalent inspectors	1,060	1,090	1,108	1,144	1,150

FOOD INSPECTIONS

All official agencies operate risk-based programmes of official controls, and each agency categorises risk in agreement with the Authority. Those food businesses which carry out activities that present the greatest potential risk to human health are prioritised for inspection. Unannounced inspections of food businesses are a key element of the official controls, as well as other activities, such as food sampling and investigation of incidents and outbreaks. There has been a decline in recent years in the number of inspections carried out (Table 3). In addition to planned inspections, a significant number of unplanned inspections take place; these arise as a result of food incidents, investigations, follow-up on complaints from the public, and advisory visits to food businesses. In 2018, the Health Service Executive Environmental Health Service carried out 11,668 other inspections of food businesses.

Table 3: Number of planned food inspections by official agencies, 2014–2018

Official agency	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Health Service Executive (Environmental Health Service)	35,053	36,353	35,786	33,193	32,254
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Inspectorate)	15,021	15,011	11,985	11,569	10,826
Local authorities	4,802	5,033	4,870	4,891	4,582
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	2,035	2,015	2,228	2,245	2,122
National Standards Authority of Ireland	77	61	72	84	62
Total number of food business inspections	56,988	58,473	54,941	51,982	49,846

FOOD SAMPLING

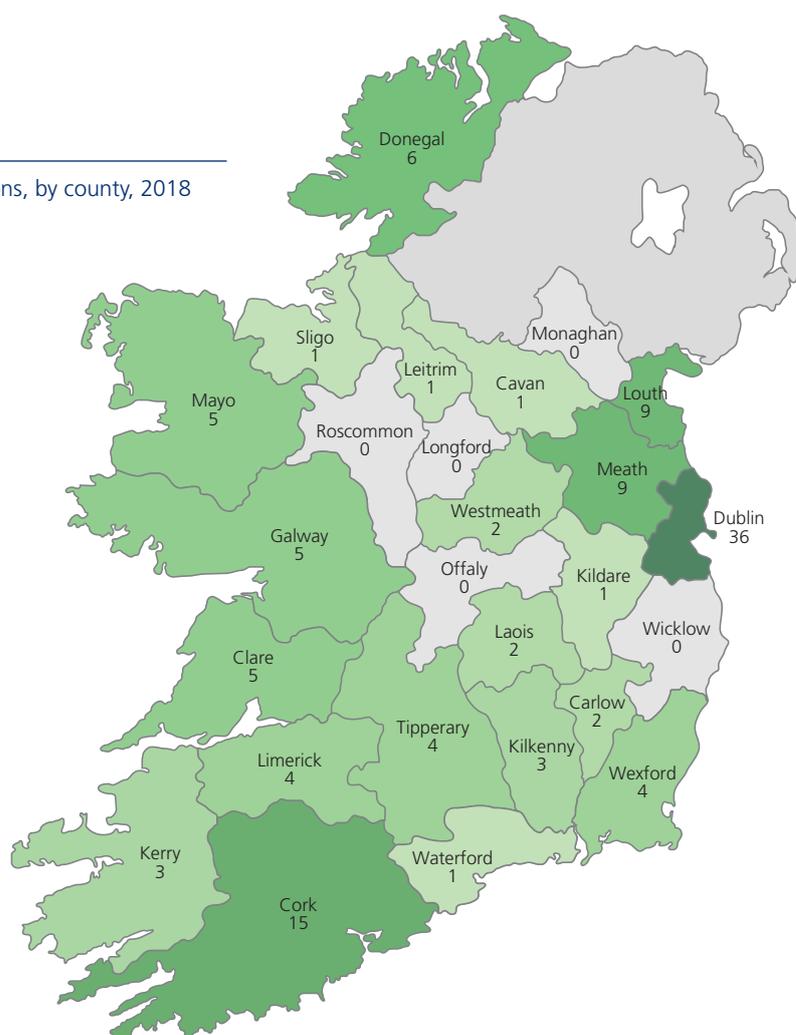
The service contracts include programmes by the official agencies for the sampling and testing of food for compliance with all aspects of food legislation. Samples taken by the food safety inspectorates are analysed by a network of official and national reference laboratories operated by the official agencies. In 2018, 63,839 samples were taken and tested, an increase of 10.8% compared with 2017 (Table 4).

Table 4: Number of samples taken by official agency, 2015–2018

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

ENFORCEMENTS

During 2018, food inspectors served 95 Closure Orders, 5 Improvement Orders and 10 Prohibition Orders on food businesses and took 9 prosecutions against food businesses throughout Ireland (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Enforcement Orders and prosecutions, by county, 2018

The types of recurring food safety issues which lead to Enforcement Orders and Improvement Notices (Table 5) are poor cleaning and sanitation of premises; poor personal hygiene; lack of running water; inadequate hand-washing facilities; incorrect food storage; lack of or an ineffective pest control programme; structural problems arising from lack of ongoing maintenance; and lack of or an inadequate food safety management system.

Table 5: Enforcements and prosecutions served, 2014–2018

Enforcement action	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Closure Order	96	90	94	64	95
Improvement Notice	269	265	263	262	230
Improvement Order	1	0	3	1	5
Prohibition Order	16	16	9	4	10
Prosecution	12	13	13	11	9
Total	394	384	382	342	349



Communications

Over the course of 2018, the Communications team responded to 220 media queries and issued 21 press releases. The Authority organised four events in 2018, including two 'Breakfast Bites', an educators' workshop and a workshop for laboratories on the rules for microbiological sampling and testing. In addition, 22 publications were published on the FSAI website.



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

The Authority's two-way communication is facilitated by its Advice Line, website, library, extranet and social media pages. Over the course of 2018, the Authority organised four events, including two 'Breakfast Bites', an educators' workshop and a workshop for laboratories on the rules for microbiological sampling and testing. The Authority also collaborated with more than 30 State agencies for the Taking Care of Business exhibition, which is a one-stop shop for businesses, entrepreneurs and start-ups to get information and advice from State offices and agencies. The Communications team responded to 220 media queries and issued 21 press releases, including the monthly Enforcement Orders press releases. The team continued its work on a stakeholder engagement project, which is a means to improve collaboration, create a wider understanding of the Authority's role, and encourage and create change in line with scientific developments and changes in regulation, while also supporting those directly involved in seeking to provide a robust official food control system. It also ran, for a second year, its allergen information campaign across print, online and broadcast media, targeting food service businesses with strong messages highlighting the potential consequences that missing or inaccurate food allergen information can have on an individual's health.

A total of 22 publications were published on the website, including guidance notes for the industry, audit reports, FSAI Scientific Committee reports, surveys, and other materials.



In 2018, Authority staff were regularly invited to speak on national and local radio. The Authority continued its active engagement with stakeholders through Facebook and Twitter, with an increase in the number of followers to 12,114 and 7,663, respectively. The Authority also actively engaged on LinkedIn in 2018, resulting in an increase in followers from 9,741 in 2017 to 12,272 in 2018. A total of 22 publications were published on the website, including guidance notes for the industry, audit reports, FSAI Scientific Committee reports, surveys, and other materials to support the achievement of the Authority's vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone.





Corporate Affairs

During 2018, Corporate Affairs ensured, and reported upon, its compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and agreed its Oversight Agreement/ Performance Delivery Agreement (OA/PDA) with the Department of Health. It devised and implemented a programme to develop the Authority's culture, achieved certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard, provided a broad range of training programmes, and achieved the highest level of assurance following completion of a review of the systems of internal financial controls.



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

The Corporate Affairs functional area is responsible for finance, HR, organisational development, data collection and analysis, information, IT, and facilities, as well as managing and ensuring adherence to its obligations with regard to governance, procurement, Freedom of Information and data protection. In addition, it oversees the Authority's business planning and reporting mechanism.

During 2018, the Authority ensured, and reported upon, its compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and agreed its Oversight Agreement/Performance Delivery Agreement (OA/PDA) with the Department of Health. In addition, it provided the Department of Health with quarterly updates on progress against the OA/PDA as part of the agreed governance arrangement, and did so within an improved business reporting template which clearly highlighted progress, any deviation from planned work and the appropriate measures being taken to manage it.

In 2018, Corporate Affairs oversaw the design and implementation of a significant programme which sought to develop the Authority's culture in order to ensure that it is collaborative, high-performing and based on positive teamwork. This commenced with a detailed staff survey, into which more than 90% of staff provided valuable and constructive input.

The Authority is committed to having in place a strong 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 functional areas and all staff, and regularly reviewing achievements. In 2018, the Authority achieved certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard.

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

An efficient and effective finance function continues to be in place within the Authority in order to ensure appropriate management and control over resources, and also to ensure that relevant accounting standards are met and adhered to, and that effective financial management systems and controls are operating. During 2018, the internal auditors conducted a review of the systems of internal financial controls, and the level of assurance achieved was 'substantial', the highest level available. The Authority also ensures that Department of Finance and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform budgetary measures are implemented in terms of salary, travel rates, procurement and other expenditure savings.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

With the publication of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016), the Authority worked to achieve full compliance with the new Code over the course of 2018. The Authority also agreed its Service Level Agreement (SLA) with its lead Department, the Department of Health, and updated this SLA in line with the Code as an Oversight Agreement and a Performance Delivery Agreement. The Authority operated in full compliance with its tax obligations during the year.

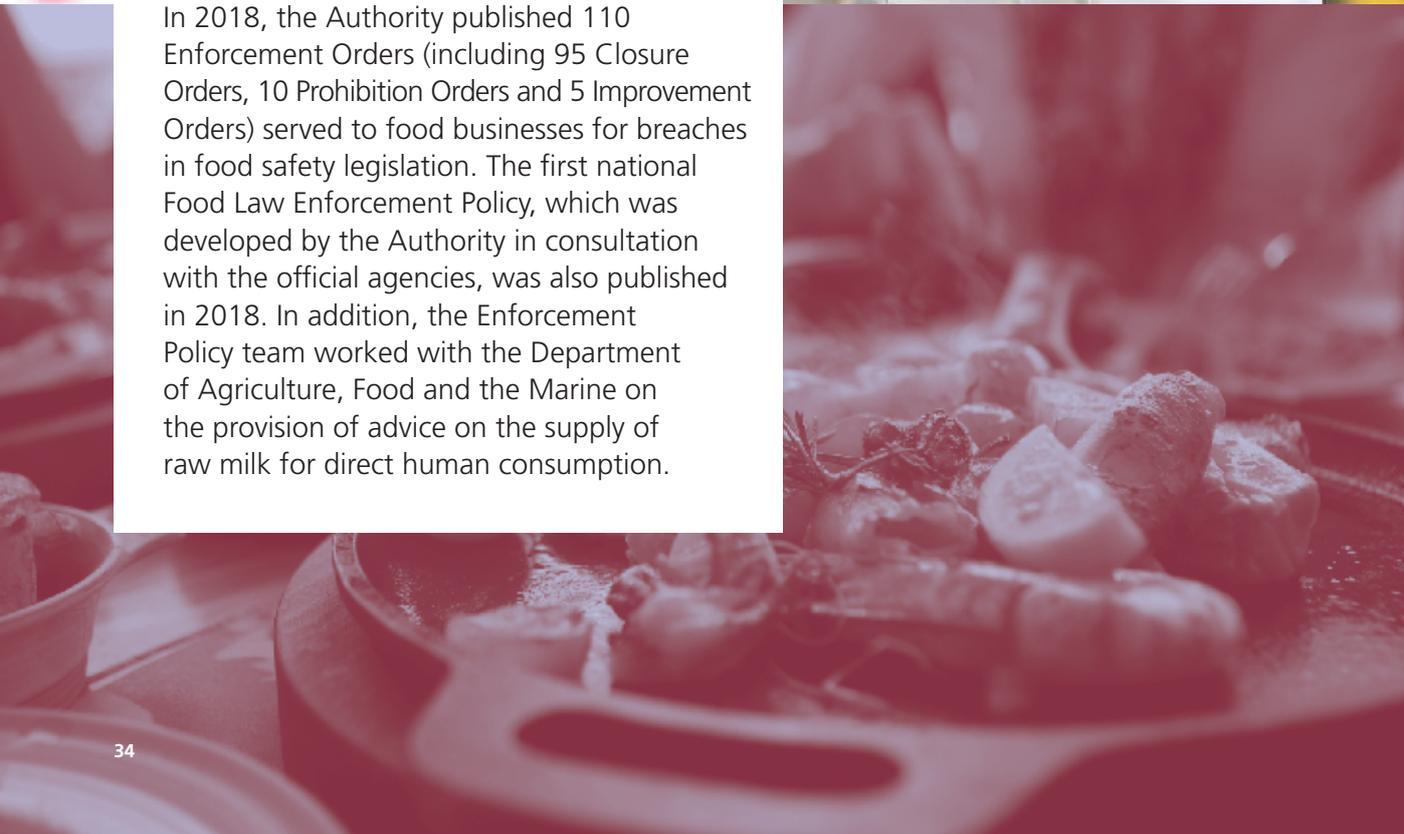
In accordance with Section 41 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 and with the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act, 2001, members of the Authority's Board, Scientific Committee, Scientific Subcommittees, and designated Authority staff are required to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

The Authority had a fully functioning Board Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) in 2018. The ARC comprises three Board members and one independent member. The role of the ARC is to support the Board in relation to its responsibilities regarding issues of risk, control, and governance, and associated assurance. The ARC is independent from the financial management of the organisation; in particular, the Committee ensures that the internal control systems, including audit activities, are monitored actively and independently. The ARC undertook audits of internal financial controls, procurement and the Local Authority Veterinary Service (LAVS). There were four ARC meetings in 2018, which is in compliance with the obligations under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). The Financial Statements, as approved by the ARC and by the Board, were subject to audit by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, with a number of low-risk audit issues to be addressed during 2019. As described in the Authority's Statement on Internal Control for 2018, while there was a strong system of internal control in operation during the year, there is a need to further improve the Authority's procurement systems. This is being addressed during 2019.



Enforcement Policy

In 2018, the Authority published 110 Enforcement Orders (including 95 Closure Orders, 10 Prohibition Orders and 5 Improvement Orders) served to food businesses for breaches in food safety legislation. The first national Food Law Enforcement Policy, which was developed by the Authority in consultation with the official agencies, was also published in 2018. In addition, the Enforcement Policy team worked with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on the provision of advice on the supply of raw milk for direct human consumption.



The main service contracts with the 31 official agencies continued to operate during 2018. Negotiations on a new service contract with the State Laboratory opened, and good progress was made by year end.

A new Order under Section 5 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 was made by the Minister for Health in late 2018, with the input of advice from the Authority to the Department of Health. This Order updates the list of food legislation to be enforced under the service contract system.

During 2018, the Authority continued its preparations for the new European legislation on official controls, Regulation (EU) 2017/625, which was published in March 2017. This Regulation outlines the rules for the performance by EU Member States of controls on the agri-food sector. In December 2019, it will replace existing official controls legislation, Regulations (EC) No 882/2004 and 854/2004. The new Regulation will require changes in how food law is enforced, will form the basis of the next service contracts with all of the official agencies, and will require amendment of national official controls legislation. A programme of work to implement the Regulation was under way in 2018, and will continue during 2019, including:

- Establishment of a steering group comprising the Authority, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and the Department of Health
- Input into the development of tertiary legislation (implementing and delegated EU Acts) in relation to Regulation 2017/625 at EU level
- Provision of introductory training to the official agencies on the requirements of the Regulation
- Provision of advice to the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on the key issues to address during the development of national legislation to give effect to the Regulation's requirements.

The Authority is a member of a steering group on Regulation (EU) 2017/625 established by the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies as well as six working groups to advise on the Regulation. The Authority is chairing the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies Working Group on Food Safety Laboratories, which commenced in 2017, and it is also participating in five other working groups. These groups were active throughout 2018.

In 2018, the Authority advised the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on the designation of national reference laboratories (NRLs) for foodborne viruses. This followed on from the European Commission's designation of a European Union Reference

Laboratory for foodborne viruses, which obliges Member States to nominate corresponding national laboratories. Ireland formally notified the European Commission of two NRLs – the Marine Institute and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's Backweston Laboratory Complex – that it designated for foodborne viruses in shellfish and in other foods, respectively.

Other European engagement included:

- Continued participation in a network of other Member States and the European Commission working on a standard format for producing National Control Plans for official controls across the EU and for reporting on them
- Participation in an EU working group in relation to compliance with EU rules on olive oil monitoring and reporting.

In 2018, the Authority published 110 Enforcement Orders (including 95 Closure Orders, 10 Prohibition Orders and 5 Improvement Orders) served to food businesses for breaches in food safety legislation, a significant increase on the 69 orders served in 2017, and closer to the 106 orders served in 2016. Nine prosecutions were also publicised. There was no obvious trend, as inspection levels were relatively constant. In 2018, the Authority also continued to implement its practice, started in late 2017, of publishing the full text of the Enforcement Orders served to food businesses, in addition to the names and addresses of the businesses. There continues to be great public interest in the outcome of official controls, and this initiative has improved the transparency of the official controls process. It has also reduced the administrative burden on the Authority of requests for information under Freedom of Information legislation. One of the requirements of the new legislation on official controls, Regulation (EU) 2017/625, is to increase the transparency of official controls activity undertaken on behalf of the public, and the Authority and official agencies will continue to seek opportunities to address this requirement.

95

In 2018, the Authority published 95 Closure Orders served to food businesses for breaches in food safety legislation.

The European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (SANTE F) conducted a general follow-up audit and country profile assessment for Ireland, resulting in the publication of a report in May 2018. These audits are conducted by SANTE F to monitor progress in relation to open recommendations from its previous audits. From the latest audit, 27 recommendations were verified as closed by the mission team. This included verification that 14 recommendations made after a previous audit of controls on organic food had been addressed by the Irish competent authorities. The summary result of the audit is that, out of 166 recommendations generated between 2010 and 2016, only four now have a status of 'action still required'. These four relate to technical issues on the controls on scallops.

The Authority coordinated the preparation for, and follow-up to, a major SANTE F audit to assess the official controls on the production of ready-to-eat food, which took place in April and May 2018. The main official agencies (the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the HSE, the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority and the local authorities) were all involved, as each supervises this activity for different foodstuffs. The report found general strengths in the official controls system and identified certain areas for improvement, generally related to the need for greater interagency consistency. A cross-agency approach is being taken to implement corrective actions to address the report's recommendations.

Ireland is one of seven EU Member States that engaged with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2017 in a 'Systems Recognition' exercise to assess whether a country's food safety system and authorities provide an equivalent level of protection to that provided by another country. The Authority worked with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the HSE and the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority to provide a detailed submission in December 2017. This desktop exercise was followed in 2018 by an on-site assessment by a team of auditors from the FDA. The assessment was thorough, involving audits of 13 food businesses supervised by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the HSE and the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (and of national reference and official controls laboratories operated by these agencies), as well as of the Marine Institute.

110

In 2018, the Authority published 110 Enforcement Orders served to food businesses for breaches in food safety legislation.

A new Order under Section 5 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 was made by the Minister for Health in late 2018, with the input of advice from the Authority to the Department of Health. This Order updates the list of food legislation to be enforced under the service contract system.

14

The European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (SANTE F) verified that 14 recommendations made after a previous audit of controls on organic food had been addressed by the Irish competent authorities.

The first national Food Law Enforcement Policy, which was developed by a team in the Authority in consultation with the official agencies, was published in 2018.

The Authority provided a significant level of support to the official agencies during 2018, which included:

- Provision of an information desk at a series of breakfast briefing events for the fishing industry, organised by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority
- Support for a series of Shellfish Regional Information Events for the shellfish industry, with the support of the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, the Marine Institute and Bord Iascaigh Mhara
- Commencement of a series of joint compliance reviews with local authority veterinary inspectors of small meat processors which they supervise. These are aimed at increasing the cross-county consistency of official controls on these businesses.

The Authority worked with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on the provision of advice on the supply of raw milk for direct human consumption. The product poses higher risks to consumers than conventional milk, as it is not heat treated. Raw Milk Ireland is the representative body for suppliers of raw milk for direct human consumption. The Authority and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine advised on Raw Milk Ireland's development of guidance (*Industry Guide to Legal Requirements and Good Practice*) to suppliers of raw milk, which was published in 2018.



COOPERATION BETWEEN THE FSAI AND THE HPRA

In 2018, Dr Pamela Byrne, Chief Executive Officer, FSAI and Dr Lorraine Nolan, Chief Executive Officer, Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding which establishes a joint framework for cooperation between the FSAI and the HPRA in the area of the regulation of public health in Ireland.



Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs

During 2018, the Risk Management team dealt with 799 food incidents, compared with 640 in 2017. Fifty-one food alerts and 45 allergen alerts were issued in 2018, compared with 24 and 30, respectively, in 2017. The FSAI (supported by its official agencies) identified and reported 29 products to the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF).

A key coordination function of the FSAI is the management of food incidents. These are episodes where food is confirmed to be or is potentially unsafe or unfit, and consequently poses a risk to health.

FOOD INCIDENTS

In more recent years, foods which are presented in a way that is misleading to consumers by way of health claims or labelling are included among these incidents. The overall aim is to reduce or eliminate the harm to consumers, which often means withdrawing or recalling the foods from sale, informing the public of the danger and notifying the authorities in other countries from which the foods came or to which they were dispatched. The identification of a food incident can originate from several sources, such as a food inspector, a customer complaint, notification from a food business, a laboratory test, or notifications from other Member States through the European Commission's network, RASFF, of which the Authority is a member and the national contact point. The Authority monitors this network 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

In 2018, the Authority dealt with 799 food incidents, compared with 640 in 2017. The main reason for the increase was the need to follow up on food supplements arising from the requirement to notify the Authority of new food supplements placed on the market. All incidents are managed to remove risk to consumers. Arising from these food incidents, 51 food alerts and 45 allergen alerts were issued, compared with 24 and 30, respectively, in 2017. Food alerts are notifications issued by the Authority to the public, food inspectors and food businesses or other businesses relating to an identified hazard, i.e. a biological, chemical or physical agent in, or condition of, food/food contact materials with the potential to cause an adverse health effect. Food allergen alerts are issued by the Authority where allergens are found in a food but are not declared on the labelling, thus making such foods a risk to consumers with food allergies or food intolerances.

FOOD ALLERGEN ALERTS

EU food labelling law specifies 14 categories of allergens that must be declared. For prepacked food, this means indicating allergens in the list of ingredients with clear reference to the name of the allergen and highlighting it in a way that makes it stand out from the other ingredients. For food sold loose, it means having the information available in writing at the point of presentation, sale, or supply. Allergen information is critical at all points of the food chain in order to ensure that it can be passed on to the final consumer. Three in every 100 people in Ireland have a food allergy. The consequences of failing to properly inform consumers of allergens present in food can be serious, resulting in severe allergic reactions, a requirement for urgent medical treatment or even loss of life.

During 2018, 45 food allergen alerts were issued for the non-declaration of allergens in food. Subscribers to the Authority's alert system are informed by text message. Cereals containing gluten, milk, eggs, sulfites, nuts, soybeans and mustard were the most common allergens incorrectly labelled or declared in Ireland in 2018. The most common reasons for food allergen alerts were that the allergen was unknowingly incorporated into the product and therefore not listed in the ingredients; the labelling was not in English; the product was mis-packed by being placed in the wrong wrapping; or the allergen was not highlighted in the ingredients list.

FOOD ALERTS

Fifty-one food alerts were issued in 2018, generally arising from the need for a product withdrawal or recall (from consumers). The main reasons for these alerts were a direct or indirect threat to consumers because of the presence of foreign bodies, or the presence of pathogenic microbes or chemical contaminants. Other reasons included incorrect declaration of the "use by" or "best before" date, inadequate food safety controls at the point of production, or processing at an unapproved facility. Of the 51 food alerts issued in 2018, 11 related to the presence of *Salmonella* and 9 to the detection of *Listeria monocytogenes*.

EU RAPID ALERT SYSTEM FOR FOOD AND FEED (RASFF)

The Authority is the national contact point for the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). This network between the Member States, Norway, Liechtenstein, Iceland, Switzerland, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Commission enables its members to swiftly and efficiently exchange information, and trace and remove unsafe food products or ingredients from the food chain. The network alert system operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

The RASFF covers hazards identified in food, feed and food contact materials. The network's central office is located in Brussels and is operated by the European Commission. The FSAI is obliged to inform the Commission via the network if any unsafe or potentially unsafe food, feed or food contact material is detected following import into or export from Ireland. The rapid exchanges of information ensure that actions can be taken immediately in response and that risk to public health is minimised. The FSAI is obliged to follow up on any notifications received which have implications for Ireland and its food businesses. This may result in product withdrawals or recalls.

In 2018, the RASFF issued 3,628 notifications about unsafe products. Of these, 132 (3.6%) were flagged as being distributed to Ireland. Products of Irish origin were implicated in 25 notifications (0.7%). The FSAI (supported by its official agencies) identified and reported 29 products to the network. The RASFF has proven its worth over the past 40 years in uniting the food agencies in Europe to protect citizens.



Audit and Investigations

Over the course of 2018, authorised officers from the Authority, together with other State regulatory authorities and official agencies, conducted 47 investigations where breaches of food law and food fraud were suspected. During the year, Authority staff participated with official agency staff at multiagency roadside checkpoints, organised by An Garda Síochána. In addition, a number of audits were conducted by the Audit and Investigations team and subsequently, published on the FSAI website. On behalf of the Authority, the Audit and Investigations functional area acts as the national food fraud contact point for the European Commission. During 2018, representatives attended two EU Food Fraud Network meetings.



In 2018, two official controls audits were conducted by the Authority. One was carried out in the HSE and the other in the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA).

The HSE audit assessed the three public analyst's laboratories against their service contract requirements and those aspects of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 relating to their activities, and an audit of official controls regarding the microbiological classification of shellfish waters was carried out in the SFPA.

In 2018, the Authority conducted targeted audits as follows:

- Multiple retailers' management of food incidents, including food recalls and withdrawals
- The wild game food supply chain.

Targeted audits examine food business operators' compliance with respect to a specific aspect of food law and may examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls.

Audits on official controls were conducted in relation to:

- Compliance by public analyst's laboratories with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and service contract obligations
- The microbiological classification of shellfish waters.

These audits examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of all aspects of official controls as implemented by official agencies in relation to food law and service contract requirements.

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

- *Official Controls Audit of Sheep Identification, Acceptance and Traceability within Slaughter Plants*
- *Audit of official controls in DAFM supervised infant formulae and follow-on formulae establishments*
- *Audit of Multiple Retailers*

These corrective action plans are updated as progress is made on closing out the individual audit findings.

Two European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (SANTE F) audits were carried out in Ireland to assess the implementation of official controls. Members of the Audit and Investigations team attended these audits. The first audit was a general follow-up, which reviewed progress on the implementation of recommendations from previous audits. The objective of the second audit was to assess the arrangements put in place by the competent authorities to verify compliance with EU food hygiene requirements applicable to ready-to-eat food.

In June 2018, the US FDA carried out an on-site assessment of Ireland's implementation of the International Comparability Assessment Tool (ICAT) standards. The inspection comprised four different components. One team focused on the management structures within the FSAI and relevant official agencies, while a second team assessed laboratories. Two field teams audited selected businesses in order to assess the implementation of official controls by official agencies and compliance with food law by the business operators. In addition to the ICAT assessment,

In 2018, audits on official controls were conducted in relation to the microbiological classification of shellfish waters.

ICAT

In June 2018, the US FDA carried out an on-site assessment of Ireland's implementation of the International Comparability Assessment Tool (ICAT) standards.

2

Two European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (SANTE F) audits were carried out in Ireland to assess the implementation of official controls.

the US FDA also carried out a total of six inspections in Ireland during August and September 2018. The outcome of these inspections resulted in continued access to the US market for the products produced by the food businesses inspected. During all audits of food businesses, US FDA inspectors were accompanied by authorised officers from the FSAI Audit and Investigations functional area.

The FSAI Chief Executive Officer is a designated person under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014. In early 2018, Audit and Investigations team members concluded a detailed investigation into alleged wrongdoing contained in a protected disclosure received in November 2017. During 2018, five additional protected disclosures were made to the Chief Executive Officer, all of which were investigated by senior members of the Audit and Investigations team. In all instances, information contained in the protected disclosures was verified and at times significant enforcement actions were implemented on the food business operations concerned.

Authorised officers from the Authority, together with other State regulatory authorities and official agencies, conducted 47 investigations where breaches of food law and food fraud were suspected. These investigations were designed to determine the nature and extent of non-compliance with food law and related food fraud events. They required a variety of approaches, ranging from the execution of search warrants secured in the District Court under Section 49 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 to

the monitoring of social media pages in cases where the operation of unauthorised food businesses was suspected. In some instances, outcomes of investigations resulted in the issuing of Closure Orders to operators found to be carrying out unapproved food business activities. During the year, Authority staff participated with official agency staff at multiagency roadside checkpoints, organised by An Garda Síochána. Authorised officers from the relevant HSE Local Health Offices and from local authorities also attended.

The Food Fraud Task Force is chaired by the Authority, and during 2018 two meetings of the task force were convened. This multiagency, multidisciplinary forum continues to consider and report on issues that are likely to significantly impact on food integrity/authenticity. The task force considers the current controls in place to deal with food fraud and their suitability to detect, deter and disrupt those involved. In 2018, Audit and Investigations functional area staff attended three meetings of the Cross-Border Task Force on Food and Rural Crime. They also attended three meetings of the Northern Region Multi-agency Checkpoint Forum, chaired by An Garda Síochána.

47

In 2018, 47 investigations where breaches of food law and food fraud were suspected, were conducted by authorised officers from the Authority, together with other State regulatory authorities and official agencies.



On behalf of the Authority, the Audit and Investigations functional area acts as the national food fraud contact point for the European Commission. During 2018, representatives attended two EU Food Fraud Network meetings. In addition, the European Commission's Administrative Assistance and Cooperation/Food Fraud Network database was monitored; Ireland published six cases in 2018 relating to alcohol, dietary supplements, and fish, and responded to other Member State cases, as required.

The Authority has a signed Information Sharing Agreement with the Food Industry Intelligence Network (FIIN). FIIN currently represents a number of large food industry companies in the UK and Ireland, and it plans to expand its network further in the near future.

The Authority, together with the Food Standards Agency in the UK and Food Standards Scotland, meets with members of the management board of FIIN on a quarterly basis to discuss the quarterly report and share relevant intelligence on food fraud.

The Authority, in collaboration with An Garda Síochána and Revenue's Customs Service, participated in the joint Europol/INTERPOL operation, OPSON VII. Returns submitted from Ireland to Europol indicated four seizures of foodstuffs, including livestock, meat, and dietary food supplements.

The Authority continues to participate in the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies working groups in preparation for the implementation of the new Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on official controls. Audit and Investigations team members participate in the working group on food fraud.



The Food Fraud Task Force is chaired by the Authority, and during 2018 two meetings of the task force were convened. This multiagency, multidisciplinary forum continues to consider and report on issues that are likely to significantly impact on food integrity/authenticity.



Food Science and Standards

During 2018, Food Science and Standards (FSS) team members attended 53 expert meetings on legislation development organised by the European Commission and the European Council, and provided 17 written submissions on the Irish position as well as briefing the Department of Health for votes on the completed work. The FSS functional area provided 211 risk assessments in 2018. Outreach at third level included the creation of a Newman Fellowship in the area of molecular microbiology at University College Dublin, funded by the FSAI.



The Food Science and Standards (FSS) functional area focuses its work on expanding and analysing the evidence base and using this in combination with the expertise of its scientists to conduct risk assessment, draft technical guidance for the food industry, support the work of official agencies, carry out direct official controls and provide expert support to the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine for the development of food legislation.

The FSS team also manages the FSAI's Scientific Committee and provides technical input into the risk assessment work of EFSA and the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which sets international food standards. The work of scientists in the FSS functional area and the Scientific Committee is supported by a dedicated team of administrators whose work maximises the efficiency and effectiveness of the FSS functional area and ensures the quality of outputs, as well as providing vital in-house services for other functional areas.

In 2018, FSS team members attended 53 expert meetings on legislation development organised by the European Commission and the European Council, and provided 17 written submissions on the Irish position as well as briefing the Department of Health for votes on the completed work. Expert network meetings are also a feature of collaboration with EFSA, and in this context FSS team members have actively participated in 13 network meetings in the areas of emerging risks, microbiological risk assessment, genetically modified organisms, novel foods and the RASFF, with 12 submissions and three presentations. On the international stage, FSS team members made detailed technical submissions to five electronic working groups and participated in three plenary meetings of the committees under the Codex Alimentarius Commission, where global food standards are agreed.

The FSS functional area also conducts several competent authority functions in the area of notifications and approvals of certain foods. In 2018, one health claims dossier was processed and sent to EFSA and 1,836 health claims compliance assessments were carried out on food supplements. Notifications of 204 foods for special

medical purposes and 14 infant formulas were assessed for safety and compliance with legislation. Under novel foods regulations, FSS team members assessed three notifications for traditional foods from third countries, provided expert opinions on the novel food status of five consultation requests, and sent information on 21 novel food applications to the Department of Health for voting at EU level. In addition, there were 12 reviews of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) for food and feed following EFSA assessment.

Food incident management requires sound risk assessment, and the FSS functional area provided 211 risk assessments in 2018, including 74 on food supplements and 108 on chemical safety matters. It also provided detailed technical support on 23 food incidents and took part in the work of two outbreak control teams over several weeks. In addition, extensive technical support on shelf life safety was provided for one large protected disclosure investigation. FSS team members also respond to a large number of queries from outside the FSAI, and in 2018 they answered around 260 queries through the FSAI Advice Line and 550 direct queries, of which 279 concerned the new novel foods legislation and compliance.

The FSS functional area plays a key role in providing scientific support to the food safety enforcement work of the official agencies. Detailed scientific input was provided to the Department of Food and the Marine for its report on the Silvermines lead mining legacy issue concerning pollution with heavy metals.

53

In 2018, FSS team members attended 53 expert meetings on legislation development organised by the European Commission and the European Council.

On the international stage, FSS team members made detailed technical submissions to five electronic working groups and participated in three plenary meetings of the committees under the Codex Alimentarius Commission, where global food standards are agreed.

In conjunction with the training team an e-learning module was developed on microbiological criteria sampling and testing, along with face-to-face training of laboratories and additives training for local authorities. Information on foods for specific groups, novel foods, safe cooking of burgers and health claims was updated on the FSAI website to help enforcement officers with interpretation of the law in these areas.

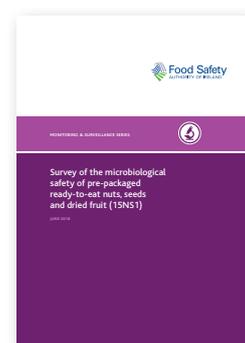
The FSS functional area also provided compliance support to the food industry, including supporting the Regulatory and Environment Committee of Food Drink Ireland meetings and providing technical review of the association's food reformulation work. Food safety leaflets were developed on food enzymes and on the smoking of foods, as well as guidance on shelf life. Input was provided to the National Standards Authority of Ireland for its update of food industry standard I.S. 342. Five fact sheets on biological safety hazards were updated on the FSAI website along with a fact sheet on histamine formation in food and detailed guidance on how food business operators can comply with Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs. The FSS functional area also submitted an application to the European Commission for the approval of ascorbic acid and citric acid on white vegetables, following consultation with Irish vegetable processors. Finally, FSS team members upgraded the MenuCal software and training materials and engaged with the Communications team to promote use of the software in the food industry for compliance with legal requirements for allergen labelling of foods in food service outlets and to facilitate voluntary calorie posting. This work will continue in 2019.

As part of the FSAI's Science Strategy, the FSS functional area focused on research in 2018. A business case for a dedicated research budget was discussed with the Department of Health for a sustainable approach to the generation of evidence for risk assessment of foods. In addition, the FSAI funded three research projects: the development of molecular methods for authentication of botanical foods and the validation of reformulation of yoghurts were both completed in 2018, and a large study to estimate the salt intake of the Irish population was started and will be completed in 2021. A further research project on the safety of *sous vide* cooking was co-funded with safefood; this project is due for completion in 2019. Data sets on zoonosis patterns for Ireland for 2016 were posted on the FSAI website, along with official controls data for 2018 on fish authenticity, irradiated foods, and GMOs; the latter two data sets were also sent to the European Commission, as required by food law. Further data on nitrites and sulfites in meat were generated via coordinated official controls, leading to detailed work with food business operators to improve compliance. Two reports on pathogens in food were published: pathogens in ready-to-eat nuts and seeds, and pathogens in ready-to-eat fruit and vegetables, providing assurance of the safety of these important foods for a healthy diet. A study on the persistent pollutants per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in food was also started and will continue into 2019. In further contributions to the Irish research agenda, FSS team members acted as evaluators for the Department of Food and the Marine's Food Institutional Research Measure research call and provided input into the research strategies of the Environmental Protection Agency and Science Foundation Ireland.



Other Science Strategy activities to enhance science at the FSAI and improve external awareness of this included a visit by FSS staff to the Kerry Global Technology and Innovation Centre, and the commencement of science communication via LinkedIn. The FSS functional area also developed a teaching lesson for the Science and Technology in Action initiative in order to increase the uptake of STEM subjects at second level. Student training was provided both by student placement in the FSAI and by the organisation of a regulatory training course for Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) master's students in the FSAI in conjunction with the other functional areas. Further outreach at third level included 22 lectures in four institutions of higher education and the creation of a Newman Fellowship in the area of molecular microbiology at University College Dublin, funded by the FSAI. The FSAI's commitment to engagement with the scientific community was furthered with presentations at four national and six international scientific conferences or events, together with a national seminar on whole genome sequencing that was organised by the FSAI. FSS team members also contributed a chapter on food allergens to a book entitled *Introduction to Human Nutrition*. Other projects under the Science Strategy that started in 2018 and will continue in 2019 include the creation of a list of principal investigators in Ireland and mapping of the scientific expertise of the Scientific Committee and FSS scientific staff. This will help us target training and outreach in 2019.

An important function of the FSS functional area is the management and facilitation of the work of the Scientific Committee and its subcommittees and working groups comprising 83 scientists. The Scientific Committee met four times in 2018 and approved several important opinions and requests for advice. Five opinions were published on the safe cooking of beef burgers, the safety of vitamins and minerals in food supplements, a total diet study on fluoride intake, Enterobacteriaceae limits in ice cream, and fluoride safety and the foetus. Four other reports were completed and approved for publication in 2019: a risk ranking model for chemical contaminants, advice on Shiga toxin-producing *E.coli* detection in food, a food safety evaluation method for new food processing technologies, and a method for risk assessment of food allergens. Requests for advice were accepted on the safety of seaweed as a food, an evaluation of the BELFRIT approach to botanical safety assessment, and risk ranking of biological safety hazards; these will progress in 2019.



REPORTS ON PATHOGENS

Two reports on pathogens in food were published: pathogens in ready-to-eat nuts and seeds, and pathogens in ready-to-eat fruit and vegetables, providing assurance of the safety of these important foods for a healthy diet.

The FSAI funded three research projects: the development of molecular methods for authentication of botanical foods and the validation of reformulation of yoghurts were both completed in 2018, and a large study to estimate the salt intake of the Irish population was started and will be completed in 2021.

Strategic goals and achievements

Goal 1

Lead a regulatory culture where everyone is passionate about achieving the highest standards for food

Underpinning this goal are five key objectives; in 2018, the Authority achieved the following against these objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1

Provide a framework for regulating food that is strategically planned and reviewed to encompass food safety and integrity, with enforcement that is proportionate, risk-based and effective

- 31 service contracts were in place with the official agencies in 2018, covering the official controls on all food legislation within the remit of the Authority.
- 110 Enforcement Orders were served by the official agencies and nine prosecutions were taken against food businesses.
- Authority staff participated in the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies Working Group meetings in order to exchange information and best practice on national official controls systems.
- The Authority met with delegations from counterpart agencies in Abu Dhabi, Brazil, China, Mumbai, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Vietnam to exchange knowledge and experience of official controls.
- The Authority's staff contributed to Head of Agency meetings and provided advice to the EU, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of Health on the legislation on official controls.
- The first phase of training of official agencies to achieve compliance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 was undertaken in 2018.
- The Authority continued to work closely with its counterparts in the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland in the management of food safety risks.

- 47 incidents of potentially fraudulent activities were investigated.
- More than 2,500 notifications of food supplements placed on the market during the year were received and assessed for compliance with composition, labelling, nutrition and health claims legislation.
- In the area of novel foods, the Authority assessed three notifications for traditional foods from third countries, provided a reasoned opinion on the novel food status of five consultation requests and sent information on 21 novel food applications to the Department of Health for voting at EU level.
- 44 export certificates for third countries were provided, mainly in relation to mixed food consignments or food contact materials.
- 799 food incidents were identified and managed, and 96 food alerts and allergen alerts were issued.
- Authority staff attended 53 expert meetings on legislation development organised by the European Commission and the European Council, and provided 17 written submissions on the Irish position.

OBJECTIVE 2

Operate a partnership approach to food regulation that engages with stakeholders and promotes innovative compliance solutions to raise standards

- The Authority continued to engage with key stakeholders, including *safe*food, Revenue's Customs Service, An Garda Síochána, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Health Products Regulatory Authority, and the Loughs Agency.
- Advice was provided to stakeholders in the areas of labelling, health claims, food supplements and many other issues, including Brexit.
- A national enforcement policy document was published after discussion and agreement among the official agencies.
- The Authority collaborated with a number of food businesses/associations in order to manage risks to consumers' health and interests.

OBJECTIVE 3

Strive for a world-class official controls system that includes effective risk-based measures of performance, is verified through audits and delivers the best outcomes for consumers

- An Interagency Group on Official Controls continued to work on the recommendations from *A Review of the Official Controls System in Ireland and Opportunities for Improvement: Report of the Scientific Committee of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland*.
- The Authority commenced a series of joint visits with local authority veterinary inspectors to support their official controls in small meat processing establishments.
- Four audits of food businesses were carried out.
- A major audit by the US FDA of official controls in Ireland was coordinated by the Authority, as part of a 'Systems Recognition' exercise.
- The Authority worked with the official agencies to plan and prepare enhanced official controls on food imports in anticipation of the UK's departure from the EU.
- The following publications were published on the FSAI website: *Enterobacteriaceae limits for ice cream (containing milk ingredients) and frozen dairy desserts sampled when placed on the market; Survey of the microbiological safety of ready-to-eat cakes, pastries and desserts with high-risk fillings; Survey of the microbiological safety of ready-to-eat, pre-packaged nuts, seeds and dried fruit; Survey of Trans Fatty Acid in Processed Food Products in Ireland (2016); An investigation of the most appropriate z-value to be used in calculating 'equivalent cooks' for beef burgers in food business establishments; and Total Diet Study 2014–2016: Assessment of dietary exposure to fluoride in adults and children in Ireland*.

OBJECTIVE 4

Enhance our analysis, reporting and communication on the outcome of official controls

- The first phase of the implementation of the Authority's Data Strategy was progressed, which will ensure that the maximum value from the data collected is extracted, allowing the Authority to make robust decisions on future activities.
- The Authority presented the 2017 zoonosis data to EFSA.

OBJECTIVE 5

Provide resources to our partners through training, advice and consultation

- A major allergen awareness campaign was run in the media in 2018 to raise awareness among food businesses and consumers on the legislation for allergens.
- Four guidance notes were completed and published:
 - Guidance Note No. 33, *Good Manufacturing Practices for the Production of Ready-to-eat Raw Fermented Meat Products*
 - Guidance Note No. 32, *Fresh Produce Safety in Processing and Retail in Ireland*
 - Guidance Note No. 15, *Cook-chill Systems in the Food Service Sector (Revision 2)*
 - Guidance Note No. 17, *The Labelling of Meat and Meat as an Ingredient (Revision 1)*.
- *Advice for Caterers on Serving Burgers that are Safe to Eat* was published.
- In 2018, the Advice Line dealt with 9,434 requests; 3,424 of these were complaints about food or food premises, labelling, or allergens.
- The Authority's Training and Compliance team developed and delivered face-to-face training courses to staff in the official agencies in 2018, including food additives training for local authority veterinary inspectors (26 participants), official controls regulation training (300 participants) and specialist investigation training for all official agencies (14 participants). More than 1,300 Authority e-learning modules were accessed by users of the Authority's website.
- A total of 706 of the Authority's e-learning modules on food law were accessed or used by staff in the official agencies via our learning management system, SafetyNet Learning, in 2018.
- The Authority set up the Food Trainers Network in 2018 to enable more dynamic engagement with food safety training consultants. There are over 100 trainers subscribed to this service.

Goal 2

Use the best scientific knowledge, evidence and expertise to underpin policy and risk analysis in respect of food safety

Underpinning this goal are six key objectives. In 2018, against these objectives, the Authority achieved the following:

OBJECTIVE 1

Underpin all decisions and advice with the best independent scientific knowledge, evidence and expertise

- The Authority's Scientific Committee work plan was updated and published, and five scientific opinions were completed and published, with a further four opinions to be completed for publication in 2019.
- The Authority commissioned three research projects, coordinated two food surveys and co-funded a further research project with *safe food* to enhance the science and evidence base.
- The Authority's staff continued to participate in an advisory capacity in scientific projects related to the Authority's scientific activities.
- The Authority participated in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's Research Advisory Committee in order to ensure that food safety and nutrition research receive adequate funding.
- A dairy supply chain vulnerability analysis project continued in collaboration with *safe food*, the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland, Teagasc, and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.
- Authority staff trained in numerous scientific areas, including quantitative risk assessment, ready-to-eat foods, whole genome sequencing, epidemiology, and the hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) system. Staff also attended scientific conferences on food microbiology, risk assessment, molecular methods, nutrition, food science and technology, and food preservation. Additionally, staff undertook internal auditor training, attended leadership courses and attained professional certification in dietetics. A number of students were also trained during 2018 in areas related to food science.

OBJECTIVE 2

Provide high-quality, independent, scientific advice to Government to inform and influence food policy within the areas of food safety, integrity and nutrition

- The Authority contributed to numerous Department of Health activities in the area of public health nutrition, e.g. fortification of foods with folic acid, scientific recommendations for healthy eating, and food reformulation.
- The Authority contributed to the National Interdepartmental Antimicrobial Resistance Consultative Committee.
- Authority staff provided scientific and technical advice and expertise to several State bodies, including the Environmental Protection Agency, Health Protection Surveillance Centre and Bord Bia.
- Authority staff provided input into the development of national policy in a number of areas, including pesticides, fertilisers, and processed cheese, and drafted a national position on chlorates.

OBJECTIVE 3

Provide timely, transparent, evidence-based risk assessments using the best available data and methods

- The Authority carried out 211 risk assessments in response to food safety incidents with regard to biological, chemical, nutritional and other food safety risks.
- Contributions through expert advice were made to national risk research programmes, including those on *Campylobacter* and Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli*.

OBJECTIVE 4

Lead risk management and risk communication effectively and openly to promote trust and engagement

- The Authority continues to support the industry *Campylobacter* control programme in the poultry production and slaughter chain.
- Authority staff attended and participated in meetings of the European Commission's RASFF, including the Administrative Assistance and Cooperation/Food Fraud Network; the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies group; and EFSA's Advisory Forum. There was no engagement with INFOSAN in 2018.

- During 2018, the Authority:
 - Supported responses to outbreaks of *Salmonella* and verocytotoxigenic *E. coli*
 - Provided detailed scientific input to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine inter-agency group on lead contamination in the Silvermines area of Co Tipperary
 - Progressed the implementation of the recommendations of the FSAI Scientific Committee report, *Potential for Transmission of Antimicrobial Resistance in the Food Chain*; engaged in European and international consultations and discussions and participated in the National Interdepartmental Antimicrobial Resistance Consultative Committee.

OBJECTIVE 5

Lead in identifying and analysing current and emerging threats to food safety, and, where appropriate, to integrity and nutrition, including leveraging our partnerships in research, regulation and industry

- The Authority, in collaboration with Food Drink Ireland, held two meetings of the Emerging Risks and Threats Forum.
- During 2018, Authority experts collated Authority research priorities for *safe food* and the Department of Food, Agriculture and the Marine's food research funding programme, and contributed to strategic research agendas in Science Foundation Ireland and the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Experts also contributed to the EU-funded projects Authent-Net, FoodSmartphone and FoodIntegrity.
- Over the course of 2018, the Authority participated in the following groups' meetings: Food Fraud Task Force; Cross-Border Task Force; Multi Agency Check Point Coordination Group; EU Food Fraud Network; EU Administrative Assistance and Cooperation/Food Fraud Network (AAC); CEN working groups; the EU Food Law Enforcement Practitioners (FLEP); the Europol/INTERPOL operation OPSON VII; Codex Alimentarius Electronic Working Groups; the Heads of Food Safety Agencies Working Group on the fight against food fraud; the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies group.
- The Authority continued its close collaboration with EFSA through participation in its network on emerging risk identification.

OBJECTIVE 6

Strengthen and develop our engagement with national, European and international food safety, integrity and nutrition partners, as appropriate, to ensure the delivery of robust advice and to underpin decision-making

- In 2018, the Authority:
 - Attended and participated in EFSA's Advisory Forum.
 - Actively participated in 13 EFSA network meetings in the areas of emerging risks, microbiological risk assessment, GMOs, novel foods, and RASFF, with 12 submissions and three presentations.
 - Supported the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and of the Codex Alimentarius Committees on Food Hygiene, Food Additives, Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification System Nutrition, and Foods for Special Dietary Uses.
 - Supported the work of the International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods through attendance at the International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods meeting, and managed editorial tasks in the revision of *Microorganisms in Food 7*. The hosting of the International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods' website was transferred to the Authority and updates were subsequently uploaded.
 - Acted as Focal Point for Ireland with EFSA and the 13 national Article 36 agencies. Attended and participated in four EFSA Focal Point meetings.
 - Contributed a chapter on food allergens to a book entitled *Introduction to Human Nutrition*.
 - Upgraded the MenuCal software and training materials, and engaged with the Communications team to promote use of the software in the food industry.

Goal 3

Create an environment where Ireland is a trusted and recognised leader in food safety and integrity

Underpinning this goal are five key objectives, and the Authority achieved the following against these objectives in 2018:

OBJECTIVE 1

Communicate openly, effectively and promptly on our work to foster trust and be an advocate for food safety and, where appropriate, integrity and nutrition

- The Authority dealt with 220 media queries during 2018; all were managed in a timely manner and accurate information was provided to the media.
- The Authority published 21 media releases, including the monthly Enforcement Orders press releases.
- The Authority put a plan in place to celebrate the organisation's 20-year anniversary, including sponsorship of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Award at the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition 2019 and the organisation of a food safety scientific conference and a conference for food safety inspectors in 2019.
- FSAI staff gave presentations at four national and six international scientific conferences or events, as well as at a national seminar on whole genome sequencing that was organised by the FSAI.
- Two regulatory workshops were hosted in the FSAI for postgraduate students from University College Dublin and Dublin Institute of Technology. The workshops provided students with an introduction to the FSAI and food law.

- The FSAI developed a teaching lesson for the Science and Technology in Action initiative to increase the uptake of STEM subjects at second level.
- FSAI staff delivered 22 lectures in four higher education institutions and created a Newman Fellowship in the area of molecular microbiology at University College Dublin, funded by the FSAI. The final programme for the 2019 FSAI scientific conference was also agreed.
- The FSAI had an information stand and provided advice to stakeholders at a number of national events.
- The FSAI held two 'Breakfast Bites', an educators' workshop, and a workshop for laboratories on the rules for microbiological sampling and testing. It also collaborated with more than 30 State agencies for the Taking Care of Business event.

OBJECTIVE 2

Set standards that are practical and recognised globally, and implement a programme to attain those standards

- Food safety leaflets were developed on food enzymes and on the smoking of foods, as was guidance on shelf life safety, and input was provided on the National Standards Authority of Ireland's update of food industry standard I.S. 342.
- Five fact sheets on biological safety hazards were updated on the FSAI website along with a fact sheet on histamine formation in food and detailed guidance on how food business operators can comply with the microbiological criteria legislation (Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs).
- Authority staff provided a technical review of the FDI food reformulation work.
- The Authority's FSS team upgraded the MenuCal software and training materials and ran a campaign to promote use of the software in the food industry for compliance with legal requirements for allergen labelling of foods in food service outlets and to facilitate voluntary calorie posting.

OBJECTIVE 3**Work in partnership with consumer advocacy groups to address consumers' needs**

- The Authority continued to liaise with the Coeliac Society of Ireland in relation to the Authority's allergen information campaign.

OBJECTIVE 4**Create a network of leaders to champion food safety and integrity as a cornerstone for the success of the Irish food industry**

- Three meetings of the Food Safety Consultative Council were held during 2018 and a new work programme was agreed.
- Meetings were also held with representatives from Irish food businesses to work through a number of risk management issues.
- Over the course of the year, the Authority chaired a number of meetings of the Artisan Forum, the Retail Forum, the Food Service Forum, the Emerging Risks and Threats Forum, and the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee.
- The Authority participated in meetings of Food Drink Ireland's Regulatory and Environment Committee, and provided updates on the regulatory activities of the Authority.
- The Authority's senior management team also met with a number of companies during the course of 2018 to discuss specific topics, particularly in the area of risk management.

OBJECTIVE 5**Build capacity and capability to allow Ireland to react and deal effectively with any national or international food incident or crisis**

- A number of unscheduled investigations were carried out in 2018, which increased the FSAI's and its official agencies' capacity and capability to react to risk in the system.
- The Kerry Global Technology and Innovation Centre hosted FSAI staff on a visit to the centre to improve understanding of industrial innovation pathways and directions.
- Authority staff also developed a crisis simulation exercise which will be undertaken in 2019. This will assess the Authority's and the official agencies' ability to practise their response to large, complex food safety incidents.
- The team was also involved in two European crisis simulation exercises, which has developed our capacity to deal with cross-border and larger European food crises.

21

The Authority published 21 media releases, including the monthly Enforcement Orders press releases.

I.S. 342

Input was provided by the FSAI to the National Standards Authority of Ireland's update of food industry standard I.S. 342.

Goal 4

Develop our organisation with an ethos that is true to our values

Five key objectives underpin this goal, and in 2018, the Authority achieved the following against these objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1

Foster a culture of respect, integrity and humility, which is non-discriminatory and supports equality

- Work continued on embedding the Authority's values within the team.
- The FSAI commenced a detailed programme which sought to further develop a positive, collaborative and high-performing working environment. This included a staff survey, themed workshops with all staff, and senior leadership development.
- The Authority's Innovation team held a number of meetings to further develop the Authority's approach to innovation.
- Regular Staff Committee meetings were held during 2018, which facilitated discussions on numerous issues of relevance to staff.

OBJECTIVE 2

Empower and inspire our team to deliver our work effectively and recognise achievements

- The Authority's recruitment needs were reviewed, and recruitment progressed throughout the year in line with sanctions received.
- A number of initiatives under the Life@FSAI Health and Wellbeing Framework, developed by the Staff Committee and endorsed by the Senior Leadership Team, took place during 2018.

- Regular meetings of the Health and Safety Committee took place and the annual work programme was implemented. An audit was conducted by the Health and Safety Authority during the year, and minor issues in relation to the audit findings have been addressed.
- In 2018, the Authority undertook a review of the current performance management system. The system was revised and new processes were rolled out.
- The Authority hosted a number of students throughout the year across all functional areas.
- A survey of the Advice Line was completed during 2018 in order to determine customer satisfaction. Feedback was taken into account in order to improve the service.

OBJECTIVE 3

Commitment to better communication, continual improvement, competency development and creating innovative opportunities

- Throughout the year, regular staff meetings and quarterly staff seminars were held. In addition, the Senior Leadership Team met twice a month on average to discuss issues and make decisions on key areas for the organisation. Functional area, team, and project meetings were also held with all teams on a monthly basis.
- The Authority's new Intranet system, 'Our Space', continues to be utilised following its rollout in 2017.
- Skills gap analysis as well as staff learning and development plans were undertaken in order to plan for future organisational needs.
- A number of project briefings were held throughout the year. Project briefings are recognised as a key mechanism for informing the staff of the activities of the organisation which they may not be directly involved in.

OBJECTIVE 4**Deliver a robust system of corporate governance to ensure accountability, transparency and public value**

- The FSAI operates under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). The FSAI, under the guidance of the Board, continued to review, ensure compliance with, and report on its full compliance with, the Code. The FSAI Oversight Agreement/Performance Delivery Agreement was agreed with the Department of Health.
- After a review which commenced in 2017, the Authority implemented a new Risk Management Policy, and a Risk Register, and commenced the embedding of risk management into all aspects of its business planning, delivery and reviews.
- The Authority's 2019–2023 Strategy was developed following a substantial stakeholder consultation process which involved an external independent panel of international experts.
- The implementation plan for 2019 was also developed and sent to the Department of Health for consultation and agreement.
- The 2018 business plan was substantially delivered in full by the end of the year and any deviations from the original plan were reported upon and discussed between the Board and the Department of Health as part of their quarterly governance meetings.
- During 2018, there were 29 Freedom of Information requests, one request under Access to Information on the Environment legislation, and 20 Parliamentary Questions. All requests were answered in a timely manner and in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- The Authority assessed the impact of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 with a view to identifying what actions the Authority needed to take, and it also commenced the implementation of any/all required actions in order to ensure compliance.
- During 2018, there were five protected disclosures made under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014.

OBJECTIVE 5**Implement and develop management systems that will enable our team to meet and exceed legal and corporate governance requirements**

- A document management solution which was launched in 2017 became fully functional in 2018.
- The FSAI operates a business management system in order to ensure organisational compliance with the Code of Practice (2016) and with ISO 9001:2015, and so that risks and opportunities are identified and addressed. Following external audit, certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard was achieved during 2018.
- The Authority's HR policies were reviewed and updated in order to ensure compliance with relevant employment legislation and best practice.
- A best practice, comprehensive business management system was implemented across the Authority in 2018.

2019–2023

The Authority's 2019–2023 Strategy was developed following a substantial stakeholder consultation process which involved an external independent panel of international experts.

Goal 5

Adopt a digital-first approach to maximise accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness

Underpinning this goal are five key objectives; in 2018, we achieved the following against these objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1

Develop intelligent and targeted information systems to improve communication, process workflows and service delivery

- Software development applications to support business activities were updated in 2018 to meet increased and changing business needs.
- The Authority's website, www.fsai.ie, was updated regularly and maintained in order to ensure that it is accessible for all users on all devices.
- The implementation of the FSAI Data Strategy progressed in 2018, including the building of a data warehouse.
- SAP Business Objects analytical and report delivery solutions were upgraded in order to enhance their functionality and meet increased business needs.
- Active two-way engagement with our stakeholders was achieved with increased followers on social media platforms such as Facebook, with 12,114 followers (2017=8,519); Twitter, with 7,663 followers (2017=5,614); and LinkedIn, with 12,272 followers (2017=9,741).

- A robust corporate Wi-Fi solution was implemented for FSAI staff and visitors.
- Core IT infrastructure was upgraded, thus ensuring that the FSAI is using the most secure and stable software within its IT environment.
- IT security projects were delivered in order to mitigate against cybersecurity threats as detailed within the FSAI Risk Register.
- The FSAI implemented a flexitime and attendance system upgrade, including state-of-the-art terminals, which provides FSAI staff with a more efficient way of managing office attendance and leave, as required by the EU Working Time Directive.
- Enhancements were made to the audio-visual services, including an electronic meeting room booking system which delivers organisational efficiencies.

OBJECTIVE 2

Enhance how we gather and use data to better understand the environment in which we operate and inform decision-making

- In 2018, a number of IT projects were completed which supported the FSAI Data Strategy. Incoming data were collected, classified and managed, with timely reports provided to internal and external stakeholders.
- The Authority's library resources are available for staff and external users, and all of the electronic resources were assessed and updated in line with organisational needs.
- All Advice Line queries were responded to in line with the Authority's Customer Charter.
- An online customer needs survey and Advice Line assessment, which were completed in 2016, led to a more strategic focus on written communications with our customers in 2017 and 2018.
- The FSAI continued to develop the Database of Rapid Alerts (DORA), which is used to manage and collate food alerts and notifications. The result is a system that has delivered improved functionality and operational efficiencies.

OBJECTIVE 3**Further enhance customer accessibility and engagement through the use of technology**

- The IT team supported the updating of key databases that the Authority requires in order to carry out its functions.
- The Authority implemented the redeveloped food notification system in line with the principles defined within the FSAI Data Strategy. The new Food Notification System offers improved end user functionality and includes a broader remit for the capture of notification information on food supplements and foods for special groups.
- The Authority is using less paper in its day-to-day activities, which is enabled through the full implementation of the document management system facilitated through the Authority's Intranet, 'Our Space'.

12,114

The number of Facebook followers has increased from 8,519 to 12,114.

7,663

The number of Twitter followers has increased from 5,614 to 7,663.

12,272

The number of LinkedIn followers has increased from 9,741 to 12,272.

OBJECTIVE 4**Utilise technology as a foundation for innovation**

- Following the seminar on innovation with the Staff Committee in 2017, the Innovation team has worked towards embedding innovation as a core value within the Authority's activities for the future.
- The Authority continues to use webinars, e-learning tools and MenuCal as innovative tools for increasing compliance with food legislation.
- The Authority further developed its use of webinar technology to record presentations and training exercises. Examples of webinars included the use of food additive checklists and the Official Agency Premises Inspections FAQs document via SafetyNet, the food inspectorate's Intranet run by the Authority.
- The food supplement notification system was upgraded, making it easier and more efficient for food businesses and environmental health officers to use.
- The Authority completed a project implementing state-of-the-art cloud-based technologies to include client hardware and software upgrades. The project increases efficiency and reliability and reduces the cost of operations while enhancing computing governance.

OBJECTIVE 5**Explore Big Data to help us do our job better**

- In 2018, the Authority continued to explore some external data sources for interoperability with its datasets, in line with the Authority's Data Strategy.

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Appendix 1 Industry fora members

ARTISAN FORUM, 2018

Mr John Matthews (Chairperson)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Darina Allen

Ballymaloe Cookery School

Ms Sally Barnes

Woodcock Smokery

Mr Eoin Bird

The Wooded Pig

Mr John Brennan

The Organic Centre

Mr Kevin Brennan

Teagasc

Ms Jeffa Gill

Durrus Cheese

Mr Michael Gleeson

Beekeeper

Mr Michael Healy

Game Expert

Mr Rupert Hugh-Jones

Farmer and Micro-brewer

Ms Simone Kelly

The Rocket Man Cafe

Mr Sean Kent

Poultry Expert

Mr Donal Lehane

Food NPD Teo

Mr Hugh Maguire

Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland

Ms Jane Murphy

Cáis

Ms Mary Regan

Regan's Organic Poultry

Ms Dearbhla Reynolds

The Cultured Club

Mr Declan Ryan

Arbutus Bread

Ms Elisabeth Ryan

Raw Milk Ireland

FOOD SERVICE FORUM, 2018

Ms Dorothy Guina-Dornan (Chairperson)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Lana McGinn

Gather and Gather

Ms Louise Collins

Eddie Rocket's (IRL) Limited

Mr Pat Crotty

Vintners' Federation of Ireland

Mr Adrian Cummins

Restaurants Association of Ireland

Ms Martina Donohoe

Aramark

Mr Adam Heyes

Subway Ireland

Ms Louise Hickmott

McDonald's Restaurants of Ireland

Ms Mary Flynn

Catering Management Association of Ireland

Mr Conor O'Kane

Irish Hotels Federation/Clayton Hotels

Mr Pat O'Sullivan

Irish Prison Service

Ms Manuela Spinelli

Euro-Toques Ireland

RETAIL FORUM, 2018**Ms Dorothy Guina-Dornan (Chairperson)**

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Mr Ray Bowe

Musgrave Retail Partners Ireland

Mr Stephen Browne

Retail Ireland/Ibec

Ms Katie Creamer

Aldi

Ms Tara Buckley

Retail Grocery Dairy & Allied Trades Association (RGDATA)

Ms Rachel Moran

Avoca

Mr Gareth Coburn

Pallas Foods

Ms Mary Daly

Dunnes Stores

Ms Elaine Clohosey

BWG Foods

Mr Jonathan Halls

Boots

Ms Aoife Noonan

Lidl Ireland

Ms Lynda Kenny

Musgrave Wholesale/Daybreak

Mr Rob McEvoy

Circle K

Ms Aisling McGough

Tesco Ireland

Ms Sharon Murphy

Barry Group

Ms Caroline O'Connor

Gala Retail

Ms Trish Twohig

Iceland Foods

Mr Peter Wight

Marks & Spencer

MOLLUSCAN SHELLFISH SAFETY COMMITTEE, 2018**Mr David Lyons (Chairperson)**

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

**Mr Dave Clarke/Mr Bill Doré/Mr Conor Duffy/
Dr Jeffrey Fisher/Dr Sinead Keaveney/Mr Joe Silke**
Marine Institute**Ms Patricia Daly/Ms Vicky Lyons**

Bord Iascaigh Mhara

**Mr Paul Duane/Mr Brian Nolan/
Mr Bernard O'Donovan/Dr Micheál O'Mahony/
Ms Aileen O'Sullivan**

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

**Mr Richie Flynn (RIP)/Mr John Harrington/
Mr Ray Harty/Mr Pat Mulloy/Mr Finian O'Sullivan**
Irish Shellfish Association and Processing Industry**Ms Valerie Hannon/Ms Kate Harrington/
Ms Maeve O'Reilly**

Irish Water

Mr Paul Hickey

Health Service Executive

Dr Sarah McLean

Loughs Agency

Ms Maria Meghan

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Mr Liam Ó Súilleabháin

Environmental Protection Agency

*The Authority wishes to acknowledge the sad loss
in 2018 of Mr Richie Flynn, IFA Aquaculture Executive.*

Appendix 2 Scientific Subcommittee members

BIOLOGICAL SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE, 2018

Dr Geraldine Duffy (Chairperson)

Teagasc

Dr Declan Bolton

Teagasc

Prof. Martin Cormican

National University of Ireland, Galway

Dr Bill Doré

Marine Institute

Ms Catherine Foye

Health Service Executive

Dr Patricia Garvey

Health Protection Surveillance Centre

Dr John Griffin

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Ms Bernadette Hickey

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Kieran Jordan

Teagasc

Prof. Simon More

University College Dublin

Dr Eleanor McNamara

Health Service Executive

Dr Joanne O’Gorman

University College Dublin

Dr Micheál O’Mahony

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

Dr Helen O’Shea

Cork Institute of Technology

Dr Margaret O’Sullivan

Health Service Executive

Mr Ray Parle

Health Service Executive

Mr Kilian Unger

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Theo de Waal

University College Dublin

Dr Paul Whyte

University College Dublin

Mr Vincent Young

Health Service Executive

CHEMICAL SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE, 2018

Dr Michael O’Keeffe (Chairperson)

Residues Expert

Dr Gabriel Beechinor

Health Products Regulatory Authority

Mr Alan Breen

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Finbar Brown

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Nigel Brunton

University College Dublin

Dr Claire Chambers

Toxicology Expert

Ms Catherine Cosgrove

Health Service Executive

Dr Enda Cummins

University College Dublin

Dr Martin Danaher

Teagasc

Dr Edel Duggan

Beaumont Hospital

Mr John Keegan

Health Service Executive

Prof. Joe Kerry

University College Cork

Dr Ita Kinahan

State Laboratory

Dr Evin McGovern

Marine Institute

Dr Declan McKernan

National University of Ireland, Galway

Dr Tara McMorrow

University College Dublin

Dr Breige McNulty

University College Dublin

Dr John Moriarty

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Mr Joe Silke

Marine Institute

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION SUBCOMMITTEE, 2018**Ms Ita Saul (Chairperson)**

Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin (retired)

Dr Teresa Bennett

Health Service Executive

Dr Clare Corish

University College Dublin

Prof. Albert Flynn

University College Cork

Dr Eileen Gibney

University College Dublin

Prof. Mairead Kiely

University College Cork

Prof. Barbara Livingstone

Ulster University (retired)

Prof. Fionnuala McAuliffe

University College Dublin

Dr Sinéad McCarthy

Teagasc

Prof. Malachi McKenna

St Vincent's University Hospital

Prof. Helene McNulty

Ulster University

Dr Emeir McSorley

Ulster University

Dr Anne Nugent

University College Dublin

Dr Claire O'Brien

Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute

Dr Dilip Rai

Teagasc

Dr Janette Walton

University College Cork

Prof. Mary Ward

Ulster University

Dr Katherine YoungerDublin Institute of Technology
(Technological University Dublin)**AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE ON ALLERGENS****Mr Ray Parle (Chairperson)**

Health Service Executive

Dr Pdraig Burke

Public Analyst's Laboratory, Galway

Dr Orla Cahill

Dublin Institute of Technology (Technological University Dublin)

Dr Ruth Charles

Consultant Paediatric Dietitian

Dr Cristina Arroyo-Casabona

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Dr James McIntosh

safefood

Dr Pat O'Mahony

Dublin Institute of Technology (Technological University Dublin)

Dr Ciara Walsh

Dublin Institute of Technology (Technological University Dublin)

AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING TECHNOLOGY IN FOOD PROCESSING**Dr Mark Fenelon (Chairperson)**

Teagasc

Dr PJ CullenDublin Institute of Technology
(Technological University Dublin)**Dr Geraldine Duffy**

Teagasc

Prof. Alan Kelly

University College Cork

Dr James Lyng

University College Dublin

Dr Karl McDonald

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Prof. Brian McKenna

University College Dublin (retired)

Dr Michael O'Keefe

Residues Expert

Dr Seamus O'Mahony

University College Cork

Dr Pat O'Mahony

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Prof. Brijesh Tiwari

Teagasc

Dr Cristina Arroyo-Casabona

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Appendix 3 Statement of Board members', Chief Executive Officer's, and Scientific Committee members' interests

For 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018

Board member	Commercial interest		Non-commercial interest	
	Name of organisation	Nature of interest	Name of organisation	Nature of interest
Mr Ciaran Byrne	None	–	None	–
Ms Mary Cullen	None	–	None	–
Mr Derek Cunningham	None	–	None	–
Prof. Albert Flynn	None	–	None	–
Prof. Michael Gibney (tenure on Board ceased 7 February 2018)	Nestlé Research Centre	Consultancy	International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) Europe	Non-executive Director
	Cereal Partners Worldwide	Consultancy		
	Keelen & Co	Consultancy		
Mr Martin Higgins	None	–	None	–
Ms Margaret Moran	None	–	Arthur Cox Solicitors	One family member currently employed as Partner by Arthur Cox, the current legal advisors to FSAI
Ms Ros O'Shea	None	–	None	–
Dr Susan Quinn	None	–	None	–
Prof. Patrick Wall	Aryzta	Shares	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Independent Scrutineer for official controls in the area of food safety and animal welfare
	Independent Milk Laboratories	Chairperson		
	Maperath Management Ltd	Director		
	European College of Veterinary Public Health	Director		
	Agri Aware	Board member		
	Dawn Farm Foods	Member of the Scientific Advisory Panel		
	Moypark Poultry	Member of the Food Safety Advisory Panel and Antibiotic Stewardship Council		
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and Irish Industry Stakeholders	Chairperson, <i>Campylobacter</i> and Stakeholders Group			
Chief Executive Officer				
Dr Pamela A Byrne	None	–	None	–

Scientific Committee member	Commercial interest		Non-commercial interest	
	Name of organisation	Nature of interest	Name of organisation	Nature of interest
Ms Paula Barry Walsh	None	–	None	–
Prof. Kevin Cashman	None	–	None	–
Dr PJ Cullen	None	–	None	–
Dr Geraldine Duffy	None	–	None	–
Dr Mark Fenelon	None	–	None	None
Prof. Albert Flynn	None	–	International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) Europe	Member, Board of Directors
Mr John Keegan	None	–	None	–
Prof. Brian McKenna	None	–	None	–
Dr Eleanor McNamara	None	–	None	–
Prof. Simon More (retired mid 2018)	None	–	None	–
Dr Michael O'Keeffe	None	–	None	–
Dr Margaret O'Sullivan	None	–	None	–
Mr Redmond (Ray) Parle	None	–	None	–
Dr Donal Sammin	None	–	None	–
Ms Ita Saul	None	–	None	–

Appendix 4 Board members' biographies



1. Mr Martin Higgins

4. Mr Derek Cunningham

7. Ms Ros O'Shea

2. Mr Ciaran Byrne

5. Prof. Albert Flynn

8. Dr Susan Quinn

3. Ms Mary Cullen

6. Ms Margaret Moran

9. Prof. Patrick Wall

1. Mr Martin Higgins (Chairperson)

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

2. Mr Ciaran Byrne

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

3. Ms Mary Cullen

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

4. Mr Derek Cunningham

Mr Derek Cunningham is a communications consultant. Previously, he was Special Adviser to the former Tánaiste and Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney, and Head of Communications with the Irish Farmers' Association. He is a former journalist with RTÉ television and radio. He is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and has postgraduate qualifications from TCD and Dublin City University. He served on an Advisory Group of the Information Society Commission and was Chairman of the RTÉ Audience Council.

5. Prof. Albert Flynn

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

6. Ms Margaret Moran

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

7. Ros O'Shea

Ms Ros O'Shea is an independent, non-executive director with a portfolio of board positions in the financial, public and charitable sectors, including with the Bank of Montreal Ireland plc, BlackRock's Irish funds and Pieta House. She also chairs PwC's Alumni Network in Ireland. She is a founding partner of Acorn Governance Solutions, a consulting firm providing advice and leadership training in governance, culture, risk, compliance and business integrity, and she lectures on these topics at the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School, the Institute of Directors in Ireland and the Institute of Banking. Previously, she enjoyed a highly successful executive career, spanning almost 20 years, and working with two of Ireland's largest companies: CRH plc, where she was Head of Group Compliance & Ethics, and Smurfit Kappa Group plc. She has first class honours bachelor and master's degrees in business from University College Dublin, a Diploma in Corporate Governance from the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School, and is an associate of the Institute of Tax and a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, having trained with PwC. She has also completed the Master Trainer Programme at the Irish Management Institute (IMI), holds a Diploma in Aircraft Finance and Leasing from the Law Society of Ireland, is a graduate of the Value Creation through Effective Boards programme at Harvard Business School, and is a Certified Bank Director as designated by the Institute of Banking. In addition, she is the author of the book *Leading with Integrity: A Practical Guide to Business Ethics* and is a regular contributor to news and print media on related topics.

8. Dr Susan Quinn

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

9. Prof. Patrick Wall

Professor Patrick Wall is Professor of Public Health in University College Dublin's School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science. He was the first Chief Executive of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) and he was the second Chairperson of the European Food Safety Authority. He is a member of the International Scientific Advisory Committee of the China National Center for Food Safety Risk Assessment. He is a member of the management board of the Mater Foundation and Agri Aware. He qualified in veterinary medicine in University College Dublin and in human medicine in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He has an MSc in Infectious Diseases from the University of London, an MBA from the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School and a Diploma in Corporate Governance from University College Dublin. He is a Diplomat of the European College of Veterinary Public Health, a Member of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine of Ireland, a Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine in the UK and a Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. He is Chairperson of the management boards of Independent Milk Laboratories and Horse Sport Ireland.

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Governance Statement and Board Members' Report

For the year ended 31 December 2018

GOVERNANCE

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

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The work and responsibilities of all those associated with the operation of the Board are set out in the Code of Practice for Board members, Chairperson, Chief Executive and Secretary. The Code also sets out the matters specifically reserved for Board decision. Standing items considered by the Board include:

- Declaration of interests
- Reports from committees
- Financial reports/management accounts
- Performance reports
- Reserved matters.

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

In preparing these Financial Statements, the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare the Financial Statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Authority will continue in operation
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the Financial Statements.

The Board confirms that it has complied with the above requirements in preparing the Financial Statements.

The Board is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Authority and which enable it to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with Section 26 of the Act. The maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information on the Food Safety Authority's website is the responsibility of the Board.

The Board is responsible for approving the annual plan and budget. There is an ongoing evaluation of the performance of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland by reference to its annual business plan and budget. The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Board considers that the Financial Statements of the Authority give a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland at 31 December 2018, except for the non-compliance with the requirements of FRS 102 in relation to retirement benefit entitlements, as directed by the Minister of Health. The Board approved the signing of this statement and the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2018 on 25 June 2019.

The Board consists of a Chairperson and eight ordinary members, all of whom are appointed by the Minister for Health. The members of the Board were appointed for a period between three and five years and meet six times per annum. The table on page 69 details the appointment period for members serving during the year.

The Board engaged an independent specialist in early 2018 to complete an extensive review of the effectiveness of the FSAI Board and its committees – this included a survey and 1:1 interviews. In 2018 the Board reviewed the resulting report and identified actions to further enhance its effectiveness. In addition, the Board approved a revised Risk Management Framework and Policy in 2018.

The Board established two sub-committees, the **Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)** and the **Nominations and Remuneration Committee (NRC)**.

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

The members of the ARC are Ms. Margaret Moran (Chair), Mr. Ciaran Byrne, replaced by Ms. Ros O'Shea in September 2018, Ms. Mary Cullen and Mr. Raymond Dolan. There were 4 meetings of the ARC in 2018.

Board Members	Role	Date Initially Appointed	Latest Re-Appointment Date	Additional Detail
Prof. Mike Gibney	Chairperson	February 2013	–	Term ended February 2018
Prof. Patrick Wall	Ordinary Member	February 2013	February 2016	Term ended February 2019
Prof. Albert Flynn	Ordinary Member	February 2003	April 2015	–
Dr. Susan Quinn	Ordinary Member	October 2013	October 2016	–
Ms. Margaret Moran	Ordinary Member	June 2014	June 2017	–
Mr. Ciaran Byrne	Ordinary Member	July 2014	June 2017	–
Mr. Derek Cunningham	Ordinary Member	February 2013	June 2016	–
Mr. Martin Higgins	Ordinary Member/ Chairperson	February 2013	June 2016	Appointed Chairperson in February 2018
Ms. Ros O'Shea	Ordinary Member	June 2016	–	–
Ms. Mary Cullen	Ordinary Member	June 2016	–	–

The NRC comprises three Board members. The role of the NRC is to manage the CEO or senior management recruitment process. As required, the NRC agrees remuneration with Government Departments, develops the job description, identifies the relevant competencies and ideal candidate profile for the post, agrees the recruitment and search process, and sets a specific timetable. The Nominations and Remunerations Committee convenes as required by the Board. The NRC reports to the Board after each meeting.

The members of the NRC are Mr. Martin Higgins (Chair), Prof. Albert Flynn and Prof. Patrick Wall. There were no meetings of the NRC in 2018.

SCHEDULE OF ATTENDANCE, FEES AND EXPENSES

A schedule of attendance at the Board and Committee meetings for 2018 is set out in Note 4(c) of the Financial Statements.

KEY PERSONNEL CHANGES

Prof. Mike Gibney's term on the Board expired in February 2018 and he resigned as Chairperson of the Board. Mr. Martin Higgins was appointed as Chairperson of the Board.

DISCLOSURES REQUIRED BY CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE GOVERNANCE OF STATE BODIES (2016)

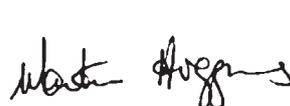
The Board is responsible for ensuring that the Authority has complied with the requirements of the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* ('the Code'), as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016. The following disclosures are required by the Code:

- Employee short-term benefits breakdown – set out in note 4(b) to the Financial Statements
- Consultancy costs – set out in note 4(h) to the Financial Statements
- Legal costs and settlements – set out in note 4(h) to the Financial Statements
- Travel and subsistence expenditure – set out in note 4(a) and 4(c) to the Financial Statements
- Hospitality expenditure – set out in note 4(f) to the Financial Statements.

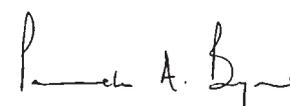
STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The Board has adopted the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016)* and has put procedures in place to ensure compliance with the Code. The Food Safety Authority of Ireland operated in compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* for 2018.

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



Mr Martin Higgins
Chairperson



Dr Pamela A Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

25 June 2019

Statement on Internal Control

For the year ended 31 December 2018

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

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

PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

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

The system of internal control, which accords with guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, has been in place in the Authority for the year ended 31 December 2018 and has been maintained up to the date at the time of approval of the financial statements. In addition, the Board is provided with further assurance as to the quality of the Authority's internal control as the FSAI is certified to the Quality Management System Standard ISO 9001:2015. This Standard confirms that the Authority operates a set of policies, processes and procedures appropriate for planning and execution of its core business.

CAPACITY TO HANDLE RISK

The FSAI has an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) comprising 3 Board members and 1 external member, with financial and audit expertise. The ARC met 4 times in 2018.

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

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

RISK AND CONTROL FRAMEWORK

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

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

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

- procedures for all key business processes have been documented,
- financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability,
- there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management,
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems,
- there are systems in place to safeguard the assets, and
- control procedures over the use of grant monies and the allocation of funding to outside agencies to ensure adequate control over approval of such monies so as to ensure grant funding has been applied for the purpose intended.

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

ONGOING MONITORING AND REVIEW

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

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

PROCUREMENT

We confirm that the FSAI has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines. The FSAI commenced a review of its procurement procedures in 2018. This review was completed in early 2019. Procedures have been updated to enhance on-going compliance and to address matters arising regarding controls over procurement, which are highlighted under internal control issues below.

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

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

The Board engaged an independent specialist in early 2018 to complete an extensive review of the effectiveness of the FSAI Board and its committees – this included a survey and 1:1 interviews. In 2018 the Board reviewed the resulting report and identified actions to further enhance its effectiveness.

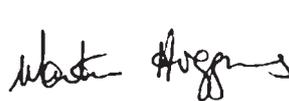
INTERNAL CONTROL ISSUES

During 2018 expenditure of €251,000 was incurred in relation to nine contracts for services where the procedures employed did not comply with procurement guidelines:

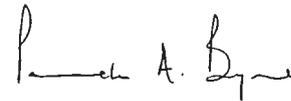
- Approximately €35,000 related to the provision of cleaning services on an expired contract which was also disclosed in the 2017 Statement on Internal Control. A procurement process for these services was completed in June 2018 and a contract awarded to a new supplier.
- Approximately €64,000 related to project management services provided by a third party in relation to the FSAI's relocation, which continued on from 2017 and was also disclosed in the 2017 Statement on Internal Control. This contract ceased in June 2018.
- Approximately €15,000 relates to agency fees for temporary staff which were engaged to fill an identified skills gap. The total cost of this contract in 2018 was €96,000, which comprises salary costs of €81,000 (including VAT). FSAI expects to regularise this contract in Q3 2019.
- The remaining amounts totalling €137,000 relate to expenditure incurred on expired contracts. The Office of Government Procurement has established Frameworks that may be used to address these services. The Authority has commenced a process to regularise these contracts and to enhance existing controls, which will be concluded in 2019.

There were no internal control weaknesses identified during 2018 other than those disclosed above.

On behalf of the Board of the FSAI:



Mr Martin Higgins
Chairperson



Dr Pamela A Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

25 June 2019

Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General

Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas

QUALIFIED OPINION ON FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

I have audited the financial statements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ending 31 December 2018 as required under the provisions of Section 26 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 – *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland*, and comprise:

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

In my opinion, except for the non-compliance with the requirements of FRS 102 in relation to retirement benefit entitlements referred to below, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland at 31 December 2018 and of its income and expenditure for 2018 in accordance with FRS 102.

BASIS FOR QUALIFIED OPINION ON FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

In compliance with the directions of the Minister for Health, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland accounts for the costs of retirement benefit entitlements only as they become payable. This does not comply with FRS 102 which requires that the financial statements recognise the full cost of retirement benefit entitlements earned in the period and the accrued liability at the reporting date. The effect of the non-compliance on the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's financial statements for 2018 has not been quantified.

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

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

REPORT ON INFORMATION OTHER THAN THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, AND ON OTHER MATTERS

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland has presented certain other information together with the financial statements. This comprises the annual report, the governance statement and Board members' report and the statement on internal control. My responsibilities to report in relation to such information, and on certain other matters upon which I report by exception, are described in the appendix to this report.

I have nothing to report in that regard.



Andrew Harkness

For and on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General

27 June 2019

APPENDIX TO THE REPORT

Responsibilities of Board members

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

- The preparation of financial statements in the form prescribed under Section 26 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998
- Ensuring that the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with FRS 102
- Ensuring the regularity of transactions
- Assessing whether the use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate, and
- Such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

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

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

As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. In doing so,

- I identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to fraud or error; design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks; and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- I obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal controls.
- I evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures.

- I conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, on whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Food Safety Authority of Ireland to cease to continue as a going concern.
- I evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

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

Information other than the financial statements

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

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

Reporting on other matters

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

I seek to obtain evidence about the regularity of financial transactions in the course of audit. I report if I identify any material instance where public money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them.

I also report by exception if, in my opinion,

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

Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves

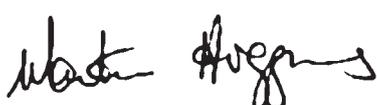
For the year ended 31 December 2018

		2018	2017
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Income			
Oireachtas Grant	2	15,779	17,924
Other Income	3	438	580
Total Income		16,217	18,504
Expenditure			
Administration, Operations & Promotion	4	9,973	10,030
Communications Activities	5	589	527
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	6	594	591
Local Authority Veterinary Service	7	6,248	6,041
Total Expenditure		17,404	17,189
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Appropriations		(1,187)	1,315
Transfer from/(to) the Capital Account	8	394	(2,142)
Profit or Loss on Disposal		–	(17)
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year after Appropriations		(793)	(844)
Balance at 1 January		(289)	555
Balance at 31 December		(1,082)	(289)

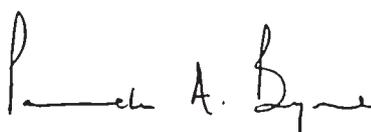
The Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 15 form part of these Financial Statements.

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



Mr Martin Higgins
Chairperson



Dr Pamela A Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

25 June 2019

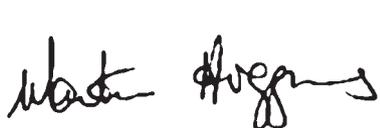
Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2018

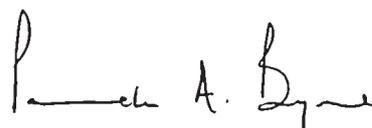
		2018	2017
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	6	1,973	2,329
Intangible Assets	6 (a)	19	57
Current Assets			
Receivables	9	609	248
Cash and Cash Equivalents		544	94
Net Current Assets		1,153	342
Current Liabilities (amounts falling due within one year)			
Payables	10	2,235	631
Net Current Assets/Liabilities		(1,082)	(289)
Total Assets less Liabilities before Pensions		910	2,097
Representing			
Capital Account	8	1,992	2,386
Retained Revenue Reserves		(1,082)	(289)
		910	2,097

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 15 form part of these Financial Statements.

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



Mr Martin Higgins
Chairperson



Dr Pamela A Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

25 June 2019

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 December 2018

		2018	2017
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Net cash inflow from operating activities			
(Deficit)/Excess Income over Expenditure		(1,187)	1,315
Depreciation and Impairment of Fixed Assets	6	594	591
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	9	(361)	221
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	10	1,604	378
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities		650	2,505
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Payments to acquire Plant & Equipment	6	(196)	(2,684)
Payments to acquire Intangible Assets	6 (a)	(4)	(66)
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities		(200)	(2,750)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		450	(245)
Cash and Cash Equivalents at 1 January		94	339
Cash and Cash Equivalents at 31 December		544	94

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2018

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

(a) General Information

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland was set up under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, with a head office at The Exchange, George's Dock, IFSC, Dublin 1, D01 P2V6.

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland's primary objectives as set out in Part II of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act are as follows:

To take all reasonable steps to ensure that:

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

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

(b) Statement of Compliance

The Financial Statements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2018 have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), as promulgated by Chartered Accountants Ireland as modified by the direction of the Minister for Health in relation to superannuation. In compliance with the directions of the Minister for Health, the Authority accounts for the costs of superannuation entitlements only as they become payable (see 1 (i) below). This basis of accounting does not comply with FRS 102, which requires such costs to be recognised in the year in which entitlement is earned.

(c) Basis of Preparation

The Financial Statements have been prepared under the accruals method of accounting, except as stated below, and under the historical cost convention in the form approved by the Minister for Health with the concurrence of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform under Section 26(5) of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's Financial Statements.

(d) Capital Funding

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

(e) Revenue

Oireachtas Grants

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

Other Revenue

Other Revenue is recognised on an accruals basis.

(f) Plant and Equipment

Plant and Equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation, adjusted for any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided on all Plant and Equipment at rates estimated to write off the cost less the estimated residual value of each asset on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

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

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

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

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

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2018

(g) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at fair value.

(h) Operating Leases

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

(i) Employee Benefits

Short-term Benefits

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

Retirement Benefits

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

By direction of the Minister for Health no provision has been made in the Financial Statements for future pension liabilities. Payments under the scheme are charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure and retained reserves when paid.

(j) Local Authority Veterinary Scheme

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland provides funding to Local Authorities in relation to the provision of veterinary services. The Authority received funding from the Department of Health (as part of its annual determination) in this regard. Funding received from the Department of Health and amounts paid to Local Authorities are recognised on a cash received and cash paid basis, in line with Section 34 of FRS 102.

(k) Key Estimates and Judgements

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

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

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2018

2. OIREACTHAS GRANTS

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

	Sub-head	2018	2017
		€'000	€'000
Grants for Current Expenditure	E.1	15,779	15,424
Grant for Capital Expenditure	L.1	–	2,500
Total		15,779	17,924

3. OTHER INCOME

	2018	2017
	€'000	€'000
Superannuation Deductions	240	250
Sale of Publications	146	156
Sundry Income	52	174
	438	580

The FSAI paid €36,852 (2017: €22,905) to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in respect of employee contributions under the single pension scheme.

4. ADMINISTRATION, OPERATIONS & PROMOTION

	Note	2018	2017
		€'000	€'000
Remuneration and Other Pay Costs	4(a)	6,162	6,439
Rent, Rates, Service Charges and Insurance		1,447	1,613
Research Costs		227	43
Legal and Consulting Fees	4(h)	133	351
IT, Telephone and Internet		945	868
Operating Expenditure	4(g)	1,059	716
		9,973	10,030

(a) Remuneration and Other Pay Costs

	Note	2018	2017
		€'000	€'000
Staff Salaries, Basic Pay		4,540	4,351
Staff Salaries, Overtime		7	8
Retirement Benefit Payments		96	80
Retirement Lump Sum Payments		–	159
Employer's Contributions To Social Welfare		436	407
Staff Training and Development		177	250
Staff travel and Subsistence Cost – National Travel		79	87
Staff Travel and Subsistence Cost – International Travel		187	159
Temporary Staff		578	871
Board members' Emoluments and expenses	4 (c)	62	67
		6,162	6,439

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

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2018

4. ADMINISTRATION, OPERATIONS & PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

(b) Employee Benefits Breakdown

Range of Total Employee Benefits		Number of Employees	
From	To	2018	2017
60,000	69,999	5	10
70,000	79,999	5	6
80,000	89,999	5	5
90,000	99,999	3	3
100,000	109,999	4	3
110,000	119,999	2	0
120,000	129,999	0	1
130,000	139,999	1	0

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

(c) Board Members' Attendance, Fees and Expenses

Board Member		Board Fee	Travel Expenses	Meetings Attended	Meetings Attended
		€	€	Board	Audit & Risk
Michael Gibney	(Chairperson to Feb 2018)	1,995	0	1/1	
Derek Cunningham	(Re-appointed June 2016)	7,695	0	6/6	
Margaret Moran	(Re-appointed June 2017)	7,695	0	6/6	4/4
Ciaran Byrne	(Re-appointed June 2017)	7,695	0	6/6	3/3
Patrick Wall	(Term ended Feb 2019)	0	0	6/6	
Susan Quinn		0	25	6/6	
Albert Flynn		7,695	907	6/6	
Mary Cullen		7,695	0	5/6	3/4
Ros O'Shea		7,695	0	5/6	0/1
Martin Higgins	(Chairperson from Feb 2018)	11,258	1,330	6/6	
		59,423	2,262		

During 2018, six Board meetings were held. Michael Gibney's term on the Board ended in February 2018. Martin Higgins was subsequently appointed as Chairperson of the Board. Two Board Members did not receive a Board fee under the One Person One Salary (OPOS) principle, as they are employed by other State organisations. The two members are Susan Quinn and Patrick Wall. All travel and subsistence relates to domestic travel in Ireland. The Audit and Risk Committee included one external member, Ray Dolan who attended 4 of 4 meetings. Ray Dolan does not receive a fee under the OPOS principle.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2018

4. ADMINISTRATION, OPERATIONS & PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

(d) Chief Executive Officer Salary and Benefits

	2018	2017
	€'000	€'000
Chief Executive Officer, Pamela Byrne	139	128
Total	139	128

The CEO remuneration package for 2018 was annual basic salary of €139,003 (2017: €127,805) with standard public sector arrangements. The above salary values do not include the value of retirement benefits earned in the period. The key management personnel (excluding Board members) are members of the FSAI's contributory defined benefit pension scheme.

(e) Key Management Personnel Compensation

Key management personnel in the Food Safety Authority of Ireland consist of the CEO, five Directors and members of the Board. Total compensation paid to key management personnel, including Board members' fees and expenses and total CEO remuneration amounted to €745,360 (2017: €630,708).

(f) Hospitality Expenditure

	2018	2017
	€'000	€'000
Staff hospitality	2	3
Advisory Committee Hospitality	11	10
Client hospitality	48	49
Board hospitality	3	0
Total	64	62

At the end of each year, a voucher for €100 is given to members of the FSAI Scientific and Consultative committees, and subcommittees who work on a voluntary basis.

(g) Operating Expenditure

	Note	2018	2017
		€'000	€'000
Recruitment Expenditure		27	48
Stationery and Postage		29	31
Cleaning and Catering		78	101
Repairs and Maintenance		146	58
Audit Fee		14	12
Food Legislation Compliance		161	117
Training – Official Agency Staff		124	63
Food Supplement Database		181	60
Committee Expenses		19	20
Library Supplies		91	55
General Expenditure (including hospitality)	4(f)	189	151
Total		1,059	716

(h) Consultancy Costs

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

	2018	2017
	€'000	€'000
Legal (i)	17	76
Consultancy	116	275
Total Consultancy Costs	133	351
Legal Costs Capitalised	–	34
Consultancy Costs Capitalised	–	312
Consultancy Costs Charged to Income and Expenditure	133	351
Total	133	697

(i) This refers to general legal advice. No expenditure was incurred in the reporting period in relation to legal costs, settlements and conciliation and arbitration proceedings relating to contracts with third parties.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2018

5. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

	2018	2017
	€'000	€'000
Public Relations	278	82
Industry Events	125	240
Industry Liaison	11	11
Publications	175	194
	589	527

Public relations includes expenditure on Allergens Advertising campaign of €92,000 in 2018.

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Office Furniture	Leasehold Improvements	Scientific Equipment	Total
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cost:						
At 1 January 2018	1,046	116	323	2,123	311	3,919
Additions	181	15				196
Disposals	(300)	(2)				(302)
At 31 December 2018	927	129	323	2,123	311	3,813
Accumulated Depreciation						
At 1 January 2018	879	60	62	319	270	1,590
Charge for the Year	158	15	46	318	15	552
Depreciation on Disposals	(300)	(2)				(302)
At 31 December 2018	737	73	108	637	285	1,840
Net Book Value						
At 31 December 2018	190	56	215	1,486	26	1,973
At 31 December 2017	167	56	261	1,804	41	2,329

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2018

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS (CONTINUED)

(a) Intangible Fixed Assets

	2018	2017
	€'000	€'000
1 January, Opening Net Book Value	57	75
Additions at Cost	4	66
Less Depreciation Charge for the Year	(42)	(84)
31 December, Closing Net Book Value	19	57

Intangible Fixed Assets consist of software licences which are written off over their useful life.

7. LOCAL AUTHORITY VETERINARY SERVICE (LAVS)

	2018	2017
	€'000	€'000
LAVS Payments	6,248	6,041

Payments are made to 25 Local Authorities for the provision of veterinary services, quarterly in arrears, on receipt of the appropriate funding from the Department of Health. Funding is channelled through the Department of Health and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and is included as part of the annual determination.

8. CAPITAL ACCOUNT

	2018	2018	2017	2017
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
At 1 January		2,386		244
Transfer from/(to) Income and Expenditure and Retained Reserves Account				
Additional Funds Allocated to Acquire Fixed Assets Funded through Operations	196		2,684	
Funds Allocated to Acquire Intangible Assets	4		66	
Written off on Disposal	–		(17)	
Amortisation in line with Asset Depreciation	(594)	(394)	(591)	2,142
Balance at 31 December		1,992		2,386

9. RECEIVABLES

	2018	2017
	€'000	€'000
Prepayments	603	242
Debtors	6	6
	609	248

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2018

10. PAYABLES

Amounts falling due within one year.

	2018	2017
	€'000	€'000
Trade Creditors	696	347
Accruals	210	191
Deferred Rent Accrual	1,155	7
Payroll Accruals	(27)	38
Tax Creditor – VAT	27	5
Tax Creditor – PAYE/PRSI	134	
Tax Creditor – PSWT	40	43
	2,235	631

11. OPERATING LEASES

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

At 31 December 2018 the FSAI had the following future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases:

	The Exchange
	€'000
Lease Obligations falling due:	
Within 1 Year	1,147
Between Years 2 to 5	4,587
After 5 Years	15,766

12. CONTINGENT LIABILITY

A contingent liability has arisen, relating to a present obligation where payment is not probable and the amount cannot be measured reliably. The FSAI is in receipt of appropriate advice and is in consultation with other State Bodies to mitigate the risk of the contingency materialising. Further disclosure is not prudent as it could impact on the outcome.

13. BOARD MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Board adopted procedures in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in relation to the disclosures of interests by Board Members and these procedures have been adhered to in the year. During the year one of the Board members provided Nutritional Risk Assessment training to staff of FSAI. The amount charged for this service was €1,400, which was paid during 2018. This is included under Key Management Personnel Compensation, Note 4(e). Other than the above, there were no transactions in the year in relation to the Board's activities in which a Board Member had a beneficial interest.

14. EXTERNAL PROJECTS

The FSAI, in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Sustainable Food Systems Ireland and the Finnish Food Authority, successfully tendered for a €5 million EU grant over the next four years. The purpose of the grant is to support Albania as a candidate for accession to the EU by strengthening its food safety, veterinary and plant health standards. The project will be supported by an Albanian not for profit organisation Creative Business Solutions. The contract was signed in December 2018.

15. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Financial Statements were approved by the Board on 25 June 2019.



Food Safety Authority of Ireland
The Exchange, George's Dock, IFSC,
Dublin 1, D01 P2V6

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