

Annual Report 2016



2016 Highlights

5 

Food Science and Standards staff chaired five sessions at international scientific meetings.

[▶ READ MORE ON P37](#)

6,404 

The Environmental Health Service of the Health Service Executive carried out 6,404 unplanned inspections of food businesses.

[▶ READ MORE ON P22](#)

39 

Thirty nine food alerts were issued in 2016 – the highest number of food alerts in ten years.

[▶ READ MORE ON P33](#)

3,202

The Advice Line received 3,202 complaints by consumers relating to food, food premises and food labelling.



[▶ READ MORE ON P28](#)

33 

The Authority has service contracts with 33 official agencies.

[▶ READ MORE ON P38](#)

243 

The Communications team responded to 243 media queries and issued 30 press releases.

[▶ READ MORE ON P25](#)

94 

During 2016, food inspectors served 94 Closure Orders, three Improvement Orders and nine Prohibition Orders, on food businesses.

[▶ READ MORE ON P23](#)

49,404

Food businesses were under the supervision of official agencies in 2016.



[▶ READ MORE ON P20](#)

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Our Mission

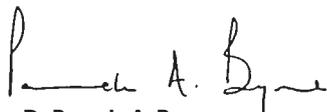
We protect consumers by leading a collaborative food safety community to continuously raise food standards and create a culture of excellence.

To the Minister for Health

The Board is pleased to submit to the Minister, its annual report and accounts for the twelve-month period ended 31 December 2016, in accordance with Section 25 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998.



Prof. Michael Gibney
Chairman



Dr Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

For more information,
please visit: www.fsai.ie



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Chairman's Statement

The Authority completed an extensive programme of work in 2016 and this annual report provides both an overview and a detailed account of the activities of the team. It serves to demonstrate the significant role that the Authority continues to play in striving for the highest food safety, hygiene and integrity and authenticity standards in food businesses in Ireland.



Compliance with food law requires a strong regulatory framework that is based on the best available science and information as well as robust enforcement powers – all of which underpin the delivery of the Authority's vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone.

In 2016, the Authority launched its new strategy which was developed through substantial consultation with all key stakeholders. I am proud to report that the Authority delivered on the majority of its objectives as set out in its strategy (2016-2018) despite constraints on resources. Within its new strategy, the Authority set out its clear but ambitious vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone. The Authority also defined a very clear mission which states "*we protect consumers by leading a collaborative food safety community to continuously raise food standards and create a culture of excellence*". This mission, fully endorsed by the Board and fully in line with the Department of Health's overarching strategy, sets out the goals, objectives, and expected outcomes over the next three years. It is fully aligned with the legislative mandate of the Authority outlined under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 (as amended).

Underpinning all activity is our core focus on effective regulation which is strongly influenced by the most up-to-date scientific knowledge available through our own expert staff, our Scientific Committee and our engagement on scientific forums at EU and international level. I am delighted that we were in a position to bring together, 15 eminent Irish scientists, following a process agreed by the Department of Health, to support the scientific endeavours of the Authority in 2016. The Scientific Committee and its Sub-Committees are essential in assessing risks to consumers from food which underpin strong risk management decisions and the development of policies that ultimately benefit public health.

Our role is comprehensive as we monitor and intervene as necessary, across the food chain from farm gate to fork. This involves monitoring for chemical and microbiological contaminants; carrying out risk assessments on food hazards; inspecting the food service sector and managing food incidents that are related to issues that have occurred both here or which have emanated in other EU countries. All this requires a robust network of experts in various aspects of food science and inspection. We carry out our oversight of the food chain through our staff working in a partnership approach, formalised through our service contracts with some 33 individual State agencies in Ireland. The support, co-operation and dedication of the staff working under service contract to the Authority are significant assets in the delivery of effective food control and protecting public health and interests in relation to food. I would like to congratulate the work of the inspectorate and the State laboratories in delivering on a significant programme of work during the year, particularly as many of the agencies were working with constrained resources.

During 2016, there was a notable increase in the number of complaints by consumers to our Advice Line which received 3,202 complaints from consumers relating to food, food premises and food labelling. The figure represents a total increase of 17% on 2015 (when 2,739 were received), with the number of complaints about food poisoning up considerably at 45%. Poor hygiene standards were the second highest reported, with an increase of 34%, as compared with 2015, while complaints about incorrect information on food labelling were up 15%. The number of complaints about unfit food was up 7%, when compared with 2015.

We welcome this increase in complaints from consumers as food inspectors cannot be in every food premises every day. Therefore, we rely on consumers to inform us if they have negative experiences when purchasing and/or consuming food. During the year, the Authority issued 39 food alerts - the highest number of food alerts in ten years. The 39 food alerts resulted in either product recalls or withdrawals from the Irish market for the following reasons: presence of a foreign body; presence of pathogens, i.e. bugs and chemical contamination.

We also noticed over the last number of years, a growth in the number of food allergen alerts, whereby an undeclared allergen is identified in a product and that product needs to be withdrawn or recalled. Three in every 100 people in Ireland has a food allergy and the seriousness of these occurrences can result in the loss of life to an individual in its most extreme form and can also result in urgent medical treatment and severe allergic reactions. Therefore, this will be an area of focus for the Authority over the years to come.

Our ultimate objective is to continue to develop a culture of excellence in food businesses in Ireland by engaging with those who can directly improve food safety - the manufacturers, processors, retailers, caterers, as well as the State agencies. To this end, I am delighted that we continue to host the industry fora where we can engage with a variety of stakeholder throughout the year. In addition, we continued our commitment to provide advice, host seminars and disseminate publications to support those in the food sector continue to raise food standards in line with our mission.

The Authority regulates and oversees a dynamic and expanding sector. Over 320 new food businesses were registered in 2016 and the sector is expected to expand even further as outlined in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's Food Wise 2025 which has set significant growth targets and aspires to deliver this growth through dairy, beef, seafood and consumer food and drinks exports. Therefore, an independent, robust, respected and well regarded food safety inspectorate system is a tremendous asset for our country's economic reliance on its food sector.

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 dedicated to protecting consumers. The food inspectors of the official agencies who work under service contract to 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 to their role as part of the national food safety inspectorate.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ministers for Health, Leo Varadkar T.D., and Simon Harris, T.D. as well as the Ministers for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney T.D. and Michael Creed, T.D. and the staff of their respective departments who have been proactive and supportive of the Authority in its endeavours and actions in 2016.

I would also like to thank my fellow Board members for their tremendous contribution to the strategic direction and workings of the Authority. 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 these scientists give us 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 year and I have enjoyed working with my colleagues on the Board and receiving the continued support of the scientific committee and the food safety consultative council. We look forward to supporting the Authority in fully delivering on the new Strategy over the coming years and to being fully compliant in 2017 with the new *Code of Practice for Governance in State Bodies, 2016*.



Prof. Michael Gibney

Chairman

Chief Executive's Overview

I am delighted to present the 2016 Annual Report and accounts for the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. This report covers my second year as Chief Executive Officer of the Authority and I would like to thank my team for its commitment and dedication to delivering on our ambitious vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone. I am constantly inspired by the professionalism and passion of the team in delivering on our legislative mandate.



The Authority performs a key function in co-ordinating the implementation of food legislation in fulfilment of its mission to protect consumers by leading a collaborative food safety community to continuously raise food standards and to create a culture of excellence within the food industry in Ireland. And whilst the legal responsibility for putting safe food on the market is with the industry, the Authority and its partners in the official agencies are responsible for providing the evidence to demonstrate that they are fulfilling their responsibility. There is no market for unsafe food and it is incumbent on all involved in Ireland's food system to ensure that consumers' health and interests in respect of food are protected in so far as is reasonably possible. The Authority does not work in isolation. It fulfils this mission in partnership with the Health Service Executive; the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; the Local Authority Veterinary Service and others, including the Marine Institute and the National Standards Association of Ireland – all of which have service contracts with the Authority. In addition, we collaborate with other organisations to facilitate a joined-up approach to the enforcement of food legislation and the assessment and management of risks.

In 2016, I was delighted to sign a new Memorandum of Understanding with *safefood* which outlines how we will work together on areas of mutual interest and specifically identifies, on an annual basis, key projects that we will undertake in collaboration. Without this and other such partnerships in place, the Authority would not be in a position to protect those who consume food which is produced, manufactured, processed or distributed in Ireland.

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 food brought into that us, in the official agencies, 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 to ensure that they are relevant, robust and deliver added value to our activities. In 2016, I began to work with other food safety agencies on the use of private certification schemes as part of the official control framework and whilst this is not an element of Ireland's official control system, I will continue to review new and innovative mechanisms and initiatives that can bring more efficiency and effectiveness to our work with the Authority. 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.

I was particularly proud to publish during the year, our strategy for 2016 – 2018 in which we have set out a significant road map for our organisation for the next three years. The strategy was inspired by the team within the Authority and feedback from our key stakeholders and the public and identifies a number of ambitious strategic goals, each underpinned with a set of clearly defined objectives – all of which will lead to a series of important outcomes. At its core, our strategy's vision is to ensure safe and trustworthy food for everyone and our mission which focusses on protecting consumers by leading a collaborative food safety community to continuously raise food standards and create a culture of excellence. Core to the delivery of our strategy are our values that will guide our work for the next three years.

The Authority has created a robust, inclusive regulatory framework which has governed and fostered new approaches to ensuring food safety over the last number of years and there is more we can do. Everyone, including those in the food sector and the regulatory system and indeed consumers, has a role to play in raising food standards and creating a culture of excellence. The delivery of our new strategy will build on the work undertaken in the past and will further foster a partnership approach by delivering a strategically planned food safety regulatory system that continues to be relevant, progressive and robust for the future.

We strive to lead a regulatory culture where everyone is passionate about achieving the highest standards of food; by providing a framework for regulating food which allows for effective enforcement, whilst also ensuring a partnership approach that really engages all stakeholders.

The Authority, through its staff and Scientific Committee structure, has a wealth of scientific knowledge, evidence and expertise available to it, and we will use this to underpin policy and risk analysis with respect to food safety. We will strengthen and develop engagement with national, European and international food safety, integrity and nutrition experts as appropriate, to deliver robust advice to underpin all the Authority's decision-making.

Creating an environment where Ireland is a trusted and recognised leader in food safety and integrity, is embedded within our strategy. We aim to set standards that are practical and recognised globally and work in partnership with consumer advocacy groups to address consumers' needs. We will build capacity and capability to allow Ireland to react and deal effectively with any national or international food incident or crisis.

Our values of teamwork, integrity, passion, respect, innovation and collaboration, as set out in our strategy, are the essence of our identity. We will develop our organisation with an ethos that is true to its values by fostering a culture of respect, integrity and humility, which is non-discriminatory and supports equality. Alongside this, we will deliver a robust system of corporate governance to ensure accountability, transparency and public value.

We have recognised that adopting a digital-first approach will maximise accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness. Over the coming years, we will enhance data collection and analysis to gain a deeper understanding of the environment in which we operate and inform decision making. We will also utilise technology as a foundation for innovation.

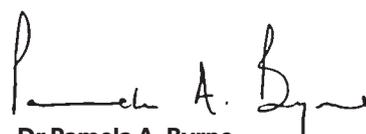
Delivering this strategy will require working in collaboration with our stakeholders, as well as the Irish and global food safety community to ensure access to timely and accurate. Indeed, as a direct result of the public feedback, we have begun the process of mapping all of our stakeholders with a view to developing a more strategic approach to how we engage with them in the coming years.

I am really looking forward to implementing the strategy over the coming years and to demonstrating, through evidence, the impact of our activities on protecting consumers, raising food standards and creating a culture of excellence within the food industry in Ireland. Ireland has excellent food companies 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 responsibilities with it, to produce the safest food we possibly can and it is the Authority's role, through working in partnership, 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 will be working with the team and other stakeholders in 2017 and beyond, to understand what Brexit will mean from a regulatory perspective.

Key to being able to deliver on our legislative mandate is people. I am very privileged to have a very professional and committed team within the Authority and during 2016, we began to look in depth into the meaning of our values and we will continue this work in 2017 because our values define how we work within the Authority and with our partners.

I would like to thank the Department of Health for its continued support to the Authority and in particular, for providing sanction for the recruitment of staff to fill vacancies that have arisen over the last number of years. I would also like to thank the department for its support in helping the Authority identify and finance, a move to new premises in the future.

Finally, I would like to thank Prof. Michael Gibney, Chair of the Board and the Board members for their support and guidance during the year. I am looking forward to continuing to work closely with the Board, the Scientific Committee, the Food Safety Consultative Council, the industry fora, and the official agencies and the team within the Authority, as we implement our new strategy together over the next three years.



Dr Pamela A. Byrne

Chief Executive Officer

About the Food Safety Authority of Ireland

LEGAL BASIS

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) was set up in 1998 under the FSAI Act¹ (S.I. No. 29 of 1998 as amended) as an independent agency of Government responsible for the enforcement of food law in Ireland. This Act was enacted in July 1998 and came into effect on 1st January 1999.

The principal function of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland 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.

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 Board of ten. 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 we do, we are also protecting the consumers of Irish food abroad. Our activities are key to underpinning the health of Irish society and Ireland's economic growth.

Healthy people making informed choices about the food that they eat is the foundation of a healthy society and a functioning economy. The Department of Health's Strategy, 2016 – 2019² recognises the importance of ensuring that the appropriate legal frameworks, policies and relevant structures, are in place to achieve the highest standards of food safety in achieving its overall objective to support 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 health care costs and social welfare costs. Although there has been no study in Ireland on the health costs of illness relating specifically to food, a 2007 *safefood* study calculated the cost of gastroenteritis in Ireland at €200 million. 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.



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.

¹ https://www.fsai.ie/legislation/fsai_act_related.html

² <http://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/DoH-SoS-2016-2019-Final-En.pdf>



Crosscare, Cedar House

The Authority acknowledges and supports the excellent work done by the charity, Crosscare, Cedar House. In lieu of sending Christmas cards in 2016, the Authority made a donation to Cedar House, Crosscare Service. In addition, staff came together and gifted Cedar House service users with some essentials this Christmas. Pictured at a presentation to Crosscare at the Authority's office is Dean Hayden of CrossCare Services.

Food and drink manufacturing is the largest indigenous sector in Ireland, with 56,000 directly employed and exports of more than €11.5 billion. Both employment and exports have now recovered to 2009 levels, or exceeded them. Additionally, it is estimated that there is about the same quantity again of indirect employment associated with the sector, as well as twice this number of farmers³. Beyond this, Food Wise 2025⁴ projects significant growth over the coming years, with a target of 85% exports growth to €19 billion by 2025, as well as an increase of 23,000 jobs over the period. Economically, the Irish agri-food industry makes the largest domestic contribution of any home grown industry. It accounts for 8.8% of GDP and is worth €8 billion in foreign export earnings whilst employing 14-15% of the Irish workforce. 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. 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 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:

85% 

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

€13bn 

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

65% 

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

23,000 

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

The work of the Authority in ensuring the safety of the Irish food supply will become even more significant if these projections are realised.

³ <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/foodindustrydevelopmenttrademarkets/agri-foodandtheeconomy/foodwise2025/Final2017ReportFutureSkillsNeedsFoodDrinkSector130417.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/foodindustrydevelopmenttrademarkets/agri-foodandtheeconomy/foodwise2025/report/FoodWise2025.pdf>

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 an agreed high standard 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 to gain its commitment in the production of safe food
- Setting food standards based on sound science and risk assessment
- Risk management in association with frontline agencies and the food sector, and communicating risks to consumers, public health professionals and the food industry



Shelf-life Seminar

A workshop on shelf-life studies was held in November at the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, Backweston Campus, Celbridge, Co. Kildare. The workshop was targeted at laboratories offering microbiological testing services to set and verify the shelf-life of food. Pictured are speakers at the workshop (l-r): Lisa O'Connor, Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Linda Gordon, safefood; Karl McDonald, Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Bernadette Hickey, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and Mary Lenahan, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.



Food legislation is enforced on behalf of the Authority by a network of official agencies through a service contracts programme which the Authority monitors and reports on the agencies' activities.

The Authority's key remit is the enforcement of the 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 and 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 approximately 49,000 food businesses 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 the 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 measures 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 consumer interests are first and foremost.

The Authority manages approximately 500 food incidents and emergencies a year and 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 Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed of the European Commission and the International Network of Food Safety Authorities of the World Health Organization, 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 – Irish Tax and Customs Service, An Garda Síochána and the competent authorities with a role 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 Sub-Committees 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 to gain its commitment for 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 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 takes approximately 11,0000 calls per year.

The Authority has a strong commitment to communicating the importance of food safety, the associated risks and providing people with timely, meaningful and tailored information. The Authority's website is our shop window for the world and received almost one million visits in 2015 and over two million page views. The enforcement activities and information resources are complemented by awareness campaigns and 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.

HOW THE AUTHORITY OPERATES

The Authority enforces food legislation through service contracts with 33 official agencies and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 provides the legislative basis.

The official agencies working under this service contract agreement in 2016 were: the Health Service Executive; the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; 28 local authorities; the National Standards Authority of Ireland; and the Marine Institute. The Authority's role is to coordinate and monitor the activities of these official agencies through the service contracts, which outline an agreed level and standard of food safety activity that the official agencies perform. The service contracts are in place for a minimum duration of three years, and subject to the request of either the Authority or the official agency, may be reviewed during that time. Regular meetings were held with senior management in each agency and with the line managers responsible for the delivery of inspection and analysis.

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

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

The food industry is primarily responsible for the safety of food on the Irish market and the Authority's role is one of oversight and enforcement and consequently, the Authority engages with the industry to encourage compliance and make food businesses aware of its responsibilities.

The Authority continued to engage with the food industry on many levels to reinforce the need for the sector to take responsibility for producing and marketing safe food and to improve standards of food safety and hygiene.

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

ARTISAN FOOD PRODUCERS' FORUM

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

The Artisan Forum met once in May 2016. At this meeting, the following issues were discussed: the Authority's Strategic Plan 2016-2018; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine supports for artisan producers; nutrition labelling derogations and country of origin labelling; position paper on STEC testing in Europe; protocol for organic and free-range artisan poultry production; amending/ extending the terms used in the Authority's *Guidance Note No. 29 – The Use of Food Marketing Terms*; best practice for speciality retailers around temperature control for cured and fermented foods (cheeses, meats, etc.); specified risk material and making broth with bones; guidance on crushing of bones and using as fertiliser; update on *Campylobacter*, national and international; update on *Salmonella* in duck eggs; and an update on Teagasc activities of interest to the artisan sector.

RETAIL FORUM

The Retail Forum includes members from the main supermarkets and the major symbol groups. The forum serves as a useful mechanism to increase understanding of food legislation, disseminate food safety advice and share best practice. In 2016, the Retail Forum met three times. The main issues discussed were: the Authority's Strategic Plan 2016-2018; clothing in high-care areas and hot-air dryers; MenuCal and *Campylobacter* were both recurring agenda items; information sharing/ potential emergency and fraud risks; cook/chill for the food service sector; query on defrosted fish; sugar tax in the UK; boil water notices and tea and coffee machines; reformulation; voluntary code of practice for food advertising and marketing that applies in non-broadcast media; food businesses changing from using 'use-by' to 'best-before'; marketing of infant formula; country of origin labelling for poultry; chlorinated washing of fresh produce; guidance on fresh produce; hot food for consumption on day of purchase; and antimicrobial resistance.



Your Business and EFSA

EFSA and the Authority hosted a conference in Dublin in October, entitled 'Your Business and EFSA'. This conference brought together, EU experts on regulated products and emerging risks with stakeholders in the food industry, to discuss EFSA's evaluation process for the safety of regulated food ingredients and the techniques it currently uses to identify emerging risks in the food industry.

Pictured at the conference are: David Byrne, former European Commissioner and Pamela Byrne, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.



Fresh Produce Safety

This leaflet, published by the Authority in 2016, provides basic information to growers on good practices which will help improve fresh produce safety for Irish consumers.

✓ AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD
www.fsai.ie/publications



The Retail Forum serves as a useful mechanism to increase understanding of food legislation, disseminate food safety advice and share best practice.

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 twice in 2016. The following items were discussed at these meetings: *Campylobacter*; the Authority's Strategy 2016-2018; MenuCal/calories on menus; the Authority's Enforcement Consistency Committee; fraud complaints from artisan producers; information sharing/potential emerging risks; EC guidance on food safety management systems; antimicrobial resistance; common questions to the Authority's Advice Line from caterers; and cooking of burgers.

MOLLUSCAN SHELLFISH SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee is the national stakeholder committee for the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme, which aims to ensure that only safe shellfish are placed on the market. The Committee, which is chaired by the Authority, includes representatives from the official agencies, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, the shellfish industry and other stakeholder groups. During 2016, the Committee met five times and a wide range of issues was discussed such as the molluscan shellfish production period and the definition and management of it in the context of the legislation, norovirus, tetradoxin, lipophilic toxins, laboratory performance against key performance indicators, and training and capacity building.

OTHER COLLABORATIONS

The Authority continued its collaborations with a number of organisations both in Ireland and abroad during 2016.

Its close cooperation and collaboration with the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland continued and is supported by means of a Memorandum of Understanding that is designed to ensure rapid and effective co-operation in the event of a food incident and common enforcement matters in both jurisdictions. The Memorandum of Understanding 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 2016, the Authority signed a Memorandum of Understanding with *safefood* which sets out how both agencies will work collaboratively on areas of mutual interest.

The Authority contributes to the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Health Protection Surveillance Centre in the Health Service Executive. The Authority also has a confidentiality agreement with the Food and Drugs Administration in the USA.

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

The Authority also chairs the Food Law Enforcement Practitioners, an EU group of inspectors and laboratory personnel engaged in food law implementation and participates in the relatively recently formed Heads of European Food Safety Agencies group. In addition, the Authority also participated in a global Government to Government meeting on the use of private certification schemes in the context of official controls.



Memorandum of Understanding

The Authority signed an updated Memorandum of Understanding with *safefood*. Both agencies share the common goal of protecting consumers' health and consumers' interests in the area of food safety.

Signing the Memorandum of Understanding are: Pamela Byrne, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Ray Dolan, *safefood*.

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

Staff from the Authority are part of the International Commission for Microbiological Specifications for Foods. Authority staff also took part in expert consultations of the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The Authority is the national contact point for INFOSAN - the International Network of Food Safety Authorities, a joint initiative between the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization. It involves 177 Member States in the exchange of routine information on food safety issues, sharing experiences and expertise, and allows for rapid access to information in case of food safety emergencies.

FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND STRATEGY 2016 – 2018

In 2016, following a substantial internal and external stakeholder consultation, the Authority launched a new Strategy which sets out new vision, mission, values, and strategic goals and objectives for 2016 – 2018.

The new vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone – clearly articulates the Authority’s ambition and the delivery of the new Strategy will build upon the work undertaken in the past and will further foster 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 the mission, which states:



Food Safety Authority of Ireland Strategy 2016 - 2018

This Strategy sets out the Authority’s vision, mission, values and strategic goals for the period 2016 – 2018. The delivery of the new Strategy will build on the work undertaken in the past and will further foster a partnership approach by delivering a strategically planned food safety regulatory system that continues to be relevant, progressive and robust for the future.

www.fsai.ie/publications

Underpinning how the Authority works, are the following values:

- **Integrity** – We are honest, open and independent in all we do
- **Passion** – We are passionate about protecting consumers
- **Respect** – We act with respect and personal responsibility
- **Innovation** – We change 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 will constantly guide the Authority’s decisions and interactions as the organisation strives to achieve its vision and deliver on the mission and strategic goals.



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

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 oversight of corporate governance in accordance with Government guidelines. Two independent bodies advise the Board, one consisting of stakeholders in the food chain, e.g. food industry, consumers, called the Food Safety Consultative Council and one consisting of scientists called the Scientific Committee.

The Scientific Committee is a body consisting of 15 independent scientists appointed by the Minister for Health in consultation with the Board. The Chair of the Scientific Committee must be a member of the Board. The Scientific Committee advised the Board on scientific matters underpinning food safety and nutrition. 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 Sub-Committees of independent scientists to progress its advice. Hence, the Authority is advised by the work of approximately 60 scientists.

FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND BOARD, 2016

Prof. Michael Gibney (Chair)

Prof. Albert Flynn

Ms Margaret Moran

Mr Ciaran Byrne

Dr Susan Quinn

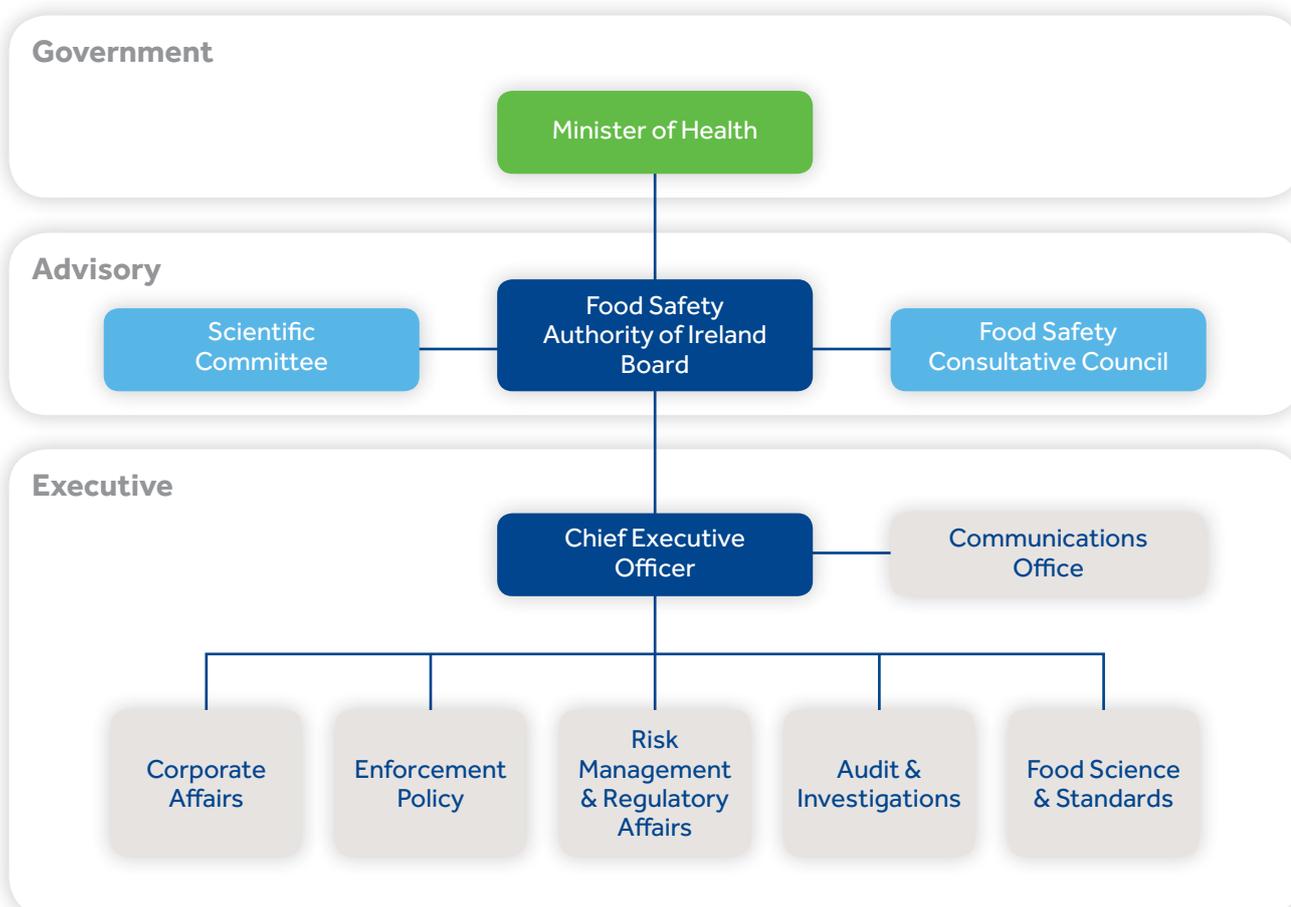
Prof. Patrick Wall

Mr Derek Cunningham

Ms Mary Cullen

Mr Martin Higgins

Ms Ros O'Shea



FOOD SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL, 2016

Ms Veronica Campbell (Chair)
Campbell Bewley Group Ltd

Mr Ray Bowe
Musgraves

Dr Susanne Boyd
Queen's University, Belfast

Mr Pat Daly
Teagasc

Ms Sinead Finnegan
Beverage Council of Ireland

Ms Una Fitzgibbon
Bord Bia

Ms Maree Gallagher
Solicitor

Mr Cormac Healy
Meat Industry Ireland

Mr Dermott Jewell
Consumers' Association of Ireland

Mr Brendan Kehoe
Farmer

Ms Margaret Leahy
Organic Farmer

Mr Donal Maguire
Bord Iascaigh Mhara

Ms Paula Mee
Nutritionist

Mr Tim O'Brien
Restaurateur

Ms Breda Raggett
Consumer – Former President
of the Irish Countrywomen's Association

Mr Martin Roper
Excellence Ireland Quality Association

FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE, 2016

Prof. Albert Flynn (Chair)
University College, Cork

Prof. Kevin Cashman
University College, Cork

Dr PJ Cullen
Dublin Institute of Technology

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 B. 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)

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



CORPORATE AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Authority and is supported by a Senior Leadership Team in which there are currently four Directors who report to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer is currently acting Director of Corporate Affairs. The Chief Executive Officer is the Irish representative to the European Food Safety Authority's Advisory Forum; the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies; a member of the Irish delegation to the Codex Alimentarius Commission; the Chair of the European Joint Programming Initiative "A healthy diet for a healthy life"; 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 Group; and Chair of the Institute of Food and Health Business Advisory Board, University College, Dublin. The CEO's office is responsible for liaison with the Authority's Board; management of the corporate risk register; co-ordinating all communications by the Authority; organisation of events; design and publishing of the Authority's publications; and promoting the work of the Authority in the media; and representing Ireland at the European Food Safety Authority's Communications Network.

In 2016, the organisation was re-structured to align to the new strategy and the following describes the purpose of each of the functional areas:



Dr Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

The Corporate Affairs functional area is led by the Chief Executive Officer in an acting capacity and develops and implements leading-edge corporate affairs and information and data management strategies designed to enhance organisational performance and effectiveness. It is responsible for human resources, finance, IT, information and data management, freedom of information, corporate governance, and general facilities management functions of the organisation. This functional area is key to ensuring the Authority achieves its business objectives internally and externally, building the organisation's impact and reputation and ensuring its future success. The team works in close collaboration with other members of the Senior Leadership Team in developing and implementing strategic plans and annual service plans.



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. The service contact 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 32 agencies. Most of the activities of the team are focussed on supporting the strategic goal of leading a regulatory culture for enforcement of food legislation, though they also provide 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 functional area reflects this operating model.



RISK MANAGEMENT AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS



Raymond Ellard

Director, Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs

Ray Ellard leads the Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs functional area which has two main roles within the Authority. 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 the risk assessments carried out by the Food Science and Standards team. In addition, the team manages the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed which is a notification system managed by the European Commission to exchange information between members of the network including Member States, the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority on hazards identified in food, feed and food contact materials. The team is also responsible for the development of the regulatory strategy of the Authority, thereby leading the development of our regulatory strategy for the broad framework of food legislations that we are required to enforce. This is achieved through veterinary, agricultural and environment health experts within the team. The Training Compliance team ensures that the right tools are developed to enable food safety inspectors and the industry to comply with the law. The team is also responsible for the management and co-ordination of the Food Safety Consultative Council, the Artisan, Food Retailer, and Food Service Fora.



AUDIT AND INVESTIGATIONS



Peter Whelan

Director, Audit and Investigations

Peter Whelan leads the Audit and Investigations functional area which is responsible for three broad areas: audits, investigations (including food fraud investigations) and the maintenance of the Quality Management System. However, in the future, the Quality Management System will be led by the Corporate Affairs functional area. The team in Audit and Investigations carry out audits of the official controls system; targeted audits of food businesses; it also provides support on third country; and support European Commission Santé-F (formerly the Food and Veterinary Office) audits in Ireland; all of which are in accordance with the Authority's legal mandate. The annual audit programme is designed to ensure adequate coverage of all relevant areas of activity and all relevant official agencies within at an appropriate risk-based frequency over a period not exceeding five years. Audit reports and their corrective action plans are published on the Authority's website. The team also conduct special investigations in conjunction with competent authorities where serious breaches of food law or food fraud have 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 risk management activities of the Authority. As well as carrying out in-house risk assessment, it manages and supports the work of the Authority's Scientific Committee which consists of 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 European level through work on expert groups of 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 to help it produce safe food. The 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 to assess the safety of food, provide input into national and European food safety research policy, maintain expert networks with third level institutes throughout Ireland and beyond, and communicate the Authority's science at national and international meetings. The aim of the team is to provide the science base for the activities of the Authority.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

In compliance with the *Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies, 2009*, the Authority has a Corporate Governance Framework in place. This framework was developed in order to assist in improving efficiency and enhance openness and transparency. The framework gives guidance for the organisation, detailing aspects such as: conducting Board business; strategic planning; operational processes; risk management; financial control and standards of behaviour.

The new *Code of Practice for Governance in State Bodies* was published in September 2016 and the Authority will work towards full compliance with the new Code.

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 performance, and overseeing major capital expenditure and investment decisions.

The Board has a formal schedule of matters specifically reserved for it, for its decision.

The Board meets at least twice a year without executive Board members or management present, to discuss any matters deemed relevant.

During 2016, two new members were appointed to the Board and one member reappointed.

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

The Authority had a fully functioning Board Audit Committee (renamed the Board Audit and Risk Committee in October, 2016) which undertook the following audits: internal financial controls; human resources; and data protection. In December 2016, the Board engaged in a Board Self-Effectiveness Review. The review was facilitated via electronic questionnaire and followed up with a report to the Chairman which will be considered by the Board in 2017.

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 2016. Central Government frameworks were availed of where relevant and available.

The Audit and Risk Committee has an independent role in the provision of assurance to the Board 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 Audit and Risk Committee operates under an agreed charter and prepares a formal annual report for the Board.

Number of meetings: Four

Chair: Dr Susan Quinn

Membership: Ms Margaret Moran, Mr Ciaran Byrne, Mr Ray Dolan

Audit & Risk Committee Member attendance 2016

Dr Susan Quinn	3 out of 4
Ms Margaret Moran	4 out of 4
Mr Ciaran Byrne	4 out of 4
Mr Ray Dolan	2 out of 4

THE NOMINATIONS AND REMUNERATIONS COMMITTEE

The Nominations and Remunerations Committee is appointed as an independent sub-committee of the Board to manage the Chief Executive Officer or senior management recruitment process. As required, the sub-Committee agrees remuneration with Government departments, develops the job description, identifies the relevant competencies and ideal candidate profile for 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 2016.

Number of meetings: Nil

Chair: Prof. Michael Gibney

Membership: Prof. Michael Gibney, Prof. Albert Flynn, Prof. Patrick Wall

STATUTORY AND OTHER NOTICES

Ethics in Public office Acts, 1995 and Standards in public Office Act, 2001

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

PROTECTED DISCLOSURES ACT, 2014

There were no protected disclosures made to the Authority in 2016.

PROMPT PAYMENTS 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 timeframes, in accordance with best practices. 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 provides information about the Authority's services provided or to be provided to the public, including a disclosures log and financial information.

CUSTOMERS CHARTER

The Authority has published a Customers 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.

Key Highlights of the Authority's Activities

THE OFFICIAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEM – THE NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

SUPERVISION OF FOOD BUSINESSES IN IRELAND

In 2016, just over 49,404 food businesses were under the supervision of official agencies under service contract to the Authority. This represents a small (0.65%) increase over the previous year. 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 the local authorities. This distribution of food businesses inspected by the official agencies was similar over the last five years. There are a wide range of activities carried out by these food businesses, from importation and manufacturing, through to distributing, retailing and catering operations.

Number and Type of Food Businesses under Supervision by Official Agencies, 2012 – 2016

Official Agency	Premises Type	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Meat	278	286	313	311	114
	Milk	372	370	373	383	297
	Eggs	97	98	107	120	411
	Total Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Premises	747	754	793	814	822
Health Service Executive*	Primary Producers	21				
	Manufacturers & Packers	2,534				
	Distributors & Transporters	1,472				
	Service Sector	30,311	28,214	28,843	29,222	28,933
	Retailers	10,978	10,972	11,259	11,362	12,950
	Manufacturers Selling Primarily on a Retail Basis*	695				
	Not Assigned		42		39	23
	Importer/Exporter		73	79	57	
	Manufacturers		2,864	3,039	3,110	2,109
	Packers		92	100	108	117
	Transporter		64	80	105	123
	Wholesaler/ Distributors		1,098	1,111	1,183	1,138
	Third Country Importer/Exporter					37
	Administrative Food Business					102
		Total Health Service Executive Premises	46,011	43,419	44,511	45,186
Local Authorities	Slaughterhouses	211	209	205	205	201
	Small Meat Manufacturing Plant	200	205	197	200	204
	Poultry Plants	30	32	34	38	40
	Cold store	15	21	29	31	36
	Butcher Shop	3	5	7	8	9
	Mobile Business	5	12	15	16	21
	Total Local Authority Premises	464	484	487	498	511

Number and Type of Food Businesses under Supervision by Official Agencies, 2012 – 2016 (continued)

Official Agency	Premises Type	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	Fishing Vessels	2,216	2,155	2,077	2,077	2,195
	Approved Establishments on Land	189	181	179	195	
	Molluscan Production Areas	131	133	137	141	2
	Registered Food Business on Land (including ice-plants)	93	87	99	110	8
	Freezer and Factory Vessels	34	35	45	52	40
	Processing Plant					111
	Fresh Fishery Products Plant					60
	Importers					53
	Cold Store				16	15
	Shellfish Farmer					17
	Purification Plant					16
	Dispatch Centre					12
	Mobile Business					9
	Auction Halls					1
Total Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority Premises		2,663	2,591	2,537	2,591	2,539
Total Number of Food Premises		49,885	47,248	48,328	49,089	49,404

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

STAFF WORKING IN OFFICIAL CONTROL

The official agencies report annually to the Authority on the staff resources they have been dedicated to official controls, under the service contracts. In 2016, 1,109 whole time equivalents were involved in carrying out official controls in Irish food businesses. 2016 saw an increase of 20 whole time equivalents however, the whole time food equivalent inspectorate in Ireland has decreased from a high of 1,280 in 2011. The food inspectorate continues to develop its expertise through training and development courses. In 2016, 770 courses were taken by the inspectorate.

Whole Time Equivalent By Official Agency, 2012 – 2016

Official Agency	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine					
Inspection Service	445	333	315	319	319
Health Service Executive – Environmental Health Service					
Laboratory Service	88	89	76	84	79
Environmental Health Service	344	307	305	304	336
Laboratory Service	138	138	128	128	104
Food Safety Authority of Ireland	74	71	68	72	70
Local Authority	106	88	98	101	116
Marine Institute	28	27	29	38	41
National Standards Authority of Ireland	0	1	1	1	1
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	42	41	40	43	42
Total Number of Whole Time Equivalent Inspectors	1,265	1,095	1,059	1,089	1,109

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 in food businesses are a key element of the official controls, as well as other activities such as food sampling, and investigation of incidents and outbreaks. There has been a decline in recent years in the numbers of inspections, with an increasing focus on more thorough audits of food safety management systems in larger food businesses and of establishments presenting higher risks to public health. In addition to planned inspections, a significant number of unplanned inspections take place which arise as a result of food incidents; investigations; follow-up on complaints from the public; and advisory visits to food businesses. In 2016, the Environmental Health Service of the Health Service Executive carried out 6,404 unplanned inspections of food businesses.

Number of Food Inspections by Official Agencies, 2012 – 2016

Official Agency	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Health Service Executive (Environmental Health Service)	36,584	33,971	35,053	36,353	35,786
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Inspectorate)	15,618	13,733	15,021	15,011	11,985
Local Authorities	4,689	5,021	4,802	5,033	4,870
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	2,386	2,114	2,035	2,015	2,228
National Standards Authority of Ireland	9	89	77	61	72
Total Number of Inspections	59,286	54,928	56,988	58,473	54,941

FOOD SAMPLING

The service contracts include programmes by the official agencies for the sampling and testing of food for compliance with all aspects to food legislation. Samples taken by the food inspectorates are analysed by a network of official and national reference laboratories operated by the agencies. In 2016, over 56,588 samples were sampled and tested.

Number of Food Samples by Official Agency, 2015 – 2016

Sampling Agency	2015	% of Total	2016	% of Total
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	30,333	54%	31,456	56%
Health Service Executive (Environmental Health Service)	13,744	24%	13,220	23%
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	8,229	15%	9,004	16%
Local Authority	3,107	5%	2,388	4%
Other Agencies*	1,262	2%	520	1%
Total	56,675		56,588	

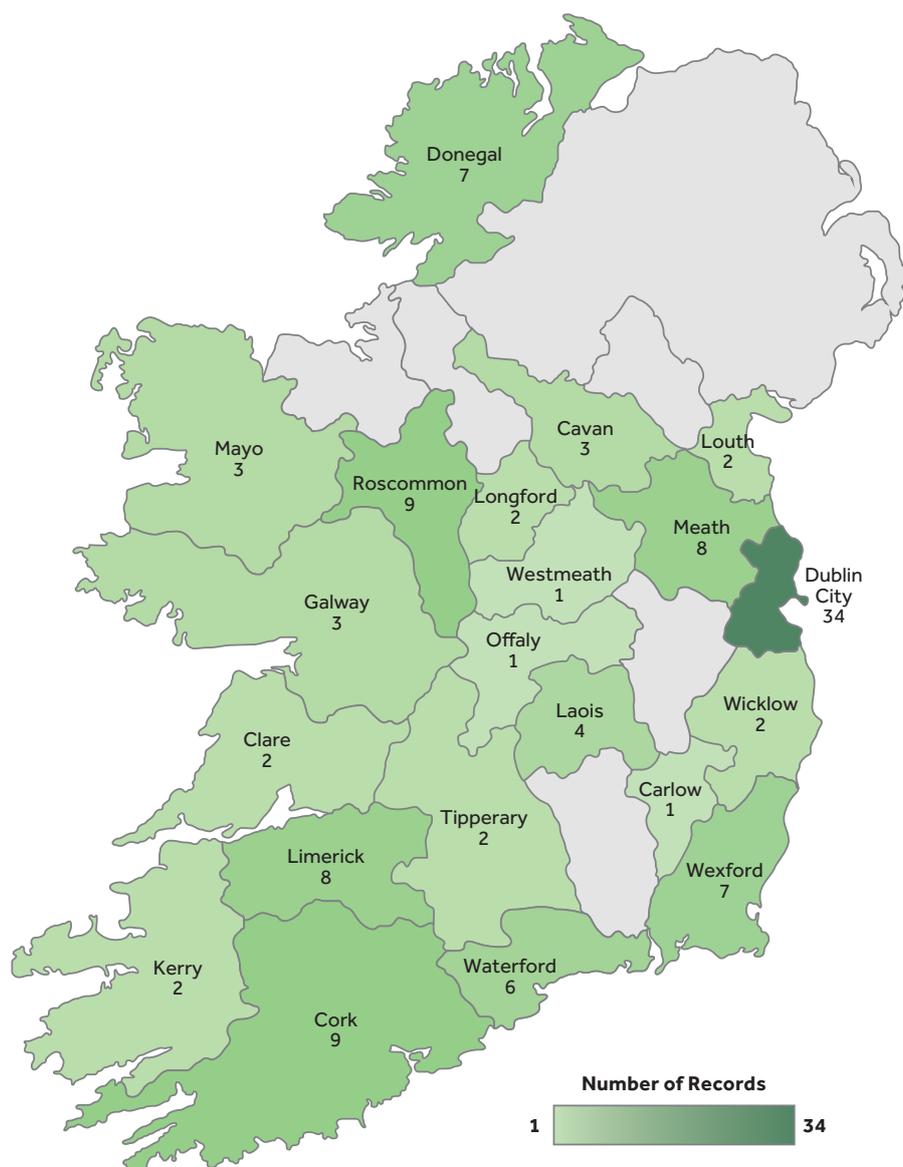
*Includes the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the Marine Institute and the National Standards Authority of Ireland

AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS

During 2016, the Audits and Investigations team carried out six audits (three official control and three targeted audits); 34 investigations and supported Santé-F on two missions.

ENFORCEMENTS

During 2016, food inspectors served 94 Closure Orders, three Improvement Orders and nine Prohibition Orders on food businesses throughout the country.



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

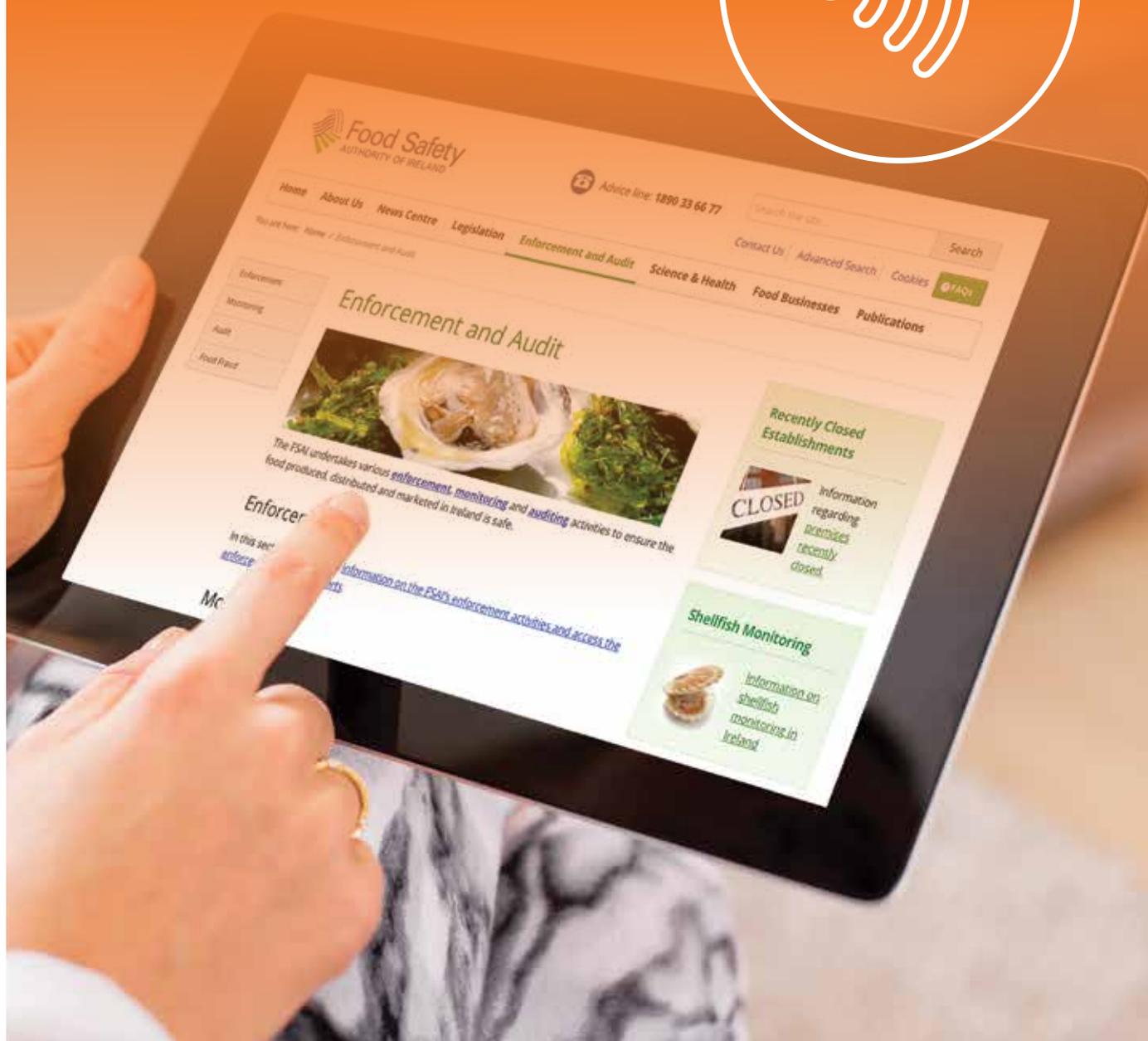
Enforcements Served, 2012 – 2016

Enforcement Action	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Closure Order	91	118	96	90	94
Improvement Notice	307	322	269	265	263
Improvement Order	3	5	1		3
Prohibition Order	13	20	16	16	9
Total	414	465	382	371	369

Key Highlights of the Authority's Activities

Communications

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



The Authority's two-way communication is facilitated by its Advice Line, website, library, facebook page, Twitter page, YouTube channel and extranet. Over the course of 2016, the Authority organised 13 events including six 'Breakfast Bites'; three Small Food Business Start-up Seminars; a workshop on shelf-life studies; the Food Safety Consultative Council Open Meeting on 'Food and Fitness – The Recipe for Performance?' as well as a European Food Safety Authority seminar entitled 'Your Business and the European Food Safety Authority'. The Communications team responded to 243 media queries and issued 30 press releases including the monthly enforcement orders press release. The team also led on a project to identify the Authority's stakeholders with a view to developing a comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan.

In 2016, 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 6,464 and 4,611 respectively. The Authority also actively engaged with LinkedIn in 2016 resulting in an increase in followers from 4,553 in 2015 to 6,230 in 2016. Six editions of the Authority's newsletter, FSAInews, were also published during 2016 and disseminated to registered stakeholders. A total of 59 publications were published on the website including codes of practice for the industry; audit reports; scientific committee reports; factsheets and other materials to support the achievement of the Authority's vision of safe and trustworthy food for everyone.

243 

The Communications team responded to 243 media queries and issued 30 press releases including the monthly enforcement orders press release.

6,230 

The Authority actively engaged with LinkedIn in 2016 resulting in an increase in followers from 4,553 in 2015 to 6,230 in 2016.



A total of 59 publications were published on the website including codes of practice for the industry; audit reports; scientific committee reports; factsheets and other materials.



Key Highlights of the Authority's Activities

Corporate Affairs

The Corporate function of the Authority plays a key part in ensuring that the Authority has the capacity and capability, systems and processes, to facilitate effective delivery of the Authority's services to all stakeholders. It also ensures good corporate governance practices are developed, maintained and adhered to.



During 2016, the Corporate Affairs team was expanded to align with the strategy, to include data capture and analysis; and information management. In addition, the HR, IT and finance teams were involved in the Authority's Relocation Project team which invested a significant amount of time in identifying and scoping out new premises for the Authority, in line with the organisational needs.

While the main function of the Authority is to protect consumers' health and interests, a key role is played by the corporate functions in ensuring the Authority is effectively managed and developed and resources are most effectively deployed so as to best deliver services. The key resources available to the Authority are primarily the executive and staff, financial resources, technology, information infrastructure and systems, data and information and ensuring the best utilisation and development of these, continues to be a priority. To underpin this, 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 divisions and all staff; and regularly reviewing achievements.

In 2016, the Authority maintained registration to ISO 9001 (Quality Management System). A gap analysis of the current Authority Quality Management System certified to the 2008 standard against the revised ISO 9001:2015 standard, was carried out. Recommendations from the report will be followed up by the Authority with a view to achieving certification to the 2015 standard.

A comprehensive Service Level Agreement with the Department of Health for 2016 was developed, detailing the service deliverables and planned work programmes and projects for the year. These in turn, formed the basis of the annual work plans at organisational, functional area, team and individual staff member, level. Key to demonstrating delivery in accordance with the service level agreement is a strong performance management system and ongoing monitoring of individual and team performance and how that is contributing to the agreed deliverables. Planning, performance management, continual review and improvement, are an integral part of the Authority and the process is facilitated by the Quality Management System.

The HR team within Corporate Affairs focussed 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 continuing learning and development and encourages staff to engage in continued professional and personal development activities. During the year, a broad range of training programmes was delivered to support this and the Authority also supported a number of staff through developmental and further education programmes.

An efficient finance function continues to be in place within the Authority to ensure appropriate management and control over resources, that relevant accounting standards are met and adhered to and that effective financial management systems and controls are operating. During the year, a review of the systems of internal financial controls was conducted by the internal auditors and the level of assurance achieved was substantial, the highest level available. The Authority also ensures that Department of Finance and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform budgetary measures are implemented in terms of salary, travel rates, procurement and other expenditure savings. During 2016, the finance team transitioned to the SAGE system and began work on moving towards a paperless procurement system. The team was also very involved in the identification of new premises for the Authority.

The Authority's key resource continues to be its very committed staff who are dedicated to delivering a top class service. There is a Staff Committee comprising staff at all levels throughout the Authority which is consulted on many organisational issues, including the development of human resource policies and processes. Regular meetings were held during the year and a number of issues progressed through the forum. Life@FSAI – a health and wellbeing framework, was proposed by the Committee and this was considered by the Senior Leadership Team with a view to formalising the framework in 2017. The Authority is also fully committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its staff and to complying with the requirements of the relevant health and safety legislation and promoting the health and wellbeing of staff. The Authority's Health and Safety Committee met regularly in 2016 and its work programme was implemented. Training was provided on relevant issues and monitoring of the workplace continued on a regular basis to ensure a healthy work environment.

ISO 9001

The Authority maintained registration to ISO 9001 (Quality Management System). A gap analysis of the current Authority Quality Management System certified to the 2008 standard against the revised ISO 9001:2015 standard, was carried out.

SAGE

During 2016, the finance team transitioned to the SAGE system and began work on moving towards a paperless procurement system.



Canadian Food Safety Authority Visit

The Authority welcomed a delegation from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. The visitors presented to the Authority on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency service and regulatory modernisation agenda and on data analytics and its application to risk management and science-based decisions.

Pictured are (l-r): Edel Smyth, Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Irwin Bess, Tony Ritchie, Canadian Food Inspection; Wayne Anderson, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Gord Webb, Canadian Food Inspection Agency.



The business continuity and disaster recovery system ensures that the Authority can function 365 days year should the premises be unavailable to the team.

During 2016, the Authority received sanction from the Department of Health to proceed with the recruitment of a number of replacement posts. The recruitment process was managed in line with requirements of the Department of Health and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The Authority continued to work with the Department of Health on the sanctioning of new posts required to enable the Authority to fulfil its legal mandate.

During 2016, the Authority's IT team continued to ensure that staff had access to the required infrastructure and systems as well as support other projects and activities within the organisation to ensure compatibility with the ICT systems in place. The team also played a key role in the roll out of the first phase of the data strategy. A significant piece of work completed by the team this year was the business continuity and disaster recovery system and this ensures that the Authority can function 365 days year should the premises be unavailable to the team.

The data team continued to provide key data reports for the Authority during 2016. Many of these reports are produced in accordance with our legislation and in response to the legal requirements of European food law. The Authority also provides data to the European Food Safety Authority on a number of food safety issues including zoonosis. In addition, the team is very involved in the implementation of the Authority's data strategy which was finalised in the early part of 2016. The full implementation of this strategy between 2015 and 2020 will ensure that the Authority can extract the maximum value from the data that are captured through the service contracts and other sources. By doing so, the Authority will have a very strong evidence base upon which to base its risk management decisions as well as allowing the Authority to direct resources to deliver on the vision of safe and trustworthy food.

In 2016, the Advice Line received 3,202 complaints by consumers relating to food, food premises and food labelling. The figure represents a total increase of 17% on 2015 (when 2,739 were received), with the number of complaints about food poisoning were up considerably at 45%. Poor hygiene standards were the second highest reported, with an increase of 34%, as compared with 2015, while complaints about incorrect information on food labelling were up 15%. The number of complaints about unfit food was up 7%, when compared with 2015.

Consumer complaints ranged from reports of food unfit to eat, to non-display of allergen information:

- 1,126 complaints on unfit food
- 864 complaints on hygiene standards
- 741 complaints on suspect food poisoning
- 221 complaints on incorrect information on food labelling
- 60 complaints on non-display of allergen information
- 190 other

Contamination of food with foreign objects was frequently reported by consumers. In 2016, these reports included allegations of food contaminated with insects and glass, as well as other foreign objects, e.g. a live insect found in a packaged dessert; a long black hair in garlic sauce; a human nail in a takeaway meal; glass in a dessert; plastic rope in a takeaway meal; and a cigarette butt in a bag of chips. Other complaints regarding poor hygiene standards referred to dirty customer toilets; rats seen on the premises; dirty tables and floors; and one case of a staff member at a deli sneezing into their hands and then preparing sandwiches without washing their hands. All complaints received by the Authority were followed up and investigated by enforcement officers throughout the country.

The Advice Line also offers advice and information and during 2016, 10,497 queries were received from a wide range of requesters, including consumers; people working in the food service sector; manufacturers; retailers; researchers and consultants. The most popular queries were regarding legislation on food labelling requirements; allergens and additives, as well as requests for the Authority's publications.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

In compliance with the *Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies, 2009*, the Authority has a Corporate Governance Framework in place. This framework was developed in order to assist in improving efficiency and enhance openness and transparency. The framework gives clear guidance for the organisation, detailing aspects such as: conducting Board business; strategic planning; operational processes; risk management; financial control and standards of behaviour. The new Code of Practice for Governance in State Bodies was published in September 2016 and the Authority will work towards full compliance with the new Code.

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

During 2016, two new members were appointed to the Board and one member was reappointed. The Authority had a fully functioning Board Audit Committee (renamed the Board Audit and Risk Committee in October 2016) which undertook the following audits: internal financial controls; human resources; and data protection. In December 2016, the Board engaged in a Board Self-Effectiveness Review. The review was facilitated via electronic questionnaire and followed up with a report to the Chairman which will be considered by the Board in 2017.

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 with no findings. Four Board Audit and Risk Committee meetings were held in 2016. Central Government Frameworks were availed of where relevant and available.



The Authority's key resource continues to be its very committed staff who are dedicated to delivering a top class service.



Dublin Staff Relay Event

Authority staff participated in the Dublin Staff Relay event in May in the Phoenix Park in Dublin. It was great fun and an excellent team building experience.

7%

The number of complaints about unfit food was up 7%, when compared with 2015.

10,497

The Advice Line received 10,497 queries from a wide range of requesters, including consumers; people working in the food service sector; manufacturers; retailers; researchers and consultants.

Key Highlights of the Authority's Activities

Enforcement Policy

The negotiations on a new service contract with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine concluded in January 2016 with agreement on a new three-year contract.



The service contracts with local authorities were extended to June 2016 to permit discussions on the structure of their veterinary service. New three-year service contracts were then agreed with 25 local authorities which provide a national service as a number of agreements are in place to share service provision between local authorities. The new contracts represent a further welcome increase in collaborations between a number of the local authorities.

The Authority's Scientific Committee completed a review of the Irish official control system and following endorsement by the Board, the report was published by the Authority. The report noted the many strengths of the official control system and made 13 recommendations that could be implemented to strengthen the system. In response, the Authority formed a cross-agency group, linking senior representation from the Environmental Health Service of the Health Service Executive, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Local Authority Veterinary Service and the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority. This group will identify and implement enhancements in the official control system in future years. In this context, the Authority and the agencies will also be guided by a new EU Regulation on official controls, on which political agreement was reached in 2016 and compliance with its requirements will be mandatory from 2019 (from 2018 for certain provisions).

In 2016, the Authority served 106 Enforcement Orders on food businesses for breaches in food safety legislation, equalling the same number for 2015.

The Authority co-ordinated three audits by the European Commission (Santé-F) on food controls with the official agencies. These covered national audit systems, genetically modified food, and microbiological contamination during primary production. An update of the Commission's country profile was prepared for publication by Santé-F.

106



The Authority served 106 Enforcement Orders on food businesses for breaches in food safety legislation.

The Enforcement Policy team provided a significant level of support to the official agencies during 2016 which included:

- Development of guidance and provision of training for environmental health officers on the enforcement of the new technical files and new legislation on spirit drinks
- Provision of training workshops for inspectors from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on controls on food in cold stores
- Organisation of, with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and provision, of a speaker at a conference for National Reference Laboratories and Official Laboratories
- Provision of a speaker at a series of breakfast briefing events for the fishing industry, organised by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority
- A round of regional workshops with the local authority veterinary inspectors to discuss the official controls in the small meat processors they supervise
- Provision of training for environmental health officers on enforcement of food additives legislation

The team also led the drafting of an enforcement policy for future publication by the Authority.



Hospitality Expo

The Authority had an information stand at Hospitality Expo, 2016 which took place in the RDS, Dublin, on 3-4 February. It is Ireland's largest trade show for the Hospitality Sector in 2016 and was designed to assist the Irish accommodation, food service and the licensed trades plan for growth in the year ahead. The Authority's Public Health Nutrition student, Kate McElory gave a visitor to the stand, an online demonstration of MenuCal at Hospitality Expo.

Key Highlights of the Authority's Activities

Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs

In 2016, the Authority issued 39 food alerts and 28 food allergen alerts, compared to 31 and 36 respectively, in 2015. Food alerts are notifications issued by the Authority to 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 regarding the possible risk to consumers with food allergies or food intolerances from a particular food. Reasons why food allergen alerts are issued include the undeclared presence of an allergen or inadequate/incorrect allergen labelling of a food.

In 2016, the Authority dealt with 554 food incidents and as a consequence, 67 food alerts and food allergen alerts were issued. These food incidents can lead to either a withdrawal of a certain product from food businesses or a recall from consumers. The identification of a food incident can arise for a number of reasons such as an inspection by a food inspector; a complaint from a consumer; the food business informing the Authority that there is a problem with a certain food; laboratory results; or notifications from other Member States through the European Commission's network.

FOOD ALLERGEN ALERTS

In the EU, there are 14 categories of allergens that must be labelled/declared and failure to do so or incorrect labelling/declaration of them may result in a food allergen alert being issued. During the year, 28 food allergen alerts were issued. In Ireland, milk, soybeans, eggs and nuts were the most common allergens incorrectly labelled/declared in 2016. Three in every 100 people in Ireland have a food allergy and the seriousness of these occurrences can result in severe allergic reactions, urgent medical treatment or even to the loss of life. In 2016, the main reasons for the food allergen alerts were usually the allergen unknowingly incorporated in the product and therefore, not listed in the ingredients; the ingredients list/label not in English; mis-packing of a product with the wrong product in the wrong pack and the allergen listed as an ingredient, but not highlighted properly in the ingredients list.

554 

The Authority dealt with 554 food incidents and as a consequence, 67 food alerts and food allergen alerts were issued.

453 

During the year, a total of 453 elearning modules were completed or used by staff in the official agencies via the Authority's Learning Management System, SafetyNet Learning.

FOOD ALERTS

Thirty nine food alerts were issued in 2016 - the highest number of food alerts in ten years. The 39 food alerts resulted in either product recalls or withdrawals from the Irish market for the following reasons: presence of a foreign body; presence of pathogens, i.e. bugs, and chemical contamination. Examples varied greatly from recalls of dietetic foods/food supplements due to the presence of amphetamine-like substance; unauthorised novel food ingredients and in one case, insufficient sterilisation of the product; confectionery items containing plastic pieces; presence of *Salmonella* in soups, broths sauces and condiments; to the identification of *Listeria monocytogenes* in prepared food dishes, snacks and milk products.

During 2016, an assessment of the Authority's training resources and the training requirements in line with the legislation, was completed by the Training Compliance team of the Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs functional area and this will inform the training needs into the future. The Authority has continued to focus its efforts on the development of e-learning as a tool for training of inspectors and also for industry. During the year, a total of 453 elearning modules were completed or used by staff in the official agencies via our Learning Management System, SafetyNet Learning. Previously developed elearning modules were maintained and updated and the training team delivered two 'Food Safety and You' training courses. Other training courses were also developed in line with inspectorate and industry needs.

The team also contributed to the development of legislation at national, European and international level through its engagement with the Department of Health in the context of national legislation; the European Commission in the context of European legislation as well as contributing to discussions on regulating food in an ecommerce environment; and finally through engagement with Codex Alimentarius. There was a significant amount of work undertaken by the team in the area of labelling legislation since the introduction of the Food Information to the Consumer legislation in 2014 with mandatory nutrition labelling coming into force in December, 2016.

The Veterinary Public Health team provided support to the local authority veterinary services and to the audit and investigations team where foods of animal origin were involved. The team also developed various guidance documents and codes of practice.

Key Highlights of the Authority's Activities

Audit and Investigations

In 2016, the official control audits were carried out in the Health Service Executive (Regulation (EC) No 853/2004), the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Dairy Produce Inspectorate - Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula Establishments) and the National Standards Authority of Ireland.



The following targeted audits were also carried out: (1) *Audit of the Controls that Prevent Animal By-products from entering the Food Chain* (2) *Audit of Traceability in Food and Food Products of Animal Origin* and (3) *Audit of Allergen Information on Non-prepacked Food*.

The following completed audit reports were published to the Authority's website: (1) *Official Controls in Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine supervised Ready-to-Eat and Ready-to-heat Meat Establishments*; (2) *Official Controls in Manufacturing Establishments Supervised by the Health Service Executive* (3) *Audit on the Follow-up and Close-out of Non-compliances in Establishments supervised by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority* (4) *Official Controls carried out by the Local Authority Veterinary Service* and (5) *Targeted Audit of Approved Establishments*, a follow-up to the cold store audit completed in 2015, were published this year.

The Audit and Investigations team also observed two Santé-F missions to Ireland to monitor the implementation of official controls. The missions were on GMOs and national audit systems.

In 2016, specialised training was undertaken with Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine inspectors that have responsibility for official controls in cold stores, as a result of the outcomes of the Authority's cold stores audit in 2015. The training provided inspectors with specialised tools to enhance official controls performed in this area.

The Audit and Investigations team, together with other State regulatory authorities and official agencies, conducted 34 investigations where breaches of food law and food fraud were suspected. Investigations were designed to determine the nature and extent of non-compliance with food law and related food fraud. Outcomes of the investigations resulted in enforcement actions and criminal proceedings being taken against offenders.

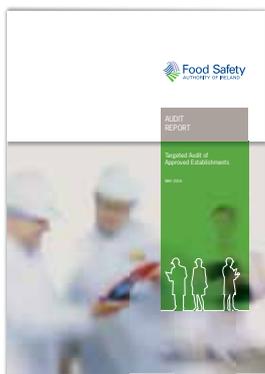
The food fraud investigations were varied in nature and included; illegal slaughter and cutting of meat, stolen animals entering the food chain, sale of meat on social media from an unregistered source, breaches of Protected Designation of Origin, mislabelling of meat and poultry, protected disclosure from a food laboratory, fatality from the consumption of methanol, illegal description and sale of wine as Prosecco, misleading sales of craft beers, and counterfeit wine.



Keelaghan Wholesale Meats Ltd was convicted of six charges related to breaches of food safety legislation.

One notable case was in relation to mislabelling of meat: Keelaghan Wholesale Meats Ltd was convicted of six charges related to breaches of food safety legislation. The six offences included falsely declaring Irish origin for beef imported from Poland, Lithuania or Germany; the application of false Irish slaughter and cutting plant codes used on packaging labels and having an inadequate beef traceability plan. The company was fined a total of €16,000 in addition to €10,000 as an agreed contribution to costs.

During the year, Authority staff worked with other official agency staff at six roadside checkpoints in five counties, organised by An Garda Síochána. Authorised officers from the relevant Health Service Executive Local Health Office and the local authority also attended. A total of 85 vehicles were stopped and inspected with follow-up action taken as required.



Targeted Audit of Approved Establishments

This report outlines the results of an audit carried out by the Authority of approved establishments utilising cold stores, to assess compliance with legislation.

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34

The Audit and Investigations team, together with other State regulatory authorities and official agencies, conducted 34 investigations where breaches of food law and food fraud were suspected.

Key Highlights of the Authority's Activities

Food Science and Standards

The Food Science and Standards team focusses its work on expanding and analysing the evidence base and using it to conduct risk assessments, draft technical guidance for the food industry and provide technical advice and support to Government policy makers.



The Food Science and Standards team attended 37 expert meetings on behalf of the organised by the European Commission to support the development of Community food legislation which underpins the legal and policy work conducted by the Department of Health Food Unit. Expert network meetings are also a feature of food science and standards collaboration with the European Food Safety Authority and in this context, members of the team actively participated in nine network meetings covering emerging risks, microbiological risk assessment, genetically modified organisms and zoonoses. On an international stage, the team contributed to three meetings of the committees under the Codex Alimentarius Committee where global food standards are agreed including limits for contaminants, approval of additives and food hygiene standards like fruit and vegetable production and trade.

Within the Authority, Food Science and Standards also conducts several competent authority functions in the area of notifications and approvals of certain foods. In 2016, there were 2,625 notifications of food supplements which were assessed for safety and health claims. There were 2,619 supplement assessments in 2016. Other assessments included three notifications of infant formula, 133 foods for special medical purposes or total diet replacement and 12 notifications under the old PARNUTS legislation. In the area of novel foods, there were three full safety assessments completed, seven reviews of safety assessments in other Member States and 30 substantial equivalence opinions issued in 2016.

Scientific reports were published on *Campylobacter* in poultry at retail level and zoonosis patterns in Ireland 2014 whilst new data on perchlorates, brominated flame retardants and salt, were generated in conjunction with official laboratories and shared with the European Commission, as required. A major technical document was completed on food hygiene in horticulture and this was accepted as a National Code of Hygienic Practice by the European Commission. Significant detailed scientific input was also provided to the development of the Department of Health's new healthy eating guidance to ensure that this work reflected findings and recommendations from earlier Authority-led work.

The Authority's new Scientific Committee was set up, rules of procedure agreed and a full work-plan for the next five years, created and commenced. The Scientific Committee published four opinions in 2016 based on work completed by the previous Committee. These were; *The Occurrence of Marine Biotoxins and Risk of Exposure to Seafood Consumers in Ireland*; *Metals of Toxicological Importance in the Irish Diet*; *Update Report on Folic Acid and the Prevention of Birth Defects in Ireland*; *Salt and Health (Revision 1)*.

Successful workshops were hosted by Authority on the work of the European Food Safety Authority and also on establishing shelf-life for foods which were attended by over 200 participants between them. In addition, Food Science and Standards staff chaired five sessions at international scientific meetings, gave 11 international and 12 national presentations on scientific aspects of food safety and nutrition, as well as providing 13 lectures to graduate and post-graduate scientists at third level institutes.

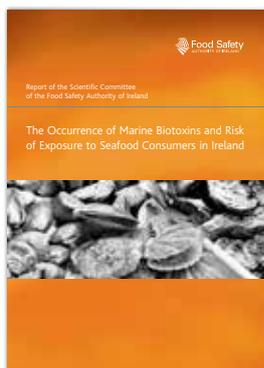
During 2016, the Authority's bespoke software to facilitate calorie menu labelling was further enhanced and promoted, building on its capacity to also allow for allergen labelling of dishes in catering establishments. A licence for the software was sold to the Foods Standards Agency in Scotland which increases the impact on MenuCal beyond the island of Ireland.

Finally, the team continued to support the incident management activities of the Authority, carrying out 166 risk assessments and providing the scientific basis for a protocol for managing positive tests for toxigenic *E. coli* in the meat industry.



International Union of Food Science and Technology World Congress

The International Union of Food Science and Technology holds a world congress every two years. The Institute of Food Science and Technology of Ireland successfully bid for the congress four years ago and this culminated in the 18th World Congress being held at the RDS in Dublin from 21st to 25th August 2016. Laura Tobin, Food Safety Authority of Ireland, offers advice to a delegate at the Authority's information stand.



The Occurrence of Marine Biotoxins and Risk of Exposure to Seafood Consumers in Ireland

This report describes the risks posed by commonly encountered and novel or emerging toxins, and describes the monitoring regimes in place for harmful algal blooms and marine biotoxins in shellfish.

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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 and in 2016, against these objectives, the Authority achieved the following:

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

- Thirty-three service contracts were in place with the official agencies with new service contracts being signed with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Local Authorities.
- 106 Enforcement Orders were issued and eleven prosecutions were progressed.
- New enforcement policy was drafted which is expected to be agreed in 2017 following consultation with the other official agencies.
- The Authority participated in the Heads of European Food Safety Agency meetings to exchange information and best practice on national official control systems and met with our counterparts from Denmark, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.
- The Authority continued to work closely with counterparts in the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland in the management of risk.
- Thirty-four incidents of potentially fraudulent activities were investigated.
- 2,625 food supplement labels were notified to the Authority and assessments on nutrition and health claims; foods for special medical purposes; GM; novel foods; and infant/follow-on formulas, were carried out.
- Forty export certificates were issued and a draft protocol with the Health Service Executive for issuing export certificates was developed.
- 554 food incidents were managed and 67 food alerts and allergen alerts were issued.
- Authority staff provided expert input into the development of legislation at national and European level

OBJECTIVE 2

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

- A new Memorandum of Understanding with safefood was signed.
- The Authority completed a stakeholder map and continued to engage with key stakeholders including Revenue – Irish Tax and Customs Service, An Garda Síochána, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Loughs Agency.
- Advice to stakeholders in the areas of labelling, acrylamide, health claims, food supplements and many other issues, was provided.
- Collaborated with a number of food businesses/associations to manage risks to consumers' health and interests was taken.

OBJECTIVE 3

Strive for a world class official control 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 to examine the official control system in Ireland following the recommendations of the Authority's Scientific Committee report published in 2015, was set up.
- Five audits were carried out and published and a further four were completed and will be published in 2017.
- The National Control Systems Audit by the European Commission identified only minor issues which are being resolved currently.



Five audits were carried out and published and a further four were completed and will be published in 2017.

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 which will ensure the maximum value from the data collected is extracted, allowing the Authority to make robust decisions on future activities, was started.
- The Authority presented the 2015 zoonosis data to the European Food Safety Authority
- Reports on *Campylobacter*, fish speciation and GMO sampling results for 2015, were published.
- The National Control Plan for 2014 was submitted to the European Commission.

OBJECTIVE 5

Provide resources to our partners through training, advice and consultation

- The Authority's cold store audit findings led to training of inspectors on what to look for in cold stores when carrying out an investigation.
- The Advice Line responded to 10,497 queries of which 3,200 were complaints from consumers regarding issues related to food they had purchased or eaten.
- An interagency protocol on outbreak control to support the Authority and the Health Service Executive during an outbreak of foodborne illness as well as other guidance materials on legislation and enforcement were published.
- The Authority's training resources to support planning into the future, were assessed.
- It was recorded that 453 elearning modules had been completed or used by inspectors in the official agencies to support their work.



Thirty-three service contracts were in place with the official agencies with new service contracts being signed with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Local Authorities.

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 and in 2016, against these objectives, the Authority achieved the following:

OBJECTIVE 1

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

- A new Scientific Committee was put in place following new selection process, with three new Sub-Committees as required, under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 with an agreed work programme.
- A draft science strategy for the Authority was developed to guide future scientific activities.
- Research projects for Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and safefood were reviewed and the Authority advised the Environmental Protection Agency and participated in Horizon 2020 projects on food authenticity.
- The Authority participated in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Research Advisory Committee to ensure food safety and nutrition research receive adequate funding.
- A dairy supply chain vulnerability analysis in collaboration with safefood, the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland, Teagasc and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, was initiated.
- Authority staff trained in numerous scientific areas including quantitative risk assessment; fermented foods; and HACCP. Staff also attended scientific conferences in food microbiology, molecular methods, nutrition, food science and technology and food preservation. Staff also undertook internal auditor training; leadership courses and attained professional certification in dietetics. A number of students were also trained during 2016 in areas related to food science.
- Four studies on trans-fatty acids, product reformulation (salt), iodine, and brominated flame retardants were commissioned.

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. folic acid, calories on menus draft legislation, food integrity and authenticity.
- Two submissions were made to Government consultations on Statements of Strategy for the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.
- The Authority contributed to the national Interdepartmental Group on Antimicrobial Resistance.
- The Authority provided the secretariat and drafted all versions of the draft voluntary Code of Practice on non-broadcast media marketing of high fat, salt and sugar foods.
- Nine meetings on healthy eating guidelines were attended by the Authority and twelve written submissions including analysis of fish contaminants data to support revised fish consumption advisories, were provided.
- The Authority attended the meetings of the Department of Health's Health Promotion Unit, the Special Action Group on Obesity and its subgroups, on reformulation and calories on menus and provided one written submission.

OBJECTIVE 3

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

- The Authority carried out 166 risk assessments to support food incidents.
- Authority experts met with European Food Safety Authority biohazard staff to assess availability of risk assessment modelling tools. However, tools are not available yet and an inventory is being compiled by the European Food Safety Authority.

OBJECTIVE 4

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

- The industry *Campylobacter* control programme in poultry was reviewed and commented on by the Authority.
- Authority staff attended and participated in meetings of the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (incl. AAC) network; Heads of European Food Safety Agencies; European Food Safety Authority Advisory Forum. There was no engagement with INFOSAN in 2016.
- During 2016, the Authority:
 - Developed a risk management approach with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to VTEC testing in the meat industry
 - In relation to antimicrobial resistance, the Authority progressed the implementation of the recommendations of the Scientific Committee report on antimicrobial resistance, engaged in European and international consultations and discussions; and participated in the national Interdepartmental Committee on antimicrobial resistance as well as contributed to the draft National Action Plan
 - The development of national chemical (residues, pesticides, contaminants, additives, nutritional and compositional) and microbiological sampling plans with official agencies was contributed to by the Authority. The Authority also reviewed the implementation of these sampling plans with the agencies

166 

The Authority carried out 166 risk assessments to support food incidents.

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, set up the Emerging Risk and Threats Forum
- During 2016, Authority experts collated Authority research priorities for *safe*food and reviewed and evaluated 26 projects the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine food research programme in the nutrition, food science and microbiology areas. The Authority contributed to the new FIRM project proposals on *Campylobacter* and reviewed the VTEC proposal. The Authority is on the steering group of both research projects. In addition, the Authority worked with the Teagasc and Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine funded research consortium on examining mitigating factors affecting uptake of Cadmium by root vegetables. Experts also worked with third level institutes on the Environmental Protection Agency funded biomonitoring programme as well as contributing to European funded projects, Authent-Net and Food Integrity Project. Authority scientists also peer reviewed Food and Agriculture Organization recommendations on evidence-informed food safety decisions and policy, considering multiple factors and acted as an advisor on Food and Agriculture Organization projects.
- The Authority participated in the shortlisting of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's successfully evaluated food research projects and participated in discussions on other food projects in line with areas of internal expertise.

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 2016, the Authority attended and participated in:
 - Nine expert meetings with the European Food Safety Authority, four European Food Safety Authority Advisory Forum meetings, two Microbiological Risk Assessment Network meetings and one presentation was made on cooking of burgers; one joint meeting was attended between the Microbiological Risk Assessment and Zoonoses Networks; two Emerging Risks Network

meetings, one GMO network; one Nano Network; one Novel Foods Stakeholder meeting, one Epigenetics Colloquium.

- The Authority also supported the work of the Codex Commission and the Codex Committees on: Food Hygiene; Food Additives; and the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- Authority experts also 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 completion of the *Campylobacter* control chapter for the update of book 7. The hosting of the website for the International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods was transferred to the Authority and updates uploaded
- The Authority organised the Institute of Food Science and Technology of Ireland's Annual General Meeting and acted as Treasurer. The Authority also evaluated the Ted Hood Bursary
- The Authority attended the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development workshop on next generation sequencing and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Task Force on Novel Foods
- The Authority attended the World Health Organization's European Salt Action Network Meeting and advice was provided to the World Health Organization's Food and Agriculture Organization total diet study protocol for sub-Saharan Africa
- Authority experts also participated in the Environmental Protection Agency's Health Advisory Group; Health Protection Surveillance Centre; Bord Bia; Environmental Protection Agency Advisory Committee; and the Food Law Enforcement Practitioners group at European level
- The Authority provided a review for studies on cadmium and perchlorate in fruit/vegetables for the Food Standards Agency UK
- FACENetwork's European artisan dairy hygiene guide was fully reviewed by the Authority and comments were submitted
- The Chief Executive Officer presented at a number of International Union of Food Science and Technology conferences and workshops in South America to promote the importance of science in the development of regulations within the South American continent

GOAL 3

CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE IRELAND IS A TRUSTED AND RECOGNISED LEADER IN FOOD SAFETY AND INTEGRITY

Underpinning this goal are four key objectives and in 2016, against these objective, the Authority achieved the following:

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

- Two hundred and forty three media queries were dealt with during 2016 and all were managed in a timely manner and accurate information provided to the media.
- Authority staff gave 13 lectures to 3rd/4th year students in various national Higher Education Institutions.
- Twelve national and eleven international presentations at various events and conferences including the International Union of Food Science and Technology World Congress; the Food Micro Congress in University College, Dublin; and the Dubai Nutrition Conference, were given by Authority staff.
- Authority experts reviewed the Irish Nutrition & Dietetic Institute's position on sweeteners
- Delegations from Denmark and Belgium were facilitated by the Authority. Training sessions for Saudi Arabia under SFSI were hosted.
- The Authority published six editions of its newsletter, FSAINews containing articles from staff and external experts.
- 10,497 queries were answered on the Advice Line
- Six 'Breakfast Bites' and three 'Small Food Business Start-up Seminars' were held.
- Work began on the programme for the conference on food integrity and authenticity to be held in collaboration with the Food Standard Agency in Northern Ireland and safefood.

OBJECTIVE 2

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

- The Authority attended two National Standards Authority of Ireland Food Industry Standards Committee meetings and five meetings on the I.S.342 revision.
- The development of National Standards Authority of Ireland food standards and a Polish code of practice on polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons formation was supported by the Authority.

OBJECTIVE 3

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

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

- In 2016, the Authority provided dietetic (Irish Nutrition & Dietetic Institute), nutrition and health professional colleagues (Health service Executive, Irish College of General Practitioners etc) with updates on nutrition-related food legislation and scientific developments and was invited to give presentations on saturated fat; and leadership in dietetics.



Small Food Business Start-Up Seminar

The Authority held a 'Small Food Business Start-Up Seminar' in Cork in April, to assist those working in small food businesses or those thinking of setting up a food business. The event brought together a range of experts to explore the requirements businesses need to meet in order to get started and comply with all relevant food safety legislation.

Speakers at the Cork seminar were (l-r): Lisa O'Connor, Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Eddie O'Neill, Teagasc and Marrian Oviawe, Bellagio Coffee House, Mallow, Co. Cork.

OBJECTIVE 4

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

- Five meetings of the Food Safety Consultative Council were held during 2016 including an open meeting on 'Food and Fitness – The Recipe for Performance?' The latter attracted a good audience and widespread media attention.
- Meetings were also held with The Vintners Federation of Ireland, the International Federation of Spirit Producers on counterfeit alcohol. A meeting with IBEC discussed the findings of the cold stores audit.
- The Authority chaired the following meetings of the industry fora: one meeting of the Artisan Forum, three meetings of the Retail Forum, two meetings of the Food Service Forum and seven meetings of the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee.
- The Authority participated in three of the Food Drink Ireland Technical & Environmental Committee meetings and provided updates on the regulatory activities of the Authority. The Authority also met with a number of industry bodies to discuss the new strategy.
- During 2016, the Authority engaged with the industry as follows:
 - Nutrition labelling data were collected on breakfast cereal and yoghurt with data submitted to WASH. A list for salt sampling was also generated.
 - Two salt surveys were conducted in conjunction with Galway Public Analyst Laboratory; an annual update of salt validation tables (processed meat, bread, spreadable fats, breakfast cereal) were completed
 - Three meetings on reformulation were held with Food Drink Ireland
 - Meetings were held with the International Federation of Spirit Producers on counterfeit alcohol and data sharing
- The Authority's senior management also met with a number of companies during the course of 2016 on 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

- This activity was postponed until 2017 to allow time for the development of a cross county simulation exercise under the auspices of the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies, for which the European Commission has agreed to provide support.



Breakfast Bites

'Breakfast Bites' are a series of free, informal breakfast meetings for food businesses, where the Authority provides useful information on the topics people want to know more about. These events 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.

Pictured at the 'Breakfast Bite' on 'Labelling for Small Food Producers' are; Colm O'Bric, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and Jennifer Smith, Musgraves Wholesale Partners.

GOAL 4

DEVELOP OUR ORGANISATION WITH AN ETHOS THAT IS TRUE TO OUR VALUES

Underpinning this goal are five key objectives and in 2016, against these objectives, the Authority achieved the following:

OBJECTIVE 1

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

- A number of workshops on the new values were held with the Authority's staff during 2016. These workshops enabled the staff to reflect on the values and what they mean and how they can be applied in everyday activities. This work will continue into 2017 and beyond in order to fully embed the values in the culture of the Authority.
- Innovation was a theme of the staff committee in 2016 and an initial workshop was held which identified a number of next steps to be undertaken in 2017.
- Regular meetings were also held during 2016 which facilitated discussions on numerous issues of relevance to staff including the move to the new premises planned for 2017.



Food and Fitness – the Recipe for Performance?

An Open Meeting of the Food Safety Consultative Council entitled 'Food and Fitness – the Recipe for Performance?' discussed the effects on young people of performance nutrition and the proliferation of related food products and supplements.

Pictured at the Open Meeting of the are Shane Jennings, Former Irish professional rugby union and Leinster player, Mary Flynn, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Noreen Roche, Nutricia and member of the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute.

OBJECTIVE 2

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

- There was ongoing liaison with the Department of Health and other Government departments in respect of IT, finance and HR – all of which are key elements of the Authority's ability to function effectively and efficiently.
- The Authority's recruitment needs were reviewed and recruitment progressed throughout the year in line with sanctions received.
- Salaries and benefits were implemented as appropriate and in line with Government policies.
- An internal team, supported by a property consultant, secured suitable office accommodation for when current lease expires.
- A Life@FSAI wellness framework was developed by the staff committee and endorsed by the Senior Leadership Team and initiatives proposed by staff will be championed by the Director of Risk Management and Regulatory Affairs, via the Senior Leadership Team.
- Regular meetings of the Health and Safety Committee took place and the annual work programme was implemented. An audit by Health and Safety Authority was conducted during the year and minor findings have been addressed.
- Teambuilding activities were organised including support for a team from the Authority participating in the Dublin Staff Relay 5k event in the Phoenix Park.
- A draft HR Strategy was prepared and elements have been progressed however, due to resource constraints, full implementation will be carried forward to 2017.
- A new electronic HR system was tendered for and fully implemented. The system will be rolled out to all staff in 2017.
- Performance management in the Authority is operated in line with current guidelines. Training and development requirements are identified and forwarded to HR to develop organisational training plans.
- During 2016, training and development services for the Authority were tendered for in line with the office of Government Procurement Guidelines.
- A coaching programme for management was introduced on a pilot basis during 2016. This will be further developed and rolled out appropriately in 2017.

OBJECTIVE 3

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

- The initial review of the internal communications policy was undertaken by a sub-group of the Staff Committee which will be signed off in 2017 and subsequently agreed by the Senior Leadership Team in 2017.
- 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 are also held with all teams on a monthly basis.
- A new intranet system was developed in 2016 and was tested towards the end of the year. The new system 'My Space' will be rolled out in Q1 2017.
- A number of project briefings were held throughout the year. These were in the areas of communication; public health nutrition; data; LinkedIn etc. 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.
- Online facilities including Go2Meeting and Go2Webinar are available to deliver support and training programmes.

OBJECTIVE 4

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

- The *Food Safety Authority of Ireland Corporate Governance Framework 2011* is based on the *Code of Practice for Governance in State Bodies 2009* and the Authority complied with the elements of the framework in 2016 including the development of the new strategy, the production of the annual report and the management of risk. The Board membership is now complete and the Board Sub-Committees are in place and functioning. A new Scientific Committee was also appointed. A number of internal audits were undertaken throughout the year and the findings are managed by subject matter experts within the Authority.
- This new Code was launched in September 2016 and due to the timing of the publication, it was not possible to update the *Food Safety Authority of Ireland Corporate Governance Framework, 2011* in line with the Code before year end. This is a priority for 2017. However, elements of the new code are already being implemented.

- Authority staff are being trained in the area of project management. In addition, during the year, the Senior Leadership Team brought in a new planning tool to manage annual planning in accordance with the new strategy. This is being piloted in 2017.
- The Authority's Risk Register was reviewed twice during the year and is available on the intranet. Risk is a standing item on the Senior Leadership Team meeting agenda. In addition, an internal audit of the risk register was undertaken and a number of minor findings have led to improvements which will be taken up in 2017.
- During 2016, there were 23 Freedom of Information requests; three requests under Access to Information on the Environment legislation, and 17 Parliamentary Questions. All requests were answered in a timely manner and in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- Privacy policy and cookies policy on www.fsai.ie were updated. Data protection requirements were adhered to in terms of e-commerce and a full data protection audit was carried out.

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 was procured and the contract awarded to an external consultant and software purchased. A cross organisation document management project is underway, with a solution to be launched in 2017.
- In 2016, registration was maintained to ISO 9001:2008 for the Quality Management System. Following an external and management review of the Authority's Quality Management System, the decision was taken to progress towards achieving certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard. This will take approximately 18 months which would ensure the Authority has a Quality Management System that is of the highest standard.

GOAL 5

ADOPT A DIGITAL-FIRST APPROACH TO MAXIMISE ACCESSIBILITY, EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Underpinning this goal are five key objectives and in 2016, against these objectives, we achieved the following:

OBJECTIVE 1

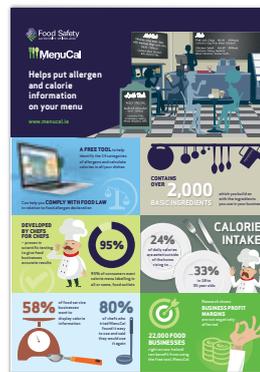
Develop intelligent and targeted information systems to improve communication, process workflows and service delivery

- A business continuity and disaster recovery infrastructure was delivered and a business continuity and disaster recovery test plan is in development for delivery Q1 and Q2 2017.
- Perimeter IT security architecture and internal anti-virus systems projects were successfully delivered.
- Software development applications including the Internal Audit Application and Enforcement Consistency Database were delivered in 2016 and business process and workflow solutions have been included as part of the electronic document management system, which is in development, to be rolled out in 2017.
- In 2016, a mobile intuitive Food Crisis Management Plan was delivered and this will ensure access to key information whilst staff are "on the go".
- www.fsai.ie was maintained and ensured that it is up to date and accessible on all devices for all users.
- Requirements specification progressed as input to Data Strategy Projects in 2017.
- Business Objects analytical and report delivery solutions were explored and solutions implemented, to automate reports. More activity is planned for 2017 based on extended system capability. Work on the upgrade of the Quality Management Site site was completed in February and work on the Internal Audit and Continual Improvement Database was completed in March.
- Active two-way engagement with our stakeholders was achieved with increased followers on social media. Facebook = 6,464 (2015=3,792); Twitter = 4,611 (2015=3,662); and LinkedIn = 6,230 (2015=4,553).

OBJECTIVE 2

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

- Phase 1 of the Authority's data strategy is being implemented following a competitive tendering process in line with procurement rules.
- The Authority's library resources are available for staff and external users and all the electronic resources assessed and updated in line with organisational needs.
- During 2016, an evaluation of exposure assessment software was undertaken and software contracts signed and an in-depth evaluation of the systems will start in 2017
- An online customer needs survey and Advice Line assessment (survey and mystery shopper exercise) was carried out in Q4 2016 and the results will be analysed early in 2017 and will inform future customer engagement strategy.



MenuCal Infographics

The Authority launched a new initiative in 2016 to encourage food businesses across the country to avail of MenuCal. The new initiative saw food businesses, owners and chefs reached through a digital campaign across social media channels, sharing insights and reasons for using the free online resource.

AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD
www.fsai.ie/publications

OBJECTIVE 3

Further enhance customer accessibility and engagement through the use of technology

- During 2016, the Authority improved/developed the following technologies/tools to improve customer engagement: the development of MenuCal was completed in accordance with the project requirements. Authority staff and some food businesses were trained on the use of MenuCal. In addition, the Authority promoted MenuCal through social media; an in-house seminar with food bloggers; demonstrations at various events and the publication of flyers; and at a 'Breakfast Bite' event. The Authority also sold the licence for MenuCal to the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland and Food Standards Scotland.
- In 2016, telecommunications technical system hardware and the software to ensure increased and enhanced accessibility were upgraded.
- The Authority is moving towards using less paper in its day-to-day activities and the on-going development of the Document Management System including the intranet will enable the Authority to move towards more paperless operations.

OBJECTIVE 4

Utilise technology as a foundation for innovation

- Following the seminar on innovation with the Staff Committee team, an innovation team was been set up and will progress work in 2017 on embedding innovation as a core value within the Authority's activities for the future.
- The Authority continues to use Webinars, elearning tools and MenuCal as innovative tools for increasing compliance with food legislation. The Authority's work on MenuCal was referred to in the Government's annual report on public sector reform.

OBJECTIVE 5

Explore Big Data to help us do our job better

- The Authority explored some external data sources for interoperability with its datasets but this work will continue into 2017 and will be aligned with the Authority's data strategy.
- During 2016, the Authority engaged with potential analytics partners and will continue to explore ways to extract value from data.



MenuCal

Celebrity chef and author, Catherine Fulvio, launched a new initiative with the Authority to encourage food businesses across the country to avail of MenuCal. This initiative reached food businesses, owners and chefs through a digital campaign across social media channels, sharing insights and reasons for using the free online resource.

Appendix 1

INDUSTRY FORA MEMBERS

RETAIL FORUM, 2016

Dr Lisa O'Connor (Chair)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Mr Ray Bowe

Musgrave Group

Ms Tara Buckley

RGDATA

Ms Selena Burke

ADM Londis Plc.

Ms Elaine Clohosey

BWG Foods

Ms Suzanne Cullen

Superquinn/Musgraves

Ms Mary Daly/Ms Jennifer Smith

Dunnes Stores

Mr Jonathan Halls

Boots

Ms Aoife Harrison

Lidl Ireland

Mr Peter Jackson/Ms Sharon Murphy

Barry's of Mallow

Ms Lynda Kenny

Musgrave Group

Ms Denise Lord

Gala Retail Services Limited

Mr Shane Lyster/Ms Elizabeth Bowen

IBEC

Ms Lucy Magner/Mr Gareth Coburn

Pallas Foods

Ms Tracey McDermott/Ms Pauline Ryall

Tesco Ireland

Ms Paula McGrath/Sarah Woods

Aldi

Mr Rob McEvoy

Topaz

Ms Trish Twohig

Iceland

Mr Peter Wight/Mr Patrick Carter

Marks and Spencer

ARTISAN FOOD PRODUCERS' FORUM, 2016

Dr Wayne Anderson (Chair)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Darina Allen

Ballymaloe Cookery School

Ms Sally Barnes

Woodcock Smokery

Mr John Brennan

Leitrim Organic Centre

Ms Mary Burns

Ardrahan Cheese

Ms Jeffa Gill

Durrus Cheese

Mr Michael Gleeson

Beekeeper

Mr Michael Healy

Game Expert

Mr Rupert Hugh Jones

Farmer and micro-brewer

Mr Frank Hederman

Belvelly Smokehouse

Mr Sean Kent

Poultry Expert

Mr Hugh Maguire

Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland

Mr Donal Lehane

Food-NPD Teo

Mr Eddie O'Neill/Mr Pat Daly

Teagasc

Mr Raymond O'Rourke

Solicitor

Mr Declan Ryan

Arbutus Bread

FOOD SERVICE FORUM, 2016

Dr Lisa O'Connor (Chair)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Caroline Byrne

Euro-Toques Ireland

Ms Nathalia Bianchi

Insomnia

Ms Louise Collins

Eddie Rockets (IRL) Limited

Mr Pat Crotty

Vintners Federation of Ireland

Mr Adrian Cummins

Restaurants Association of Ireland

Ms Niamh Devaney/Mr Mark Anderson

Gather and Gather

Ms Martina Donohoe/Ms Diane Geelan

Aramark

Mr Adam Heyes

Subway Ireland

Ms Catherine Higgins

McDonalds Restaurants of Ireland

Ms Kathy Hocht

Irish Prison Service

Ms Helena O'Brien/Ms Mary Dowling

Catering Management Association

Mr Conor O'Kane

Maldron Hotel/Irish Hotel Federation

Ms Charlene Thornton

Compass Group

MOLLUSCAN SHELLFISH SAFETY COMMITTEE, 2016

Mr David Lyons (Chair)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Vicky Lyons/Dr Terence O'Carroll

Bord Iascaigh Mhara

Mr Liam Ó Súilleabháin

Environmental Protection Agency

Mr Paul Hickey

Health Service Executive

Mr Richie Flynn/Mr John Harrington/

Mr Pat Mulloy/Mr Finian O'Sullivan

Irish Shellfish Association and Processing Industry

Ms Valerie Hannon

Irish Water

Dr Sarah McLean

Loughs Agency

Mr Bill Doré/Mr Conor Duffy/Mr Joe Silke

Marine Institute

Mr Brian Nolan/Mr Daniel O'Callaghan(RIP)/

Ms Aileen O'Sullivan

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

The Authority wishes to acknowledge the sad loss in 2016 of Donal O'Callaghan, Director of Seafood Safety, Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority.

Appendix 2

SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS

BIOLOGICAL SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE, 2016

Dr Geraldine Duffy (Chair)

Teagasc

Dr Declan Bolton

Teagasc

Prof. Martin Cormican

National University of Ireland, Galway

Dr William Doré

Marine Institute

Ms Catherine Foye

Health Service Executive

Dr Patricia Garvey

Health Protection Surveillance Centre

Dr John Griffin

Dept Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Ms Bernadette Hickey

Dept Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Kieran Jordan

Teagasc

Prof. Simon More

University College, Dublin

Dr Eleanor McNamara

Health Service Executive

Dr Michéal O'Mahony

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

Dr Joanne O'Gorman

University College, Dublin

Dr Helen O'Shea

Cork Institute of Technology

Dr Margaret O'Sullivan

Health Service Executive

Mr Ray Parle

Health Service Executive

Mr Kilian Unger

Dept 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 SUB-COMMITTEE, 2016

Dr Michael O'Keeffe (Chair)

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

Toxicologist Expert

Dr Colman Concannon

Environmental Protection Agency

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

Dr Joe Silke

Marine Institute

Dr Michael O'Keeffe (Chair)

Residues Expert

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION SUB-COMMITTEE, 2016

Ms Ita Saul (Chair)

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

University of Ulster (retired)

Prof. Fionnuala McAuliffe

University College, Dublin

Dr Sinead McCarthy

Teagasc

Prof. Malachi McKenna

St Vincent's University Hospital

Prof. Helene McNulty

University of Ulster

Dr Emeir McSorley

University of Ulster

Dr Anne Nugent

University College, Dublin

Dr Claire O'Brien

Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute

Dr Dilip Rai

Dublin Institute of Technology

Dr Janette Walton

University College, Cork

Prof. Mary Ward

University of Ulster

Dr Katherine Younger

Dublin Institute of Technology

Appendix 3

STATEMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS', CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEMBERS' INTERESTS

For 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016

Board Member	Commercial Interests		Non-Commercial Interests	
	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests
Mr Ciaran Byrne	None	–	None	–
Ms Mary Cullen	Agricultural land	–		–
Mr Derek Cunningham	None	–	None	–
Prof. Albert Flynn	None	–	International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) Europe	Member, Board of Directors
Prof. Michael Gibney	Nestle Research Centre	Consultancy	International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) Europe	Board Member
	Cereal Partners Worldwide	Consultancy		
Mr Martin Higgins	None	–	None	–
Ms Margaret Moran	None	–	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Two family members currently employed as solicitors by Arthur Cox
Mr Raymond O'Rourke	Agricultural land	Part Ownership	Consumers Association of Ireland (CAI)	Chairman
	Bord Bia	Board Member	Taste Council (c/o Bord Bia)	Board Member
	EFSA	Vice Chair	Irish Codex Committee	Member
Ms Ros O'Shea	None	–	None	–
Dr Susan Quinn	None	–	None	–
Prof. Patrick Wall	Independent Milk Laboratories	Chair	Agriaware	Non-Executive Chair
	Luxcel Biosciences	Non-Executive Director Member	Horse Sport Ireland	Non-Executive Chair
	Lifestage Nutrition	Non-Executive Director Member	DAFM/Industry Campylobacter Steering Group	Chair
	Moypark Poultry N.I.	Member of Food Safety Advisory Committee	DAFM Internal Audit System for Veterinary Service	Independent Scrutineer (As outlined in section 504 of the Annex of Decision 2006/677/EC)
		Antibiotic Stewardship Council		
	Dawn Farm Foods	Member of Food Safety Advisory Committee		
	Aryzta	Shares		
Chief Executive Officer				
Dr Pamela Byrne	None	–	None	–

	Scientific Committee Commercial Interests		Non-Commercial Interests	
	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests
Ms Paula Barry-Walsh	None	–	None	–
Prof. Kevin Cashman	INDI/Nutricia	Honorarium for Lecture	None	–
Dr PJ Cullen	None	–	None	–
Dr Geraldine Duffy	None	–	None	–
Prof. Albert Flynn	None	–	International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI Europe)	Member, Board of Directors
Dr Mark Fenelon	None	–	None	–
Mr John Keegan	None	–	None	–
Prof. Brian McKenna	None	–	UCD	Emeritus Professor (retired)
Dr Eleanor McNamara	None	–	None	–
Prof. Simon More	None	–	None	–
Dr Michael O'Keeffe	None	–	European Food Safety Authority	Member, CONTAM Panel
Dr Margaret B 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. Prof. Michael Gibney
2. Mr Ciaran Byrne
3. Ms Mary Cullen
4. Mr Derek Cunningham
5. Prof. Albert Flynn
6. Mr Martin Higgins
7. Ms Margaret Moran
8. Dr Susan Quinn
9. Ms Ros O'Shea
10. Prof. Patrick Wall

1. Prof. Michael Gibney (Chair)

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

Prof. Gibney attended six Board meetings in 2016.

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

Mr Byrne attended six Board meetings in 2016.

3. Ms Mary Cullen

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. Mary is a member of the Foundation Board of the RDS and a Board Member of the Children's University Hospital, Temple Street, Dublin. Previously, she was Chairperson of the Board of Cappagh National Orthopaedic Hospital, Dublin and a Board Member of Beaumont Hospital, Dublin.

Ms Cullen attended two Board meetings in 2016 (her appointment to the Board commenced in June 2016).

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 RTE television and radio. He is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin (TCD) and has post graduate qualifications from TCD and Dublin City University. He served on an Advisory Group of the Information Society Commission and was Chairman of the RTE Audience Council.

Mr Cunningham attended three Board meetings in 2016.

5. Prof. Albert Flynn

Professor Albert Flynn, B.Sc., Ph.D. (NUI, Galway), is Professor in Nutrition in the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, University College, Cork. He has served on the faculty of the University since 1981 and from 1993-1996, he was Dean of the Faculty of Food Science & Technology. He has published widely on human nutrition, public health and food safety, on a range of topics including nutritional intake and status of population groups, food safety risk assessment, food fortification and risk benefit assessment of nutrients. He has extensive experience in providing scientific advice on human nutrition and food safety issues related to food policy and regulation. He is currently Chair of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's Scientific Committee. He has also served as a member of the European Food Safety Authority's Scientific Committee and as Chair of its Panel for Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies from 2003-12 and as a member of the Scientific Committee on Food of the European Commission from 1997-2003. Professor Flynn was reappointed to the Board on 21st April, 2015.

Prof. Flynn attended five Board meetings in 2016.

6. Mr Martin Higgins

Martin was founding Chief Executive of *safeFood*, 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, 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. Martin 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 and the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland.

Mr Higgins attended one Board meetings in 2016 (his appointment to the Board commenced in June 2016).

7. Ms Margaret Moran

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

Ms Moran attended six Board meetings in 2016.

8. Dr Susan Quinn

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

Dr Quinn attended four Board meetings in 2016.

9. Ms Ros O'Shea

Ros is a highly experienced business leader with a career spanning almost 20 years working with the Board and Executive of two of Ireland's largest and most-respected companies: CRH plc, where she was Head of Group Compliance & Ethics, and Smurfit Kappa Group plc. She is a partner in Acorn Governance Solutions and, in addition to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Board, sits on the Board and Audit & Risk Committee of the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital. She is Programme Director for the Diploma in Governance and Compliance at the Irish Management Institute and also runs programmes for the Institute of Directors, the Institute of Banking and Chartered Accountants Ireland on these topics. Ros has first class honours business and master's degrees from University College, Dublin, a professional diploma in Corporate Governance from the Smurfit Graduate Business School, is an associate of the Institute of Tax and a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants. She is also author of the book "Leading with Integrity – a Practical Guide to Business Ethics".

Ms O'Shea attended two Board meetings in 2016 (her appointment to the Board commenced in June 2016).

10. 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 Chinese National Centre for Food Safety and Risk Assessment. He is a member of the management board of the Mater Foundation and Agriaware. He qualified in veterinary medicine in University College, Dublin and in human medicine in the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland. He has an MSc in infectious diseases from the University of London, an MBA from the Michael Smurfit School of Business and a Diploma in Corporate Governance from UCD. 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 board of Independent Milk Laboratories and of Horse Sport Ireland.

Prof. Wall attended two Board meetings in 2016.

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Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General

Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas

I have audited the financial statements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2016 under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998. The financial statements 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. The financial statements have been prepared in the form prescribed under Section 26 of the Act, and in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice as modified by the directions of the Minister for Health in relation to accounting for superannuation costs.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND OF THE AUTHORITY

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. The Board of the Authority is responsible for ensuring that they give a true and fair view in accordance with the accounting standards specified by the Minister for Health and for ensuring the regularity of transactions.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL

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

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

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

SCOPE OF AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

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

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

In addition, I read the Authority's annual report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by me in the course of performing the audit. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies, I consider the implications for my report.

OPINION ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

In my opinion, the financial statements

- have been properly prepared under the accounting standards specified by the Minister for Health,
- give a true and fair view in accordance with the those standards of the state of the Authority's affairs at 31 December 2016 and of its income and expenditure for 2016.

In my opinion, the accounting records of the Authority were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited. The financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

EMPHASIS OF MATTER – SUPERANNUATION BENEFITS

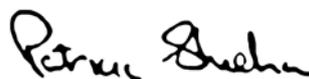
Without qualifying my opinion, I draw attention to Note 1 to the financial statements (accounting policy h) which discloses that in compliance with the directions of the Minister for Health, the Authority accounts for the costs of superannuation entitlements only as they become payable. This basis of accounting does not comply with Financial Reporting Standard 102 which requires such costs to be recognised in the year the entitlements are earned.

MATTERS ON WHICH I REPORT BY EXCEPTION

I report by exception if I have not received all the information and explanations I required for my audit, or if I find

- any material instance where money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where the transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them, or
- the information given in the Authority's annual report is not consistent with the related financial statements or with the knowledge acquired by me in the course of performing the audit, or
- the statement on internal financial control does not reflect the Authority's compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, or
- there are other material matters relating to the manner in which public business has been conducted.

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



Patricia Sheehan

For and on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General

30 June 2017

Board Members' Report

For the year ended 31 December 2016

STATEMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES

Financial Statements

Section 26.5 of the Food Safety of Ireland Act, 1998 requires the Food Safety Authority to keep, in such form as may be approved by the Minister for Health with consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, all proper and usual accounts of money received and expended by it.

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

- Select suitable accounting policies and 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 it will continue in operation
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

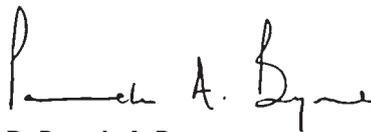
The Board is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, its financial position which enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 26 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998. The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On behalf of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland:



Prof. Michael Gibney

Chairman
29 June 2017



Dr Pamela A. Byrne

Chief Executive Officer
29 June 2017

Statement on Internal Financial Control

For the year ended 31 December 2016

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SYSTEM OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL

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

The system can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely period.

KEY CONTROL PROCEDURES

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

- Clearly defining management responsibilities;
- Establishing formal procedures for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action.

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

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

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

- Comprehensive budgeting system with an annual budget which is reviewed and agreed by the Board;
- Regular reviews by the Board of monthly and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts;
- Setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- Clearly defined capital investment control guidelines;
- Formal project management disciplines.

The Authority 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 local authorities based on actual activity levels.

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland has outsourced the internal audit function, which *operated in accordance with the Framework Code of Best Practice set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2009)*. The work of internal audit is informed by the analysis of the risk to which the body is exposed, and annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. The analysis of risk and the internal audit plans were endorsed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board. The Internal Auditor provided the board with a report of internal audit activity.

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

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

ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONTROLS

I confirm that for the year ended 31st December 2016 the Board carried out a review of internal financial controls.



Prof. Michael Gibney

Chairman

29 June 2017

Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves

For the year ended 31 December 2016

		2016	2015
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Income			
Oireachtas Grant	2	15,250	15,424
Other Income	3	669	530
Total Income		15,919	15,954
Expenditure			
Administration, Operations & Promotion	4	8,459	8,426
Communications activities	5	471	495
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	6	235	225
Local Authority Veterinary Service	7	6,554	6,952
Total Expenditure		15,719	16,098
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Appropriations		200	(144)
Transfer from/(to) the Capital Account	8	83	52
Surplus/(Deficit) for year after Appropriations		283	(92)
Balance at 1 January		272	364
Balance at 31 December		555	272

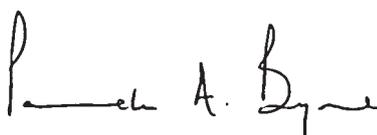
All income and expenditure for the year relates to continuing activities at the reporting date. The Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 13 form part of these financial statements.

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



Prof. Michael Gibney
Chairman
29 June 2017



Dr Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer
29 June 2017

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 December 2016

		2016	2015
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Fixed Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	6	169	227
Intangible Assets	6 (a)	75	100
Current Assets			
Receivables	9	469	437
Cash and Cash Equivalents		339	115
		808	552
Current Liabilities (amounts falling due within one year)			
Payables	10	253	279
		555	273
Net Current Assets			
		555	273
Net Current Assets / Liabilities			
		555	273
Total Assets less Liabilities before Pensions			
		799	600
Representing			
Capital Account	8	244	328
Retained Revenue Reserves		555	272
		799	600

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 14 form part of these financial statements.

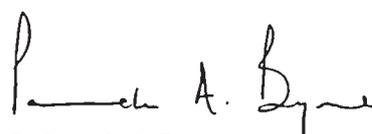
On behalf of the Board of The Food Safety Authority of Ireland:



Prof. Michael Gibney

Chairman

29 June 2017



Dr Pamela A. Byrne

Chief Executive Officer

29 June 2017

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 December 2016

		2016	2015
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Net cash inflow from operating activities			
Excess Income over Expenditure		200	(144)
Depreciation and Impairment of Fixed Assets	6	235	225
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	9	(32)	19
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	10	(26)	68
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities		377	168
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Payments to acquire Plant & Equipment	6	(99)	(59)
Payments to acquire Intangible Assets	6 (a)	(53)	(114)
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities		(152)	(173)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		225	(5)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January		114	119
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December		339	114

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2016

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

(a) General Information

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland was set up under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, with a head office at Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

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 available 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 Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2016 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.

(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 Finance under Section 26(5) of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The following 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) 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.

(e) 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.

(f) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at fair value.

(g) 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.

(h) 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. By direction of the Minister for Health no provision has been made in the Financial Statements for future pension liabilities. Payments under the scheme are charged to income and expenditure and retained reserves when paid.

The Public Service pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act, 2012 became law on 28 July, 2012 and introduced the new Single Public Scheme ("Single Scheme") which commenced with effect 1 January 2013. All new employees to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, who are new entrants to the Public Sector, on or after 1 January 2013 are members of the Single Scheme.

(i) 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 cash received and cash paid basis.

2. OIREACHTAS GRANTS

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

	Sub-head	2016	2015
		€'000	€'000
Grants for Current Expenditure	E.1.	15,250	15,424

3. OTHER INCOME

	2016	2015
	€'000	€'000
Superannuation Deductions	260	263
Sale of Publications	147	153
Sundry Income	102	114
Sale of MenuCal software licence	160	0
	669	530

4. ADMINISTRATION, OPERATIONS & PROMOTION

	Notes	2016	2015
		€'000	€'000
Remuneration and Other Pay Costs	4(a)	5,676	5,418
Rent, rates, service charges and insurance		1,104	1,223
Research costs		37	273
Legal and consulting fees		248	247
IT, telephone and internet		806	695
Operating expenditure	4(f)	588	570
		8,459	8,426

(a) Remuneration and Other Pay Costs

	Notes	2016	2015
		€'000	€'000
Staff Salaries		4,253	4,225
Pension Payments		52	46
Employer's contributions to social welfare		390	375
Staff training and development		180	183
Staff travel and subsistence costs		179	181
Temporary staff		579	356
Board members' emoluments	4 (c)	43	52
		5,676	5,418

4. ADMINISTRATION, OPERATIONS & PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

(b) Employee benefits breakdown

Range of total employee benefits		Number of Employees	
From	To	2016	2015
€10,000	€59,999	57	58
€60,000	€69,999	10	8
€70,000	€79,999	5	5
€80,000	€89,999	7	9
€90,000	€99,999	3	5
€100,000	€109,999	2	3
€110,000	€119,999	0	2
€120,000	€129,999	1	0

(c) Board Members' Emoluments

Board Member	Board Fee	Travel Expenses	Meetings Attended
	€	€	€
Michael Gibney Chairman	11,970	88	6/6
Raymond O'Rourke (Resigned February 2016)	1,283	0	0/1
Derek Cunningham (Re-appointed June 2016)	5,130	0	3/4
Margaret Moran	7,695	0	6/6
Ciaran Byrne	7,695	0	6/6
Patrick Wall	0	0	2/6
Susan Quinn	0	87	4/6
Albert Flynn	0	250	5/6
Mary Cullen (Appointed June 2016)	3,206	0	2/2
Ros O'Shea (Appointed June 2016)	3,206	0	2/2
Martin Higgins (Appointed June 2016)	2,565	0	1/2
	42,750	425	

During 2016, six Board meetings were held. Derek Cunningham's first term on the Board ended on 13 February 2016, he was re-appointed via the StateBoards process in June 2016. Raymond O'Rourke resigned in February 2016 at the end of his term of office.

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

(d) Senior leadership team remuneration

	2016	2015
	€'000	€'000
The compensation of the senior leadership team amounted to	402	401
Alan Reilly (retired 28th February 2015)	0	28
Pamela Byrne (appointed 2nd March 2015)	126	114
	528	543

The CEO remuneration package for 2016 was as follows: annual basic salary of €125,760 with standard public pension arrangements.

The senior leadership team comprises the CEO and four Executives.

(e) Key management personnel compensation

Key management personnel in the Food Safety Authority of Ireland consist of the CEO, the Executives and members of the Board of Directors. Total compensation paid to key management personnel, including Board members' fees and expenses and total CEO remuneration amounted to €571,393 (2015: €575,449). For a breakdown of the remuneration and benefits paid to key management personnel, please refer to Note 4(d).

4. ADMINISTRATION, OPERATIONS & PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

(f) Operating Expenditure

	2016	2015
	€'000	€'000
Recruitment Expenditure	35	23
Stationery and Postage	34	43
Cleaning and Catering	94	97
Repairs and Maintenance	59	44
Audit Fee	12	12
Food Legislation Compliance	113	63
Training - Official Agency Staff	13	11
Committee Expenses	24	25
Library Supplies	88	92
General Expenditure	116	160
	588	570

5. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

	2016	2015
	€'000	€'000
Public Relations	84	83
Industry Events	87	96
Industry Liaison	9	26
Publications	291	290
	471	495

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Office Furniture	Leasehold Improve.	Scientific Equipment	Total
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cost:						
At 1 January 2016	887	130	375	130	311	1,833
Additions	94	3	0	2	0	99
Disposals	0	0	(26)	(2)	0	(28)
At 31 December 2016	981	133	349	130	311	1,904
Accumulated Depreciation						
At 1 January 2016	786	110	366	112	232	1,606
Charge for the year	112	6	5	11	23	157
Depreciation on Disposals	0		(26)	(2)	0	(28)
At 31 December 2016	898	116	345	121	255	1,735
Net Book Value						
At 31 December 2016	83	17	4	9	56	169
At 31 December 2015	101	20	9	18	79	227

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS (CONTINUED)**(a) Intangible Fixed Assets**

	2016	2015
	€'000	€'000
1 January, Opening Net Book Value	100	49
Additions at Cost	52	114
Less Depreciation Charge for the year	(77)	(63)
31 December, Closing Net Book Value	75	100

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

8. CAPITAL ACCOUNT

	2016	2016	2015	2015
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
At 1 January		328		380
Transfer from/(to) Income and Expenditure and Retained Reserves Account				
Funds allocated to acquire Fixed Assets	99		59	
Funds allocated to acquire Intangible Assets	52		114	
Amount amortised in line with asset depreciation	(235)	(84)	(225)	(52)
Balance at 31 December		244		328

7. LOCAL AUTHORITY VETERINARY SERVICE

	2016	2015
	€'000	€'000
LAVS Payments	6,554	6,952
Number of Local Authorities paid	25	26

Payments are made to Local Authorities for the provision of veterinary services, quarterly in arrears.

Funding is channelled through the Department of Health and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and is included as part of the annual determination.

9. RECEIVABLES

	2016	2015
	€'000	€'000
Sundry Income	0	8
Prepayments	469	429
	469	437

10. PAYABLES

Amounts falling due within one year

	2016	2015
	€'000	€'000
Trade Creditors	67	45
Accruals	140	147
Payroll Accruals	0	(2)
Tax Creditor - PAYE/PRSI	4	(2)
Tax Creditor - VAT	13	52
Tax Creditor - PSWT	29	39
	253	279

11. OPERATING LEASES

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland currently occupies premises at Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1 under three leases, which are due to expire in 2017.

- (a) The Authority has two commitments in respect of leases, held by the Office of Public Works:
- (i) a 20 year lease which commenced in 1997 with five yearly rent reviews
 - (ii) a 20 year lease which commenced in 1997 with five yearly rent reviews

The annual costs of the leases excluding service charges is €583,000 (2015: €583,000)

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

At 31 December 2016 the Food Safety Authority of Ireland had the following future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:

	€'000
Expiring within 1 year	265
Expiring during the years 2 to 5	0
Expiring thereafter	0

The Authority is in active negotiation with its existing landlords and with potential new landlords to move to other premises in a suitable location and expects to move during the year 2017. Major stakeholders of the FSAI, in this respect, are the Department of Health and the Office of Public Works, and both parties are providing support.

An agreement to lease for 20 years was signed in May 2017, after this reporting period. The new lease will commence on completion of the Exchange Building, Dublin 1, which is planned for October 2017. No date is yet agreed for commencement of the lease. The financial effect cannot yet be determined.

12. BOARD MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

13. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Financial Statements were approved by the Board on, 29th June 2017.



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