



Údarás Sábháilteachta Bia NA hÉIREANN
Food Safety AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

Annual Report 2022

Food Safety Authority of Ireland



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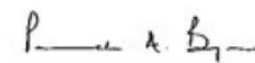
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To the Minister for Health

The Board is pleased to submit to the Minister of Health its Annual Report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022, in accordance with Section 25 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998.



Ms Ann Horan
Chair Designate



Dr Pamela A Byrne
Chief Executive Officer



Údarás Sábháilteachta Bia NA hÉIREANN
Food Safety AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

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



Chairperson's and Chief Executive Officer's statement



Ms Ann Horan, Chair Designate

Dr Pamela Byrne, Chief Executive Officer

We are pleased to present the 2022 Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) Annual Report and accounts which highlight the crucial role the FSAI plays in the protection of public health. The FSAI delivered a significant body of work in 2022 to safeguard the health of consumers in Ireland and those that consume our food in 180 markets across the world. Our dedicated team, the FSAI Board, our advisory committees, our regulatory partners and external stakeholders are essential cogs in a highly sophisticated and complex system of food controls that enable the Authority to fulfil its legal mandate. We recognise that it has been a challenging time for the food industry and we commend, both the industry and its representatives for improving and maintaining Ireland's high food safety standards in 2022. It is thanks to all of these committed individuals that we live in a country that is recognised as having one of the best food systems in the world.

2022 was a year of transformation for the Authority. Learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic were embraced and innovation was championed. The organisation moved to a hybrid working model and the staff profile of the Authority changed dramatically bringing new knowledge and opportunities. We would like to recognise each individual FSAI team member for their expertise, enthusiasm and professionalism in advancing the FSAI's mission in 2022. The FSAI remained dedicated to implementing its 2019–2023 Strategy undertaking various actions to safeguard public health. These included enforcing food safety legislation with 77 Enforcement Orders served on food businesses by the FSAI and through our Official Agencies; issuing 126 food recalls and food allergen alerts; responding to food business queries; conducting audits and investigations; completing 362 risk assessments on food and food ingredients; and publishing guidance and scientific reports.



As one of the world's pioneering food safety agencies, it is imperative that the FSAI continues to evolve by utilising data and cutting-edge science, keeping food safety and authenticity at the forefront of the public health agenda. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of our internal experts, the FSAI's Scientific Committee, as well as national and international food safety experts and scientists, for their work, which informs national and international risk management decisions. The FSAI continuously innovates to remain ahead of the curve through a combination of talented people, partnerships, cutting-edge science, timely data, regulatory powers, and compliance building activities.

Collaboration and teamwork are core FSAI values, and in fulfilling our mission we work in partnership with national and international bodies and organisations. As the legally responsible Authority for overseeing and harmonising Ireland's official food controls system from the farm gate to the consumer, the FSAI has formalised service contracts with 30 individual State agencies in Ireland. Through our engagements with our government partners, our resources are prioritised in line with the areas of highest risk to the public health. This protects consumers from the impact of unsafe and untrustworthy food being placed on the market. The [Food Reformulation Task Force](#), a new strategic partnership between the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Healthy Ireland, have the purpose of implementing the [Roadmap for Food Product Reformulation in Ireland](#). It will help drive progress towards the targets to reduce calories, saturated fat, salt and sugar in everyday processed foods and drinks by working with industry and stakeholders.

The FSAI regulates a dynamic food industry, with the purpose of protecting public health and the interests of consumers. It provides guidance to the food industry, equipping it with the best knowledge available to ensure compliance with food law and safeguard public health. In 2022, the Authority's Advice Line dealt with 3,305 queries from industry and other senders. During 2022, the Authority issued 88 food alerts and 38 food allergen alerts, an 18% decrease 2021. Through data provided to us from the official inspection agencies, the FSAI identified a 1% decrease in the number of food business operators in Ireland in 2022. The Authority and the official agencies are responsible for providing the evidence to demonstrate that the food industry is fulfilling its legal obligations. The Authority audits Ireland's food safety system to ensure that it is robust and compliant with European Union (EU) and national food safety legislation. These findings inform national and international decisions and policies that affect public health and well-being. Having an evidence-led, independent, respected, and robust system of official controls in place has proven to be a tremendous asset. It is key to the underpinning of Ireland's societal health and well-being, and to entering new markets and maintaining existing markets.



Through close collaboration, we can share, exchange, and leverage critical information in a timely manner when there is a risk to consumers from food, whether produced in Ireland or imported. Partnerships with agencies such as the Food Standards Agency in the United Kingdom, Food Standards Scotland, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and our counterparts in the EU and across the world enable us to access timely, accurate, and robust information. This helps us maintain an evidence-based, world-class system of controls that stands up to scrutiny. In 2020, the FSAI co-founded the International Heads of Food Agencies Forum with colleagues from the Saudi Food and Drug Authority and the Food Standards Agency Australia New Zealand. Preparations to host the group's fourth annual meeting in Dublin in 2023 began in 2022. Additionally, the FSAI continued to serve as the Secretariat of the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies from 2020 to 2022. These initiatives, alongside our expert involvement at EU level, allow Ireland to play a significant role in influencing food safety within the EU and beyond.

The Authority deeply values the crucial role played by our employees in achieving our mission. The FSAI understands the importance of providing personal and professional growth opportunities, and initiatives to foster an inclusive, innovative, and collaborative culture in the organisation. In 2022, surveys were undertaken on various topics, including the bi-annual staff survey in late 2022. These surveys help the Authority to ensure staff that feel supported in their new way of working and also help to identify ways to enhance the Authority's inclusivity, transparency, and welcoming atmosphere. We extend a heartfelt thanks to our colleagues in the Department of Health especially the Minister and the team in the Food Unit, for their continued and unwavering support throughout 2022. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, TD; the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, TD; and the staff of their respective Government Departments. I would also like to thank our staff, Board members, the Scientific Committee, the Food Safety Consultative Council, external partners, the industry fora, the food industry and our external stakeholders for their continued dedication as we work towards accomplishing the final elements of our 2019–2023 strategy.

Ms Ann Horan
Chair Designate

Dr Pamela A Byrne
Chief Executive Officer



An introduction to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland

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

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

This ensures that people in Ireland, as well as consumers of Irish food in 180 countries across the world, have access to safe and trustworthy food. The FSAI takes all reasonable steps to make sure that food consumed, produced, distributed or marketed in Ireland meets the highest standards of food safety and hygiene reasonably available, and that food complies with legal requirements or, where appropriate, with recognised codes of good practice.

These activities are key to underpinning Ireland's societal health and economic growth.



Supporting a healthy society and a functioning economy

The basis of a healthy society and a functioning economy is healthy people making informed choices about the food they eat. The *Department of Health Statement of Strategy 2021-2023* recognises the importance of appropriate legal frameworks, forward-thinking policy and cohesive structures in order to achieve the highest standards of food safety possible and to achieve the Department of Health's overall objective of improving the health and well-being of people in Ireland.

Unsafe food can have short- and long-term health effects, and this can impact considerably on quality of life. In addition, the consequences of food poisoning can impact on the economy at a



societal level through inability to work, as well as through healthcare and social welfare costs. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), unsafe food causes 600 million cases of foodborne diseases and 420,000 deaths each year, and it has noted that each year as many as 600 million, or almost 1 in 10 people in the world, fall ill after consuming contaminated food. It is also estimated that each year 33 million years of healthy lives are lost globally due to eating unsafe food. In this way, a safer food supply means improvements in the quality of lives of people in Ireland through reduced illness rates, lower health and welfare costs, and increased economic productivity.

Food and drink manufacturing is the largest indigenous sector in Ireland, with an average annual turnover of €27.5 billion. According to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), employment in the agri-food sector accounts for 7.7% of total employment in Ireland. It represents 6.7% of modified Gross National Income and 9.5% of total merchandising exports. Data from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) show that the food and beverages sector accounts for 19% of all industrial turnover and 21% of all manufacturing industry turnover.



Ireland exports about 90% of its food and drink production. The value of Ireland's food, drink and horticulture exports increased by 22% in to reach a new record high of €16.7 billion. According to Bord Bia, Irish dairy exports were valued at €6.8 billion last year,

meat and livestock sector exports were valued at over €4 billion, prepared consumer food export values exceeded €3 billion and Irish seafood exports are increasing by 3% year-on-year to reach €530 million in 2022.

Ireland maintains substantial market positions in the United Kingdom (UK), EU markets, and international markets. According to Bord Bia, in 2022, more than one-third (34%) of Ireland's total food and drink exports in value terms were destined for international markets, while the EU and UK accounted for 34% and 32% respectively.

The FSAI's commitment to compliance building and the provision of safe food underpins the performance of these economically crucial national industries. It also plays a significant role in Ireland's image nationally and globally as a world-class producer of safe and trustworthy food.



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Food Safety AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

Our vision is

'safe and trustworthy food for everyone'





The Irish food safety system

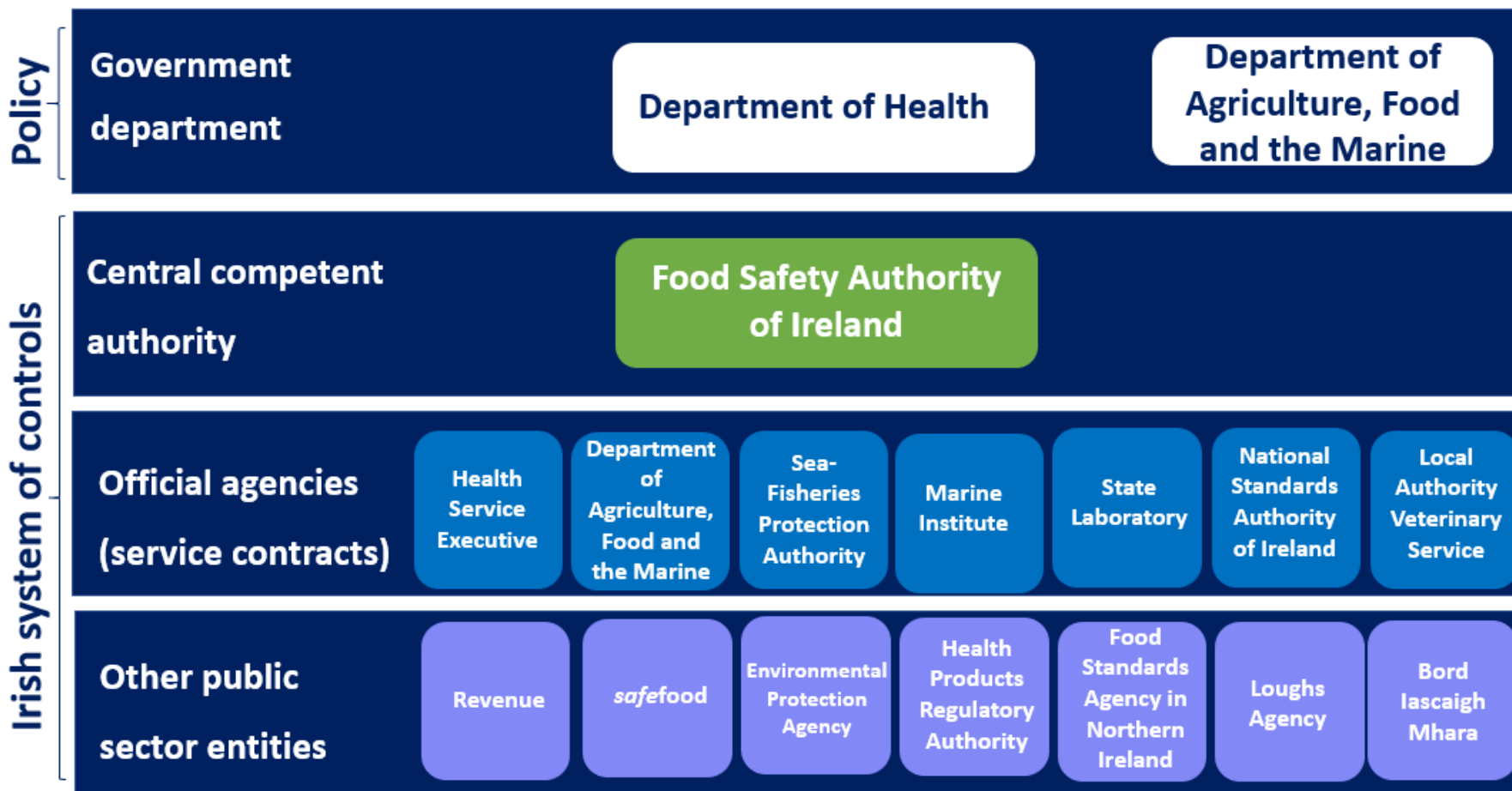


Figure 1 The Irish food safety system



How the Authority operates

In 2022, the Authority enforced food legislation through service contracts with 30 official agencies, and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 provides the requisite legislative basis for this.

The Authority's role is to coordinate and monitor the activities of these official agencies through service contracts, which outline an agreed level and standard of food safety activity that the official agencies will perform. [Service contracts](#) are in place for a minimum of 3 years and may be reviewed during that time at the request of either the Authority or the official agency. Regular meetings are held with senior management in each official agency and with the line managers responsible for the delivery of the inspection and analysis service.

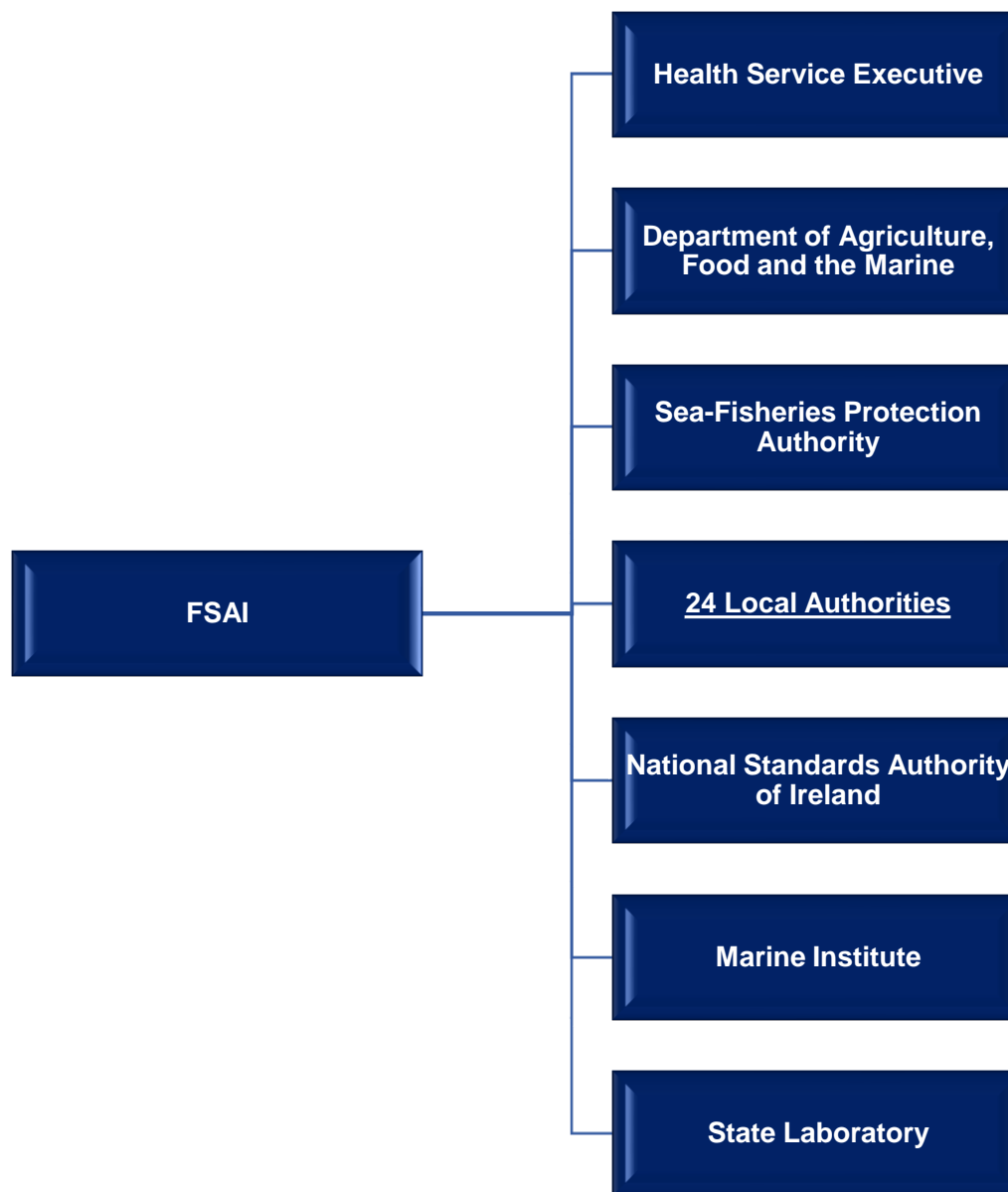


Figure 2 How the Food Safety Authority of Ireland operates



What the Authority does

The Authority's key remit is the enforcement of food legislation, which is coordinated through working in partnership with other food regulatory authorities.

Food legislation is enforced on behalf of the Authority by a network of official agencies through a service contracts programme, which the Authority monitors. The Authority also reports on the agencies' activities and seeks continuous improvement and accountability through a programme of regular audits. Read more about the [range and scope of our work here](#).



Figure 3 Functions of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Outputs and achievements 2022



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Food Safety AUTHORITY OF IRELAND



1,010
media outputs



Publication of world-class advice, research and guidance



77
Enforcement Orders



7,363 queries and complaints managed



126 food alerts and food allergen alerts



59
investigations



16
protected disclosures investigated



362
risk assessments



Food Safety Consultative Council Open Meeting



Commitment to staff culture and inclusion



3,532 food supplements notified to the FSAI



The Food Reformulation Task Force began to implement the 'Roadmap for Food Product Reformulation in Ireland'



Industry engagement

The food industry is responsible for the safety of food on the Irish market, whereas the Authority's role is one of oversight and enforcement. The Authority engages regularly with the food industry in order to make food businesses aware of their responsibilities and increase their compliance with food safety legislation. One of the ways in which the Authority does this is through virtual meetings with its four industry fora. These meetings provide the food industry with a platform to discuss pertinent issues and obtain important information from the Authority. They also allow the Authority to raise any ongoing issues with industry and create awareness of regulatory and legislative changes.

Artisan Forum



Artisan Forum members are a diverse and dynamic group of artisan, small-scale or domestic food producers. The Forum focuses on food safety management within production systems, emphasising traditional methods and not necessarily commercial volume. The Forum provides a useful setting through which such producers and the regulators can engage, interact and exchange information and perspectives. This in turn helps to enhance both compliance and regulation in such production. The Forum met twice in 2022, and communications continued in between meetings. Forum members have concerns about the presence of chemicals and the possible impact of this on human health. Members communicated concerns that operators in their sectors are sometimes inconsistently regulated and overregulated, or that food regulations do not give sufficient regard to food safety maintenance within smaller or artisan production. The Forum discussed approaches to ensuring inspector familiarity with artisan production methods, perhaps within undergraduate curricula or continuing professional development.

Retail Forum



The Retail Forum includes representatives from both the main supermarket chains and the major symbol groups operating in Ireland. The Forum serves to increase understanding of food legislation, to disseminate food safety advice, and share best practice. The Retail Forum held two virtual meetings in 2022: The main issues discussed were the war in Ukraine, Food Information for Consumers (FIC) Revision, Food Reformulation Task Force, Revision of GN18, UK Divergence and the Marketing Standards of Fruit & Vegetables.

Food Service Forum



The Food Service Forum draws its membership from catering businesses, food service businesses and representative organisations. It disseminates food safety advice, shares best practice, and improves understanding of relevant food legislation. The Forum held one virtual meeting in 2022. The main issues discussed were: the war in Ukraine, reusable food packaging and customer drinking cups, food safety culture and UK divergence.

Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee



The Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee is the national stakeholder committee for the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme. The aim of the Programme is to ensure that only safe shellfish are placed on the market. The Committee is chaired by the Authority and includes representatives from a number of stakeholder groups. During 2022, the Committee met four times and discussed a wide range of issues, including sanitary surveys, sample coordination, legislative developments, shellfish safety events, and shellfish water quality. The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority and the Marine Institute provided operational and scientific updates, while other stakeholders provided user feedback on the operation of the monitoring programmes from their perspectives.



Collaboration

Collaboration is one of the Authority's core values. Only by working with our stakeholders and our international partners can consumer protection be achieved. The Authority recognises the value and commitment of its national partners and collaborators in delivering a comprehensive system of controls for food safety and authenticity during 2022.



In addition to the FSAI's work with its regulatory partners, the Authority regularly engages with a number of relevant national and international stakeholders, with the aim of maximising the safety and authenticity of Ireland's food.

In 2022, the Authority's stakeholders played key roles in disseminating FSAI messages and safeguarding Ireland's food systems. For example, the Authority continued to maintain its close relationship with the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland in 2022. The partnership, enabled through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), allows common issues related to consistency of enforcement in both jurisdictions to be addressed, in addition to ensuring efficient cooperation in the event of a cross-border food incident. The MoU between the Loughs Agency and the Authority outlines the assistance the Loughs Agency provides to the operation of the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme in Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough. Over the past year, the Authority's collaboration with *safefood* continued on issues of mutual interest.

The Authority also collaborates with Food Drink Ireland (FDI) on horizon scanning through the Emerging Risks and Threats Forum, whose membership includes representatives from the FSAI, FDI, and the larger multinational food manufacturers. The Authority also worked with other regulators in Ireland, including the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Authority contributes to the Environmental Protection Health Agency Advisory Committee.

The Food Reformulation Task Force is a new strategic partnership between The Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Healthy Ireland at the Department of Health. The purpose of the Task Force is to implement the Roadmap for Food Product Reformulation in Ireland. See the achievements of the Food Reformulation Task Force in their [2022 Progress Report](#).

The Authority is an active contributor on a number of other committees hosted by other organisations, the purposes of which



are to raise and maintain standards in the food sector. These organisations include but are not limited to: Bord Bia, Sport Ireland Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland; Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI); National Hygiene Partnership; and the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI). The FSAI continues to be a member of Sustainable Food Systems Ireland (SFSI), a DAFM-led initiative to make Ireland's food safety, scientific, technical, policy, and agri-food expertise available in order to support development overseas.

European engagement

Engagement with our EU partners and legislators continued in 2022 with the FSAI's continued participation in the European Commission and collaborations with the European Food Safety Authority. In 2020, the FSAI co-founded the International Heads of Food Agencies Forum with colleagues in the Saudi Food and Drug Authority and the Food Standards Agency Australia New Zealand. Preparations to host the group's fourth annual meeting in Dublin in 2023 began during 2022.

The FSAI has served as the Secretariat of the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies (HoA) since July 2020. In June 2022, the FSAI hosted a HoA meeting with France. The FSAI both, chair and are members of several HoA subgroups.


Throughout 2022, the FSAI continued to engage virtually with its international and EU counterparts and share food safety ideas and information.

Other engagement

The FSAI is the national contact point for the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), a joint initiative between the WHO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The initiative involves 177 Member States in the routine exchange of information on food safety issues and the sharing of experiences and expertise, and it enables rapid access to information in the event of food safety emergencies.

The FSAI's Director of Food Science and Standards is an active member of the International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods (ICMSF). The FSAI has a confidentiality agreement with the United States (US) Food and Drug Administration, which facilitates interactions with our American counterparts. In addition, the Authority continues to host foreign delegations who wish to learn more about the FSAI's strategy and operations.

The FSAI assists agencies in other countries, which regard it as a model for single national food control agencies. In 2022, the FSAI continued to play its role, along with a consortium of Irish



Government agencies and international partners, in supporting Albania as a candidate for accession to the EU by strengthening its food safety, veterinary, and plant health standards. The FSAI and its partners are supported in this project by a €5 million EU grant.

These collaborations and partnerships are essential in order to ensure a safe and trustworthy food system. The FSAI recognises its partners' contributions as well as the food industry's efforts in achieving the delivery of this system for Ireland in 2022.

War in Ukraine

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, an FSAI internal cross-functional team was established to consider food safety and authenticity issues resulting from the war in Ukraine. With both Ukraine and Russia being significant exporters of agricultural commodities such as wheat, maize and sunflower oil, as well as being exporters of agricultural outputs such as fertiliser, it was evident that the crisis had the potential to have significant direct effects on food supply, food security and consequently food safety, as well as indirect effects due to issues such as the negative impact on energy supply and price. Through this work, the FSAI was in a position to input and respond, both proactively and reactively, in an effective and prompt way to Government and EU emergency preparedness activities associated with the war in Ukraine, thus ensuring that food safety threats were considered and

planned for as part of horizon scanning and emergency preparedness activities. One of the initial FSAI priorities, working with the Department of Health, was to establish labelling flexibilities for the food industry in line with EU guidelines, so as to address short-term food supply issues – in particular relating to sunflower oil. As the supply challenges continued into the summer of 2022, these flexibilities were extended in order to provide additional labelling flexibilities over a finite time period.

The FSAI also worked with the official agencies to raise awareness of the food safety threats associated with the war in Ukraine that needed to be incorporated into the official controls system. Working with the food industry, the FSAI sought to raise general awareness of the threats associated with the crisis and it also responded to specific food safety, compliance and authenticity threats, including issuing advisory notices to industry in relation to the supply and rising cost of food-grade carbon dioxide (CO₂), maintaining the correct food cooking and storage temperatures, and ensuring food safety in relation to rising energy costs.



FSAI Strategy 2019–2023

The FSAI launched its [current strategy](#) in 2019. The strategy set out its vision, mission, values, and strategic goals and objectives for the following 5 years.

The FSAI’s vision of ‘Safe and Trustworthy Food for Everyone’ clearly articulates the FSAI’s ambition, and the delivery of the strategy builds on the work undertaken in the past, fostering a partnership approach by delivering a strategically planned food safety regulatory system that continues to be relevant, progressive, and robust for the future.

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

“We protect consumers and raise compliance through partnership, science and food law enforcement.”.



Figure 4 FSAI values

Core to the delivery of our strategy are our values: integrity, respect, passion, transparency, teamwork and collaboration. These values guide the FSAI’s decisions and interactions.



Corporate social responsibility

The FSAI is committed to operating in a socially responsible manner. As a government agency, the FSAI is aware of the impact its activities can have on its stakeholders, wider society, and the environment. This can be seen in the way the Authority operates, and through its vision of ‘Safe and Trustworthy Food for Everyone’. This section contains information on the activities the organisation undertakes to both comply with regulations and give back to stakeholders.

Minimising environmental impact

The FSAI is dedicated to carrying out its statutory duties in an environmentally friendly manner. The FSAI offices are based in The Exchange building in the IFSC area of Dublin. The building holds LEED Gold standard certification due to its emphasis on sustainability and energy efficiency, and it is rated BER A3. A hybrid work setting has allowed the FSAI to minimise its carbon footprint, as staff continue to work from home for a number of days each week and the use of public transport and cycling has been promoted via the Green Team when staff are attending the office. This has allowed the FSAI to work and engage with stakeholders in a way that minimises environmental impact and the organisation’s

carbon footprint, thus contributing to Ireland’s commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



In order to create further efficiencies, the FSAI will be reviewing its energy usage in consultation with energy experts as preparations are made for a full energy audit to be carried out during 2023.

The FSAI’s procurement plan includes, where possible, product energy efficiency ratings and life cycle costs as tender award criteria. The FSAI will continue to be a proactive member of The Exchange Building Environmental Team in 2023, so as to improve utility consumption and reduce waste, thus reducing the organisation’s carbon footprint.

The Authority supports EU and national environmental action plans and it also has an active Green Team as well as a Food Waste

Group within the organisation. The FSAI Green Team aims to educate staff on ways they can minimise their environmental impact in their day-to-day lives. Internal communications have been posted by FSAI Green Team members to promote the reducing, reusing and recycling of goods. Some examples of messages circulated in the organisation included the importance of buying locally produced and seasonal foods, clarifying the correct collection and recycling procedures, raising awareness of the environmental impact of fast fashion and highly packaged goods. During a webinar, FSAI staff were given a virtual tour of the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun, which is the national centre of the circular economy in Ireland. The Centre has an eco-store where the public can buy upcycled furniture, textiles, bikes, jewellery, lifestyle products, recycled paint, etc. The FSAI Food Waste Group engages proactively with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications on waste issues within its legal mandate, including the application of circular economy principles across food safety-related areas.

As the body with national responsibility for coordinating the enforcement of food legislation in Ireland, the FSAI is supportive of food industry sustainability initiatives provided that food safety is incorporated into sustainability considerations. As a result, our key advice to food businesses is this: food needs to be both safe and sustainable. The FSAI has worked with many food industry sectors

and food inspectors on this. Specific examples include FSAI work initiatives around food reformulation, food donations, safe food waste reduction initiatives and food labelling, including date marking. These initiatives aimed to promote greater consumer awareness of food safety and sustainability.

Knowledge transfer



Each year, the FSAI allocates time to the education of the future generation of food scientists, food safety inspectors and those studying for a career in regulatory agencies by delivering lectures and seminars across Ireland and providing student internships and placements in the FSAI. During 2022, student training was provided through student placement in the FSAI and lectures by staff. Further

outreach at third level included delivering more than 50 hours of lectures. In addition, the FSAI website features guidance, webinars and numerous e-learning resources; these also help to contribute to and reinforce the FSAI's educational efforts.

Fundraising



The FSAI team believes in the importance of giving back. In 2022, several fundraising initiatives were organised for charities. In continuation of our long-standing tradition, a collection was organised for the Cedar House Crosscare Homeless Shelter. In addition, FSAI Chief Executive Officer, Dr Pamela Byrne took part in Focus Ireland's Shine A Light Night to sleep outdoors in solidarity with homeless people and those at risk of homelessness. Dr Byrne

live-tweeted this experience in a bid to further raise awareness of homelessness and to generate funds for Focus Ireland.

Operating in a socially responsible manner is part of the FSAI's DNA, and the organisation will continue to build on these initiatives in 2022 and beyond.

Staff culture

In order to improve staff experiences of working in the FSAI, we have a number of staff groups and committees that organise and promote initiatives to improve an individual's experience as an employee. These groups and committees are an official mechanism through which feedback can be provided. These initiatives aim to improve inclusivity, recognition and workplace well-being within the FSAI.

The Staff Committee

The Staff Committee is a representative group of staff from all divisions and levels of the FSAI. The committee's objective is to enhance communication and consultation on matters of mutual interest, and its purpose is to provide a collaborative forum for communication and consultation on topics that will contribute to the effective and efficient running of the FSAI. In late 2022, the Staff Committee rolled out a staff survey to review and improve staff experiences of working in the FSAI.

The Green Team

The Green Team comes together to educate, inspire and empower employees around sustainability. It identifies and implements solutions to help the FSAI operate in a more environmentally sustainable fashion.

Working@FSAI

During 2022, the Working@FSAI group focused on the development and implementation of a successful blended working model in the organisation. This entailed consultation and communications with staff and other relevant stakeholders, including conducting focus groups, working with relevant central guidance and frameworks, and ensuring best practice.

The Health and Safety Committee

The role of the Health and Safety Committee is to raise awareness of health and safety among staff, and to communicate relevant information.

The Staff Well-being Group

The Staff Well-being Group aims to support the well-being of our colleagues through organising events and activities that promote both physical and mental well-being, as well as bringing staff together to support one another.



In 2022, FSAI staff walked 4,960 km during our 2-week steps challenge.

The Social Committee

The Social Committee organises social events for staff. It helps employees to bond and boost morale in the workplace; promotes connection and inclusivity by helping staff to bond outside of the day-to-day pressures of work; helps to unify the FSAI team and enhances employee engagement; supports work-life balance; and makes the FSAI an even nicer place in which to work.

The Innovation Group

The Innovation Group founded during 2022 provides a forum to support employees and make recommendations on how the FSAI might share and celebrate new, innovative ideas and best practice.



Its purpose is to provide an exciting, innovative hub for communication and consultation on ideas and creations that will enhance the work of the FSAI. This is aligned to and supports the delivery of our commitments under Our Public Service 2020.

The Values Group

The FSAI values are integrity, respect, passion, transparency, teamwork and collaboration. Values are the guiding principles that are core to the FSAI and help guide what we do and the decisions we make in order to achieve our mission. They are visible in our behaviour, in how we interact with each other, in how we carry out our business, and they can provide a framework for building a great culture.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

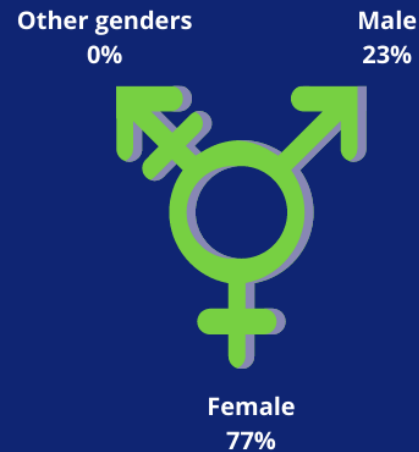
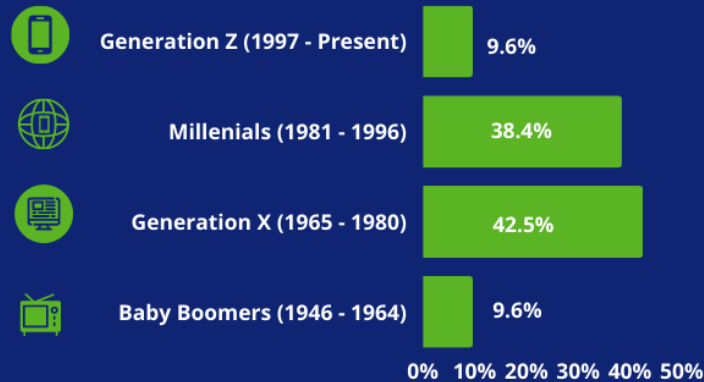
Since its inception in late 2020, the FSAI's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee has been committed to creating a culture where fairness is promoted, diversity is celebrated, and staff and stakeholders feel valued. This is done by encouraging inclusion in all that the organisation does, celebrating difference and embedding real change into how we do things to help the organisation feel like a place where all of our staff belong.

The Committee is guided in its activities by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Public Sector Equality and Human Rights

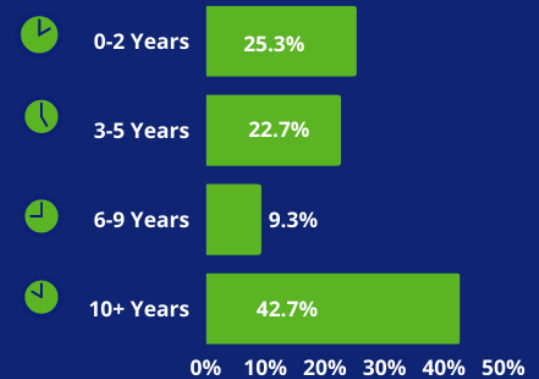
Duty legislation and Our Public Service 2020 *Promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion* guidance. The Committee, together with the FSAI Human Resources team, has introduced various initiatives, supported by the FSAI Board and Senior Leadership Team, in order to succeed in our equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) mission and to comply with the relevant legislation, including but not limited to, staff and Board inductions, staff training and culture events, and reviews of recruitment and training procedures. Some of our 2022 activities involved the collection of data to help the organisation to develop a deeper understanding of the needs of its staff. These data were collected and analysed, and we implemented initiatives aimed at improving belonging within the organisation. In 2022, FSAI staff collectively watched 452 videos and read 356 articles on diversity, equality, inclusion and belonging topics. In addition, our business plan contains a specific objective relating to EDI and there are sections on EDI on both our website and intranet. Through these activities, we hope to embed EDI and enhance our culture so that EDI permeates throughout the organisation, creating an environment that encourages staff to thrive and feel like they belong.

Who We Are

Generational Diversity



Time Spent in the FSAI



2.6% describe themselves as an immigrant.



5.1% are a member of the LGBTQIA+ Community.



11.4% are Neurodiverse.

56.8% grew up in a working-class background.



45.3% were the first generation in their family to attend college.



1.6% reported having a disability.



100% of those who requested accommodations received them.

78% feel a strong connection or bond to the organisation.



77% feel strongly accepted and valued for who they are in the FSAI.



Company culture and manager support is rated highly in the FSAI.

FSAI staff watched 452 video and read 356 articles on equality, diversity and inclusion during this survey.





Governance and management

The Authority has a non-executive Board. It is appointed by the Minister for Health and it is responsible for the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer and the oversight of corporate governance in accordance with Government guidelines.

Two independent bodies advise the Board: the Food Safety Consultative Council (FSCC), composed of stakeholders in the food chain (e.g. food industry, consumers), and the Scientific Committee, composed of scientists. The Scientific Committee comprises 14 independent scientists appointed by the Minister for Health in consultation with the Board. The Chairperson of the Scientific Committee must be a member of the Board. The Scientific Committee advises the Board on scientific matters underpinning food safety and nutrition, and the Authority may not act on an issue referred to the Scientific Committee until such time as its opinion is provided to the Board. The Scientific Committee establishes subcommittees of independent scientists to progress its advice; consequently, the Authority is advised by the work of approximately 83 scientists. The FSCC acts as a forum for debate on food safety issues. It is a constructive vehicle for consumers and industry to provide inputs to the FSAI's strategy and programme of activities.

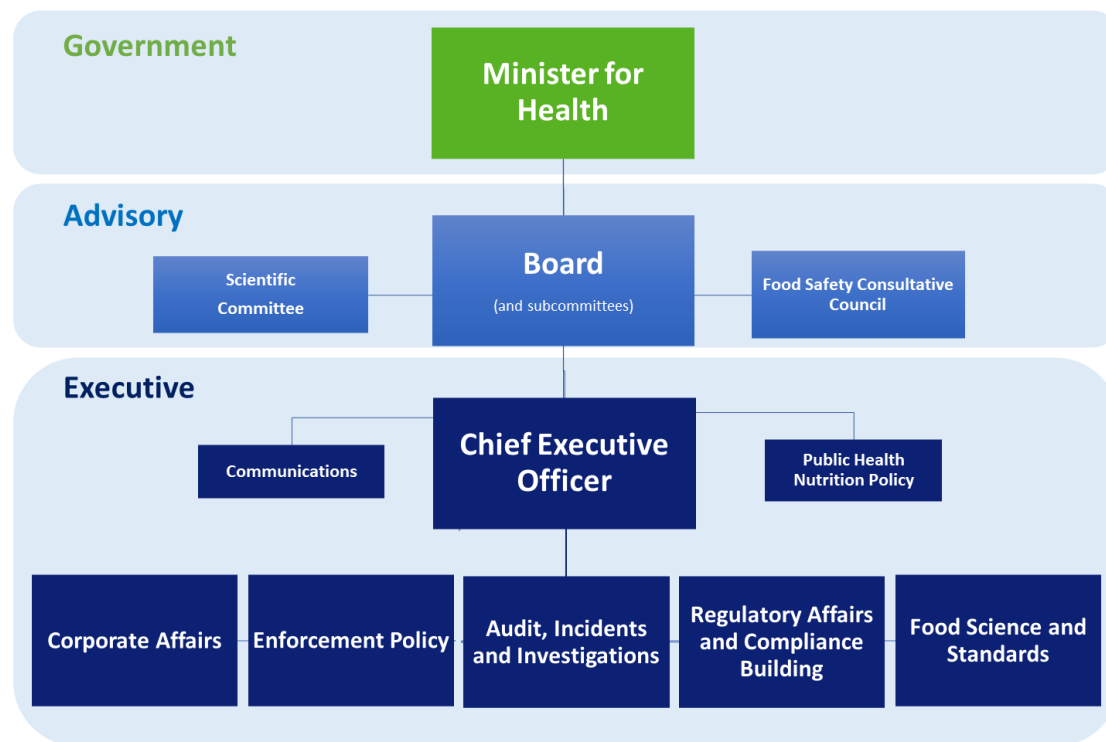


Figure 5 FSAI Organisational Chart



Governance and management

Food Safety Authority of Ireland Board, 2022

Mr Martin Higgins (Chairperson)

Ms Mary Cullen

Prof. Martin Cormican

Mr Gerry McCurdy

Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan

Prof. Francis Butler

Ms Ann Horan

Mr Patrick Knight

Food Safety Consultative Council, 2022

Mr Ray Bowe (Chair)

Musgraves Retail Partners

Ms Maree Gallagher

Food Law Solicitor

Mr Cormac Healy

Meat Industry Ireland

Mr Dermot Jewell

Consumers' Association of Ireland

Mr Jamie Knox

Keurig Dr Pepper

Ms Siobhan Murphy

Health Service Executive

Mr James McCrudden

Country Markets

Ms Sorcha Kavanagh

Kepak

Ms Catherine Morrison

Bord Iascaigh Mhara

Ms Janis Morrissey

Irish Heart Foundation

Mr Conor Mulvihill

Dairy Industry Ireland

Ms Alice McGlynn

Consultant

Ms Louise Reynolds

Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute

Food Safety Authority of Ireland Scientific Committee, 2022

Prof. Martin Cormican (Chair)
(Member of FSAI Board)

University of Galway and Health Service Executive

Prof. Kevin Cashman

University College Cork

Dr Geraldine Duffy

Teagasc

Prof. Séamus Fanning

University College Dublin

Prof. Mark Fenelon

Teagasc

Dr Andrew Flanagan

Dublin Public Analyst's Laboratory

Dr Montserrat Gutierrez

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Mr Tim O'Brien

Restaurateur

Ms Marcella Rudden

Local Enterprise Office, Cavan

Prof. Alan Kelly

University College Cork

Mr Eamonn Quinn

Kelsius

Ms Regina Sexton

University College Cork

Ms Ita Kinahan

State Laboratory (retired)

Mr Martin Roper

Food Safety Consultant

Prof. Anne Molloy

Trinity College Dublin (retired)

Ms Annette Sweeney

TU Dublin

Dr Micheál O'Mahony

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

Ms Paula Barry Walsh

Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Prof. Dolores O'Riordan

University College Dublin

Mr Patrick Farrell

Irish Farmers' Association

Ms Ann Marie Part

Health Service Executive

Mr Jonathan Griffith

Irish Health Trade Association

Prof. Dagmar Stengel

University of Galway

Ms Caroline Keeling

Keelings

Prof. Martin Wilkinson

University of Limerick



Key highlights of the Authority's activities

The official food control system: the numbers at a glance

Enforcements

During 2022, food inspectors served food businesses with **65 Closure Orders, 12 Prohibition Orders, and took 6 prosecutions against food businesses throughout Ireland.**

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

Table 1 Enforcement Orders and prosecutions served, 2018–2022.

Enforcement action	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Closure Order	95	108	31	47	65
Improvement Notice	230	237	104	106	156
Improvement Order	5	4	2	2	0
Prohibition Order	10	13	9	10	12
Prosecution	9	2	5	10	6
Total	348	364	151	175	239

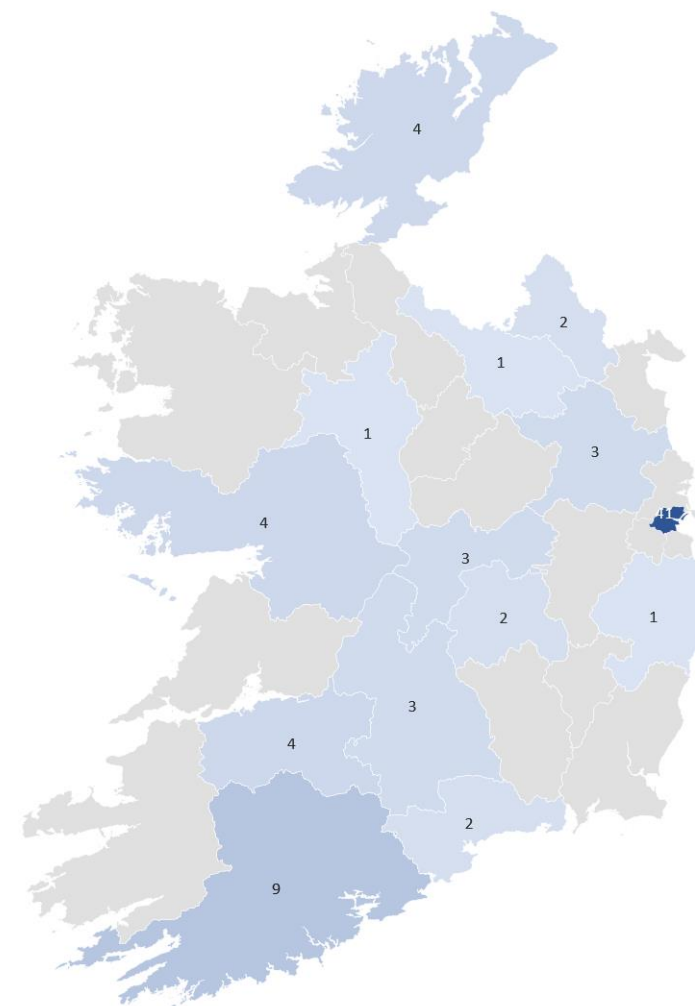


Figure 6 Enforcement Orders and prosecutions, by county, 2022

Food business inspections

In 2022, 51,212 food businesses were under the supervision of official agencies that have service contracts with the Authority (Table 2). Of the registered food businesses, almost 92% are inspected by the HSE; 5% by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; 2% by DAFM; and 1% by local authorities. A wide range of activities is carried out by these food businesses, from importing and manufacturing to distributing, retailing and catering operations.

Table 2 Number and type of food businesses under the supervision of official agencies, 2018–2022

Official agency	Premises type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Primary producers	337	340	355	480	495
	Manufacturers and packers	441	428	494	424	429
	Distributors and transporters	236	132	108	115	113
	Total	1014	900	957	1019	1037
HSE	Service sector	28 676	28 832	28 769	29 267	28 722
	Not assigned	46	36	160	285	505
	Transporters	144	130	128	130	131
	Wholesalers/distributors	1183	1194	1193	1222	1295
	Packers	120	112	107	121	120
	Retailers	13 336	13 373	13 673	14 537	14 153
	Manufacturers	1436	1400	1526	1571	1641
	Third-country importers/exporters	41	42	36	37	32
	Administrative food businesses	208	263	306	344	372
	Total	45 190	45 382	45 898	47 514	46 971
Local Authorities	Slaughterhouses	182	175	166	175	164
	Small meat manufacturing plants	211	217	199	216	194
	Poultry plants	40	32	35	38	37

Official agency	Premises type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
	Cold stores	45	38	42	53	50
	Butcher shops	9	9	7	7	5
	Mobile businesses	34	23	32	31	35
	Trader/Broker	0	0	6	7	9
	Total	521	494	487	527	494
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	Fishing vessels	1912	2077	2080	2081	2085
	Molluscan production areas	185	187	189	189	190
	Registered food businesses on land (including ice plants)	11	15	15	15	15
	Food broker	1	1	1	1	2
	Freezer and factory vessels	65	67	57	62	59
	Processing plants	124	116	105	101	98
	Fresh fishery products plants	72	72	68	66	65
	Importers	64	62	56	55	54
	Cold stores	15	4	5	5	6
	Shellfish farmers	35	30	30	33	33
	Purification plants	20	28	23	24	22
	Dispatch centres	15	14	15	15	15
	Mobile businesses	7	0	0	0	0
	Transporters	8	9	8	9	11
	Wholesalers/distributors	8	42	48	53	53
	Auction halls	1	1	1	1	1
	Other	0	0	1	1	1
	Total	2543	2725	2702	2711	2710
Total number of food premises		49 268	49 501	50 044	51 771	51 212

Food inspections

All official agencies operate risk-based programmes of official controls, and each agency categorises risk in agreement with the Authority.

Those food businesses which carry out activities that present the greatest potential risk to human health are prioritised for inspection.

Unannounced inspections of food businesses are a key element of the official controls, as well as other activities, such as food sampling and investigation of incidents and outbreaks. In addition to planned inspections, a significant number of unplanned inspections take place; these arise as a result of food incidents, investigations, follow-ups on complaints from the public, and advisory visits to food businesses. There was an increase in official controls in 2022 compared with 2021, reflecting the easing of restrictions on official controls due to the pandemic.

Table 3 All Reported Official Control Checks

Official agency	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
HSE (Environmental Health Service)	43 922	42 224	26 820	26 903	38 337
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Inspectorate)	10 826	12 214	7 408	9 538	11 375
Local Authorities	4 582	4 320	3 790	3 445	3 643
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	2 122	2 121	1 911	2 237	1 982
National Standards Authority of Ireland	62	88	37	40	76
Total number of food business inspections	61 514	60 967	39 966	42 163	55 413

Staff working in official controls

The official agencies report annually to the Authority on the staff resources they have dedicated to official controls under the service contracts. In 2022, 1,551 whole time equivalents (WTEs) were involved in carrying out official controls in Irish food businesses (Table 4). There was an increase of 60 WTEs in 2022 over the number in 2021. The food safety inspectorate continues to develop its expertise including through training courses, such as those provided or supported by the FSAI. In 2021, 813 such courses were taken by the inspectorate, a slight increase on the previous year.

Table 4 WTEs by official agency, 2018–2022

Official agency	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine					
Inspection Service	345	407	495	533	548
Laboratory Service	82	90	88	93	87
HSE					
Environmental Health Service	339	377	425	431	479
Laboratory Service	124	125	132	131	142
FSAI	79	79	87	103	96
Local Authorities	101	102	88	91	93
Marine Institute	41	41	39	38	26
National Standards Authority of Ireland	1	1	1	1	1
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	40	45	47	52	59
State Lab			18	18	20
Total number of WTEs	1150	1266	1420	1491	1551

Food sampling

The service contracts include programmes by the official agencies for the sampling and testing of food for compliance with all aspects of food legislation. Samples taken by the food safety inspectorates are analysed by a network of Official and National Reference Laboratories operated by the official agencies. In 2022, 51,023 samples were taken and tested compared with 49,658 in 2021 (Table 5). This reflects progress towards the return to normal operating conditions following the relaxing of pandemic restrictions.

Table 5 Number of samples taken by the official agencies, 2018–2022

Sampling agency	2018	% of total	2019	% of total	2020	% of total	2021	% of total	2022	% of total
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	35 983	56%	32 035	56%	28,100	56%	29 785	60%	30780	60%
HSE (Environmental Health Service)	11 678	18%	11 217	20%	5844	12%	9 343	19%	9279	18%
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	8386	13%	8463	15%	9726	19%	6 989	14%	7370	14%
Local Authorities	3195	5%	2524	4%	2354	5%	2 583	5%	2615	5%
Other agencies	4597	7%	2516	4%	4237	8%	958	2%	979	3%
Total	63 839		56 755		50 261		49 658		51 023	



Dr Pamela Byrne
Chief Executive Officer



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

The Public Health Nutrition Policy function is responsible for providing the Secretariat of the Authority's Scientific Public Health Nutrition Subcommittee and of various national working groups in the area of nutrition. The Public Health Nutrition Policy team also chairs the Codex Alimentarius Electronic Working Group to develop an international nutrition standard for older infants and young children.

The CEO is currently Board Chair of the Irish Management Institute; Vice-Chair of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority and the Chair of the Governing Committee of the Alimentary Pharmabiotic Centre (APC) in University College Cork. She is a founding member of the International Heads of Food Agencies and a member of the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies. She has also been Chair of the Strategic Advisory Board of the Institute of Food and Health at University College Dublin and the Management Board of the European Joint Research Programming Initiative "A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life." Until recently, she was Chair of the Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies.



Communications

The Authority actively engages with stakeholders through a variety of online and offline channels. These channels facilitate the flow of information, two-way dialogue and engagement on important food safety issues. In recent years, online communications channels have become more important than ever before.

In 2022, Authority staff moved to a hybrid work setting, and the new communications methods adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic became key methods of stakeholder engagement.

The Authority's Advice Line, events, website, extranet, social media pages, and webinars are now the most popular ways of delivering our food safety messages and advice. By embracing online channels we have been able to reach more people than ever before. In order to maintain a strong presence online and offline, the Authority has created many engaging and interactive initiatives to retain attention on food safety.

Media

In 2022, the Authority responded to 125 media queries and issued 28 press releases, which directly resulted in 1,010 outputs in print, online and broadcast media. Authority staff were regularly invited to speak on national and local radio throughout the year. The

Communications team continued its work on stakeholder engagement, which is a means to improve collaboration, create a wider understanding of the Authority's role, and encourage and create change in line with scientific developments and changes in regulation, while also supporting those directly involved in seeking to provide a robust official food controls system.

The FSAI Advice Line

During 2022, the Authority's Advice Line continued to provide food safety and hygiene advice and information to stakeholders. A total of 7,363 queries and complaints were handled by the FSAI Advice Line. Over the course of the year, the Advice Line received 3,305 queries from people working in the food service sector, manufacturers, retailers, researchers, distributors, consultants, and consumers. Queries about how to start up a new food business remained one of the most popular topics. Other popular topics included food labelling legislation, food safety training, food supplements legislation, and requests for FSAI publications. Consumers were also actively encouraged to contact the Authority about any food safety complaints or issues they may have. FSAI Advice Line complaints increased by almost one-fifth in 2022. More than 4,058 consumer complaints were handled by the Authority's Advice Line in 2022, with 31% of complaints relating to unfit food and 28% relating to poor hygiene standards. Overall, the 2022

complaints saw an 18.9% increase when compared with 2021 figures, continuing an overall upwards trend over the past decade.

Social media

The Authority's social media channels were key communication channels in 2022. They provide a means of communicating in real time with key stakeholders. They enable the Authority to alert consumers about food safety issues, provide food businesses with guidance, raise awareness of the supports we provide, and much more.

These social media channels also provided a key method by which stakeholders can contact the Authority with queries through platforms that suit them. At the end of 2022, the Authority had an online community of almost 70,000 engaged stakeholders between its facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube channels. During 2022, the Authority ran social media campaigns on various topics, such as food safety training, food allergens, food facts, FSAI Enforcement Orders, World Food Safety Day, food reformulation, starting a food business, labelling and much more.

'See Something, Say Something'

The FSAI launched a consumer awareness campaign 'See Something, Say Something' on World Food Safety Day 2022. The campaign had a robust online presence and featured several

videos, each encouraging consumers to make a complaint if they experienced unfit food or poor hygiene practices when buying food or eating out. The campaign ran across digital media from 7 June to 18 July 2022.

Prior to the campaign, we conducted research which found that almost two-thirds (61%) of adults in Ireland do not know how to make a complaint to authorities about unfit food or poor hygiene practices. Millennials are the least likely to know how to do so.

The campaign is estimated to have resulted in a 33% increase in complaints in 2022 when compared with the same period in 2019, and it also demonstrated overall greater awareness of the complaints facility provided by the Authority.



Guidance

The Authority continues to be a leading expert in food safety for its stakeholders, providing timely food safety guidance, and conducting studies and publishing scientific reports on a regular basis.



During 2022, a total of [10 new publications](#) were published, and a further 12 publications were updated. All of these were published on the Authority's website, and they include guidance notes for the industry, audit reports, Scientific Committee reports, surveys, and other materials to support the achievement of the Authority's vision of 'Safe and Trustworthy Food for Everyone'.

Events

In 2022, the FSAI organised a number of events for the food industry in order to raise awareness and aid understanding of rights and obligations when operating a food business. During 2022, it organised Breakfast Bite webinars on 'shelf-life'; 'what to expect from your inspector'; 'the Safe Catering Pack'; and 'food safety training'. It also ran online and in-person events to raise awareness of food reformulation.



Of particular note was the Food Safety Consultative Council Open Meeting, '[Click and eat – what's cooking in online food delivery?](#)' – an online event was held in November 2022. This event was aimed at a wide range of stakeholders including consumers and industry.

The website

The [Authority's website](#) is a valuable source of food safety information for its stakeholders. It was regularly reviewed, maintained and updated throughout 2022. It continues to take measures to improve and enable its accessibility for users of all devices. The FSAI website had 1,392,000 page views in 2022. The 'food alerts' section was the most popular. The 'Food Alerts' section was the most popular. This was mainly due to the Kinder recalls in early April, which marked a period of peak activity on the website. Both the Enforcement Orders and Food Business section on the website – particularly starting a new business – also attracted high volumes of traffic throughout the year.

Protected disclosures

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the FSAI is a designated person under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014. During 2022, 16 protected disclosures were made to the CEO. Where breaches of food law were detected, the appropriate enforcement action was taken either by FSAI or the official agency to ensure consumer health or consumer interests were protected.

Public Health Nutrition Policy

In 2022, the Public Health Nutrition (PHN) Policy team assisted in the Scientific Committee in finalising the vitamin D report for the

general population aged 5–65 years. The team provided technical support to the Department of Health, which is developing resources on healthy eating for older adults, based on the Scientific Committee's food-based dietary guidelines for older adults. The team have also developed a briefing document for the Department of Health on the need to consider iodine fortification in Ireland. In addition, four peer-reviewed abstracts and four peer-reviewed scientific papers were published by members of the team.

The Chief Specialist, Public Health Nutrition serves as a member of the Dietitians Register Board, and CORU, and is also the representative of this Board on the CORU Council. In this latter role, she participates in Fitness to Practise (FTP) hearings and serves on the Finance and General Purposes Subcommittee.

The PHN Policy team continued to Chair the Codex Alimentarius Electronic Working Group (EWG) on establishing nutrient reference values (NRVs) for persons aged 6–36 months for the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU). Prior to the March 2023 CCNFSDU43 Plenary meeting, the PHN Policy team as Ireland Chaired the physical Working Group on this agenda item. A conference room document was drafted in order to progress discussions on this agenda item at plenary and successfully progressed the draft General Principles to step 5.

The Food Safety Project Albania

In 2022, the EU-funded Food Safety Project continued to work with the competent authorities in Albania to implement activities aimed at improving food safety, as well as veterinary and plant health standards.

Key achievements were made in relation to transposing the EU *acquis* (Chapter 12) with the drafting of new laws for Albania on official controls, animal health and plant health. The project also supported development of a national agri-food safety policy. The policy establishes a framework for strengthening agri-food regulatory systems to enhance the protection of consumer health, animal health and plant health.

In terms of capacity building, more than 1,200 official controls staff participated in training activities throughout the year covering topics such as meat inspection, animal health risk assessment, plant health controls, food labelling and food/feed crisis management planning. Improved methodology for risk profiling food establishments to determine appropriate inspection frequencies was adopted by the National Food Authority and integrated into its annual inspection planning programme.



In October, a delegation from Albania, including the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development took part in a peer learning study visit to Ireland. The purpose of the visit was to gain insight into how Ireland organises and maintains its official controls system and how food safety has played an essential role in the growth of Irish food exports.



Mr Kevin Roantree
Director, Corporate Affairs



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

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

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

”

During 2022, the Corporate Affairs functional area ensured, and reported on, its compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and agreed its Oversight Agreement/Performance Delivery Agreement (OA/PDA) with the Department of Health. It continued to progress an extensive programme to develop the Authority's culture; maintained certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard; provided a broad range of training programmes; and achieved the highest level of assurance regarding the effectiveness of the Authority's systems of internal financial controls, following completion of a review.



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

During 2022, in line with Government guidelines, FSAI staff continued to work from home until April, when they began a phased

and gradual return to office working. The Corporate Affairs functional area continued to provide support to staff through ensuring technological support to work remotely, maintaining the highest level of communication and support for staff, and adapting processes and solutions to enable staff to deliver upon their business objectives within a hybrid working environment.

Organisational compliance

During 2022, the Authority ensured, and reported on, its compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016), and it agreed its Operational Agreement/Performance Delivery Agreement (OA/PDA) with the Department of Health. In addition, it provided the Department of Health with quarterly updates on progress against the OA/PDA as part of the agreed governance arrangement, and it did so within an improved business planning and reporting framework, which clearly highlighted progress as well as any deviation from planned work and the measures being taken to manage it.

Secretary to the Board

Kevin Roantree is the Secretary of the FSAI Board. This role involves supporting the Board in discharging its duties. The Secretary supports the Board, through the Chairperson, in relation

to governance matters and ensures that all relevant information is available to the Board and its committees. Along with the Chairperson, the Secretary is responsible for ensuring the formal induction of new members of the Board and for the organisation of training, development and mentoring for Board members where required.

Quality management

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

In 2022, the Authority maintained certification to the ISO 9001:2015 standard.

Organisational development

In 2022, the HR team within the Corporate Affairs functional area focused on ensuring that staff had the requisite competencies, skills and knowledge to meet both organisational and personal development needs. The Authority places a strong emphasis on continuous learning and development, and it encourages staff to engage in continuing professional and personal development

activities. During 2022, a broad range of training programmes was delivered to support this; in addition, a management development programme was introduced, and the Authority supported a number of staff through developmental and further education programmes.

Finance

An efficient and effective finance function continues to be in place within the Authority, in order to ensure appropriate management and control over resources, as well as to ensure that relevant accounting standards are met and adhered to, and that effective

financial management systems and controls are operating. During 2022, the internal auditors conducted a review of the systems of internal financial controls, and the level of assurance achieved was 'substantial to moderate'. 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.





Dr Bernard Hegarty
Director, Enforcement Policy



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

The service contract mechanism for the enforcement of food safety legislation is set out under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, as amended. Service contracts are in place with 30 official agencies. Most of the Enforcement Policy team's activities are focused on supporting the strategic goal of enforcing food legislation alongside the FSAI's regulatory partners.

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

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The programmes of [official controls](#) on food returned to normal during 2022 as the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic were lifted and the food industry

resumed usual operations. During the year, the Authority published [77 Enforcement Orders](#) (including 65 Closure Orders and 12 Prohibition Orders) which were served by the official agencies or the Authority on food businesses for breaches of food safety legislation. This was a 31% increase on the 59 orders served in 2021, reflecting a recovery in enforcement activity, although still not at pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels – 125 orders were served in 2019. The full texts of the Enforcement Orders served on food businesses were published, in order to provide transparency in the official controls process and also to inform food businesses about practices to avoid.

Six prosecutions were taken during 2022 for breaches of food safety legislation: five by the Health Service Executive (HSE) and one by the FSAI.

The COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions affected the official controls system, for example, by requiring social distancing, limiting the ability to inspect food service businesses with vulnerable consumers/residents, such as nursing homes, and requiring other work such as contact tracing or virus testing to be carried out by the

official agencies. These restrictions and activities were lifted during 2022, thus enabling the official controls to be resumed.

The official controls are carried out under service contracts with 30 official agencies. Most of the service contracts ran continuously in 2022, and therefore did not require renegotiation. The service contract with the State Laboratory was renegotiated during the year. The service contract with the Marine Institute was extended into 2023 to permit a new service contract to be finalised. The contracts with the Local Authorities were extended during 2022 in order to facilitate inter-Departmental discussions on the future of this service. Management and monitoring of the service contracts continued to be carried out by the FSAI and the official agencies through a combination of virtual and face-to-face meetings.

The Enforcement Policy staff were greatly assisted in the change to online, remote, and virtual work by their colleagues in the FSAI's IT Team. The rapid introduction and greater use of online and remote working technologies, adopted during the pandemic, presented new opportunities for engagement by Enforcement Policy staff with the official agencies and with other important stakeholder groups. They facilitated more extensive engagement, more rapid communications and often quicker decisions and better progress on important matters. Remote working technologies made attending and participating in events – or parts of events – a more realistic option

for a wider and greater number of stakeholders, and therefore it was important during the return to more normal modes of working to retain the wider degree of stakeholder engagement that characterised the work during the pandemic.

Official controls legislation



During 2022, the Authority continued its activity on the revised EU legislation on official controls, Regulation (EU) 2017/625. This Regulation sets out rules for the performance by EU Member

States of controls in the agri-food sector, replacing previous official controls legislation, Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and Regulation (EC) No 854/2004.

A programme of work to implement Regulation (EU) 2017/625 continued during 2022, including:

- Collaboration with the official agencies to oversee development of the official controls system
- Input into the development of tertiary legislation (implementing and delegated EU Regulations) in relation to Regulation (EU) 2017/625 at EU level
- further updates to a comprehensive inventory of the official controls legislation, including the tertiary

legislation as a resource for the official agencies and the FSAI

- Provision of guidance and training to the official agencies on the requirements of the Regulation and the implementation of national legislation, and
- Provision of advice to the Department of Health and the DAFM on the national legislation to give effect to the Regulation's requirements.



Management of service contracts

During 2022, uncertainty prevailed over the long-term future of the Local Authority veterinary service. The transfer of the service to the DAFM was proposed in 2021 as a future

option, and the service contract with, and funding of, the Local Authorities were extended into 2022 in order to allow time for this transfer to be agreed with all stakeholders and implemented. It became clear, however, that more time was required for discussions, and therefore in late 2022 the Enforcement Policy team agreed with the County and City Management Association (CCMA), which represents the Chief Executives of the Local Authorities, that the service contracts should be extended to 31 December 2023 in order to allow this proposal to be further considered. The FSAI worked with the Local Authority Veterinary

Inspectors to develop guidance for food safety management systems in small slaughterhouses.

In 2022, the FSAI continued to work with the official agencies to manage the impacts of the withdrawal of the UK from the EU. The official controls system has had to accommodate greatly increased levels of official controls on the import of food, reflecting the status of the UK (excluding Northern Ireland) as a third country. The FSAI worked with the official agencies to prepare for the proposed UK requirement that veterinary certificates accompany consignments of foods of animal origin from Ireland to Great Britain. The requirement was due to be implemented in 2022 but was postponed to a future date. The preparations included the transfer of some food businesses between the official agencies to facilitate efficient export certification.

S.I. No. 79 of 2020, which gave effect to the revised EU legislation on official controls, Regulation (EU) 2017/625, assigned some new responsibilities to the FSAI, including oversight of official laboratories designated by the Department of Health, and a requirement for the FSAI and the HSE to publish guidelines to support the implementation of various aspects of the Regulation, including use of its enforcement powers. A significant programme of work was carried out by the FSAI and the HSE to develop this guidance, including publication of guidance on the:

- Provision of a second expert opinion for official sampling and food testing
- Recognition of appropriately qualified experts for the purposes of a documentary review.

The FSAI continues to provide guidance on supervisory arrangements for food businesses with complex food activities that could potentially involve more than one official agency carrying out official controls. A meeting of a cross-agency group agreed changes to the existing guidance. This group also drafted guidance to improve the inter-agency consistency of processes for obtaining approval from an official agency when processing foods of animal origin – a legislative requirement for certain food businesses.

The FSAI chairs meetings of the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee, a stakeholder forum for the shellfish industry. These meetings continued online during 2022, and it was noticeable that attendance was higher than was recorded at previous physical meetings of the forum, with more representatives from different stakeholder groups participating.

Meeting participants received updates from the FSAI, the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, and the Marine Institute on these organisations' activities.



The Enforcement Policy team coordinates the preparation and follow-up of the official agencies for the audits that the European Commission (DG-Santé) conducts to verify the compliance of Ireland with the official controls legislation. In 2022, this work included:

- Coordinating submission of follow up actions to address recommendations from the DG-Santé 2021-7203 audit to evaluate the control of residues and contaminants in live animals and animal products, within the deadlines requested.
- Imports audit: coordinating extensive cross-agency preparations in advance of, and responses during, the DG-Santé 2022-7426 audit carried out to evaluate the system of official controls on animals and goods entering the EU and verification of compliance of Border Control Posts (BCPs) with EU requirements. The hybrid audit, consisting of remote technical meetings and on-site visits to BCPs, was carried out over 3 weeks in September 2022.

Advisory work

The FSAI prepared advice for the Department of Health on developments in national and EU legislation. This advice supported the preparation by the Department of Health of a new order (S.I.

No. 310 of 2022) under Section 5 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, 1998 Act to update the list of food laws within the remit of the FSAI as well as the service contracts and statutory orders designating the State Laboratory and a Dutch laboratory (Wageningen Food Safety Research) as official laboratories. The FSAI also provided advice on the cross-Departmental development of national legislation to transpose the recast of the Drinking Water Directive (EU) 2020/2184, to be finalised in early 2023.



EU engagement

EU engagement included continued participation in three EU Member States and European Commission expert groups, working on the legislation governing food contact material, the official controls Regulation and on a standard format for producing National Control Plans for official controls across the EU and reporting on them. The FSAI has been appointed by the Department of Health and the DAFM as the single contact point required by Regulation (EU) 2017/625 for producing National Control Plans. Enforcement Policy team members also participated in an EU working group examining compliance with EU rules on olive oil monitoring and reporting.



Ms Gail Carroll
Director, Regulatory Affairs and Compliance Building



Gail Carroll leads the Regulatory Affairs and Compliance Building (RACB) functional area. There are four teams in the RACB function area – Environmental Health, Training and Compliance, Veterinary Public Health and Agriculture, and Imports and Exports. The RACB team works closely with staff in the official agencies to facilitate informed, consistent and effective application of food law by supporting implementation by providing clarity on application of legal requirements including training and guidance.

The RACB area works with the food industry to raise compliance with food legislation and standards, operates the Authority's Retail, Food Service and Artisan industry fora and manages the FSAI Food Safety Consultative Council. The RACB team provides expert advice to the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and supports them in the development of food legislation at European Union level and internationally through Codex Alimentarius. Following a period of restructuring of the team's work and focus in 2021 and a number of retirements in 2021 and 2022, the RACB functional area engaged in a significant recruitment campaign, including hiring two new chief specialists and a new manager, as well as new recruits to technical executive and administrative assistant roles in 2022. This will help to provide the capability and capacity the RACB team needs in order to deliver the requisite services.

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Food supplements



The RACB functional area manages the Authority's food supplement notification system. Those placing a food supplement on the market for the first time are legally obliged to notify and provide the FSAI with a copy of the supplement label. During 2022, 3,532 food supplements were notified to the Authority, representing an increase of more than 100% since 2018. There continues to be a high level of complexity of regulatory and enforcement issues to be managed, due to a range of factors. These include the increasing popularity and range of food supplements; the growth in their supply through e-commerce from non-EU countries; Brexit and other specific issues, such as other Member States using Ireland as their point of notification to the EU market; the emergence of the popularity of cannabidiol (CBD) supplements; and incidents relating to ethylene oxide residues, novel foods and substances not permitted in food supplements. In response to these trends, the FSAI is reviewing its supplement notification system in order to introduce improvements in the regulation and compliance of food supplements. The FSAI regulates food supplements in conjunction with the HSE, with significant work carried out in 2022 to address safety and

compliance issues. The FSAI also works with other agencies such as the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA).

Consultation and stakeholder engagement

A key part of the role of the RACB functional area is to engage proactively with the food industry to build compliance with food legislation. The FSAI engages with various industry representative groups. This enhances its ability to be informed of the views held by important sectors of Ireland's food industry while providing the FSAI with a practical opportunity for engagement on food safety and food regulatory matters.

Food Safety Consultative Council

The [Food Safety Consultative Council \(FSCC\)](#) is chaired by Mr Ray Bowe. At the end of 2022 it comprised 23 consumer, food industry, food inspectorate and academia representatives. The terms of five members appointed by the FSAI Board ended in 2022, and in their place five new members were appointed by the FSAI Board. The FSCC is a statutory Council established under Section 14 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. Its purpose is to facilitate consultations, for the purpose of promoting higher standards or for any other matters relating to the functions of the Authority. In 2022, the FSCC developed a new governance framework aligned to its role under the Food Safety Authority of



Ireland Act, 1998. In 2022, the FSCC continued to hold meetings online and liaised with FSCC members examining food safety topics, including industries' handling of food crises, safe and reusable food packaging, and food safety training. In November, the FSCC held its annual open meeting 'Click and eat – what's cooking in online food delivery'. The event, which was held fully online, included presentations and discussions by the FSAI and food companies supplying foods online and innovating in food delivery. More than 150 attendees joined the event on the day, with hundreds watching online afterwards.

Industry forums

Members of the RACB team chaired on-line and face-to-face meetings of the FSAI Retail Forum, Food Service Forum and Artisan Forum during 2022. These industry fora are an important



means for the FSAI to consult with the food industry, bringing competitors from a sector of the food industry together to discuss food safety with the FSAI and advance best practice in their sector. A range of topics was discussed during 2022, including a discussion and information exchange on various topical food safety issues relevant to the fora. Minutes of all FSCC and food industry

fora meetings are published on the FSAI website to facilitate transparency in this work.

Environmental Health and Regulatory Affairs

In March 2022, a new Chief Specialist in Environmental Health was appointed by the FSAI to lead the Environmental Health team. This team plays a critical and strategic role in protecting the consumer through supporting the FSAI, the Environmental Health Service, the Food Safety Laboratory Service of the HSE and other official agencies in the consistent and effective implementation and enforcement of food legislation. The team works closely with industry to build compliance and foster a culture of food safety within Ireland's food industry, including leading the food service and retail forum. In 2022, the RACB Environmental Health team led on the provision of expert advice on a range of regulatory affairs issues, including in relation to a major change to food labelling legislation proposed under the EU's Farm to Fork strategy. The FSAI engaged with Government, the official agencies and industry stakeholders in relation to the EU proposals, and FSAI representatives attended several EU working groups in relation to this. On behalf of the Department of Health, the FSAI facilitated a stakeholder consultation event to inform national policy on the European Commission's (EC's) proposals. In addition, FSAI



representatives were members of the Interdepartmental Group that examined the EC's proposals and coordinated national responses to EC position papers and questionnaires to inform policy and future direction as part of the Farm to Fork strategy.

The team also chaired the EU Heads of Agency subgroup of Members States on the legislative framework for sustainable food systems to support the development of policy in this area.

The team had regular engagement with trade bodies on food safety and regulatory issues, including those in relation to spirit drinks, dealing with industry complaints on labelling, and various compliance issues. The FSAI worked on regulatory issues in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, as well as with Revenue, and Customs.

During 2022, there was regular engagement with Food Drink Ireland (FDI), Enterprise Ireland and other trade bodies on a range of regulatory issues including food labelling, food safety and labelling issues associated with the war in Ukraine, spirit drinks and other matters.

Work continued in relation to regulation and official controls of foods sold through e-commerce. The FSAI worked with the HSE in relation to responsibilities for registration and other requirements of food law relevant to e-commerce operators that facilitate delivery of

prepared food from restaurants and takeaways. The increasing prevalence of these operators may require the development of new regulatory approaches to food law enforcement.

During 2022, members of the team participated in EU working groups on general food law, e-commerce, food supplements, food information and labelling, official controls, and import controls contributing to the development of legislation at EU level; in addition, the team provided expert advice to the Department of Health in relation to food legislation.

Veterinary Public Health and Agriculture

In November 2022 a new Chief Specialist in Veterinary Public Health was appointed by the FSAI to lead the Veterinary Public Health and Agriculture team. The RACB



Veterinary Public Health and Agriculture team provided expert support for the FSAI, the official agencies and industry by advising on scientific, technical and enforcement issues; incident management; providing training; developing guidance, supporting service contract management and liaison; providing technical expertise for FSAI audits; and carrying out on-site visits.

Throughout the year, the team provided technical support on numerous issues, such as animal by-products, residue controls, and pesticides. The team also ensured that the FSAI contributed to stakeholder initiatives to support food safety compliance, such as Bord Bia's quality assurance schemes.



Food imports and exports

A new Regulatory Affairs Manager was appointed in November 2022 to lead the RACB Imports and Exports team, including the overall FSAI approach to regulatory

affairs.

During 2022, this team supported the official agencies in their official controls on imported food – in particular with official controls on foods imported from the UK to Ireland, but also wider third country imports – as part of the coordination of official controls on all imported foods.

This included leading the cross-agency working group on import controls on high-risk foods of non-animal origin. This is a collaborative group of FSAI, HSE, DAFM and Revenue representatives who provide inputs to EU legislative developments on high-risk foods, advise the Department of Health in relation to legislation, and address issues relating to official controls on

imported foods. The RACB Imports and Exports team participated in EU working groups and expert groups on official controls and imports of food of non-animal origin (Regulation (EU) 2019/1793), and attended meetings of the Heads of Agency working group on imports and certification. These EU working group meetings led to amendments on the rules exempting products from official controls, such as personal imports or samples for trade samples, laboratory samples, display items, and consignments intended for scientific purposes. Amendments to the foods subject to increased official controls under this legislation brought about controls for foods that presented a potential risk to public health due to possible contamination by ethylene oxide. The team also supported activities associated with the Santé F audit of Ireland's import controls in September 2022.

In 2022, the team set up systems to monitor and examine the implications of regulatory divergence between the EU and the UK on foods on the Irish market, and provided advice to Government, the official agencies and industry on enforcement and compliance issues. Some examples in 2022 of regulatory divergence included the prohibition of titanium dioxide in foods on the EU market, whereas the UK continues to permit the use of titanium dioxide in food; labelling, in particular labelling flexibilities as a result of the war in Ukraine; and controls on imports of food from the Fukushima

region of Japan, which are in place in the EU but were revoked in the UK.

The FSAI in consultation with the official agencies prepared advisory notices for industry and consumers on legislation changes during 2022 on personal imports and the importing of food samples for laboratory, trade, display, and scientific purposes. The team contributed to the Government's ongoing work in relation to Brexit through the Department of Health's Brexit Operations Team, which continued to meet throughout 2022, with the FSAI providing advice on food safety and authenticity issues arising from Brexit.



Training and compliance

Throughout 2022, the Training and Compliance team continued to develop training and compliance building materials for both inspectors and food businesses, and also returned to providing face-to-face training.

The FSAI's Food Safety and You training programme was redeveloped in 2022, with a new video and materials launched in September. Food Safety and You is a 4-hour induction-level food safety course for food handlers that promotes active learning and the application of training in the work environment. The FSAI

employs a Train the Trainer approach with this programme, whereby managers, supervisors and trainers from food businesses are trained by the FSAI so that they can deliver the Food Safety and You programme to their own staff. Between September and December 2022, 41 trainers participated in this programme. The Training and Compliance team also delivered the induction-level programme to a number of charitable organisation's as well as FSAI staff.

Official agency staff undertook face-to-face, virtual, and self-serve training throughout the year.

Eighty-one DAFM and Local Authority inspectors took part in a live, virtual training session titled 'Assessing the appropriateness of product shelf life declared by food businesses'. The training course outlined the regulatory requirements for assessing product shelf life declared by food businesses. It focused on the appropriate steps and considerations to be made when assessing shelf life, and it included a number of case studies.

The FSAI organised training for food businesses and veterinary inspectors on the national guidance on food safety management systems (FSMS), and the recommendations set out in the FSAI publication *Food Safety Management System (FSMS) Guide for Low-Throughput Cattle, Sheep, Goat and Pig Slaughterhouses*. A total of 258 people attended the 12 sessions, which were run as face-to-face training, and included:

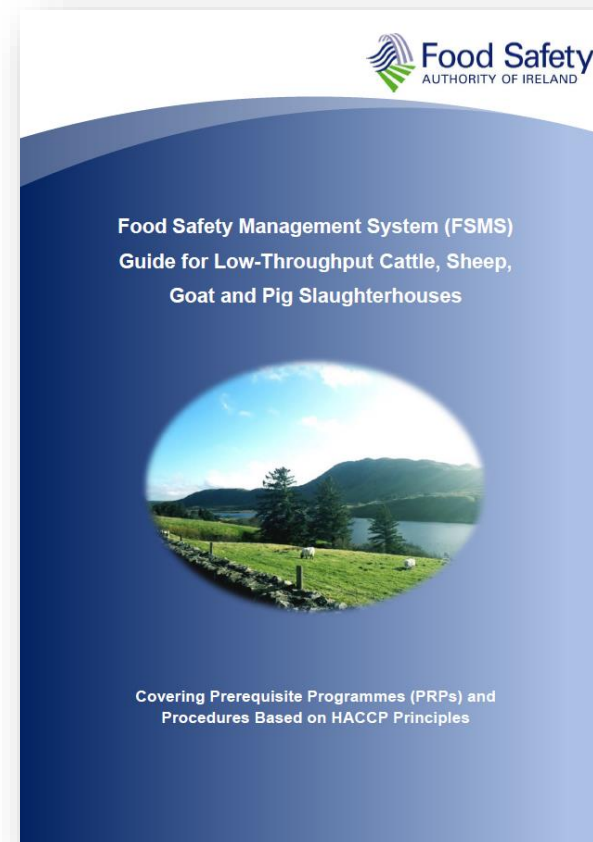
- An introduction to the national guidance and the associated records book
- Key technical aspects of the slaughter process
- Animal welfare
- Official controls – what the inspector will be looking for during inspections
- Question and answer session.

The EU-funded Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) programme of training for inspectors saw inspectors and FSAI staff attending 39 BTSF courses across a range of food safety topics in 2022, in a combination of virtual and face-to-face courses.

The training team, together with subject matter experts, continued to develop self-serve training courses, and revised and updated existing e-learning modules. Inspectors and FSAI staff undertook a total of 775 courses on the FSAI Learning Management System.

Work commenced in 2022 on the upgrading of the FSAI Learning Management System and the development of an FSAI learning portal for food businesses.

Work on the online compliance building tool for businesses on nutrition and health claims also continued.





Dr Michelle Minihan **Director, Audit, Incidents and Investigations**



Dr Michelle Minihan leads the Audit, Incidents and Investigations functional area, which is responsible for conducting audits, managing food incidents, investigating protected disclosures, and investigating complaints of fraudulent and deceptive practices. Michelle took up the post of Director in November 2022.

The team carries out audits of the official food control system and targeted audits of food businesses to ensure compliance with the Authority's legal mandate. They also provide support during third-country and European Commission audits in Ireland. The annual risk-based audit programme is designed to ensure adequate coverage of all relevant areas of activity and all official agencies over a period of five years. Audit reports and their corrective action plans are published on the Authority's website.

The team conduct special investigations in conjunction with official agencies and other state agencies where serious breaches of food law have been alleged or food fraud has been detected. These investigations are designed to determine the nature and extent of non-compliance with food law and/or related food fraud offences. Outcomes of such investigations may result in enforcement actions and criminal proceedings being taken against offenders. Notifications of protected disclosures to the Chief Executive, are investigated by the Audit and Investigations team.

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Audits

The Authority's risk-based audit programme is designed to ensure adequate coverage of all relevant areas of activity and all official agencies over a period of five years. Audit reports and their corrective

action plans are published on the Authority's website.

In 2022, the Authority commenced two Official Control Audits. The first audit was undertaken with the Health Service Executive on Water Bottling Establishments. The second Official Control audit was carried out on a Dairy Production Chain with the Department of Agriculture, Dairy Certification and Controls Division. These audit reports will be published in 2023.

The targeted Audit of Food Business Operator Compliance with Meat Labelling and Traceability Requirements was published in May 2022. A report detailing an audit of official controls carried out on the table egg production chain was published in June 2022. Audit corrective action plans are updated regularly as progress is made on closing out the individual audit findings.

International audits

Ireland's official controls system is subject to regular assessment by the European Commission's DG SANTE audit function. In 2022, a Santé F audit was carried out in Ireland to evaluate the system of official controls on animals and goods entering the European Union. This audit also verified the compliance of border control posts with European Union requirements.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) continues to carry out foreign surveillance inspections in Ireland to ensure food business operations in Ireland that supply food to the USA meet the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). In June 2022, the FDA carried out a total of 5 inspections of food business operators in Ireland. The implementation of corrective action on non-compliances raised by FDA inspectors are monitored by official agency personnel in so far as they relate to compliance with EU or National Food Legislation.

The Authority continues to represent and participate on behalf of Ireland in the European Commission chaired, National Audit Systems Network.

Protected disclosures

The Chief Executive Officer of the FSAI is a prescribed person under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014. During the year, 16 protected disclosures were made to the Chief Executive all of which were investigated by authorised officers from the Authority or relevant official agency. In all instances allegations of wrongdoing contained in the protected disclosures were verified and, in some cases, significant enforcement actions were implemented on the food business operators concerned.



Food fraud investigations

During 2022, authorised officers from the FSAI, together with other State regulatory authorities and the official agencies, conducted a total of 59 investigations. These investigations required a variety of

approaches, ranging from the execution of six search warrants secured in the District Court and subsequently executed, to the monitoring of social media pages in cases where the operation of online unauthorised food businesses was suspected. Outcomes from these investigations resulted in seven Closure Orders, two Prohibition Orders, six Compliance Notices, two voluntary surrenders, one Destruction Order and one Improvement Notice

being issued. Food safety concerns identified during these investigations necessitated the removal of in excess of 257 bottles of Cannabidiol (CBD) 1,500kg of frozen food product, 33,165 Kg product of animal origin and 10.75 Litres of CBD oils.

During 2022, the Authority engaged with online platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, where illegal food businesses were selling food online. This engagement resulted in nine illegal food businesses pages being taken down.

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

The Food Fraud Task Force is chaired by the Director of Audit, Incidents and Investigations. During 2022 two meetings of the task force were convened. This multi-agency, multidisciplinary forum continues to consider and report on issues that are likely to significantly impact on food integrity/authenticity. In 2022, the Audit, Incidents and Investigations functional area staff also attended two meetings of the Cross-Border Task Force on Food and Rural Crime.

On behalf of the Authority, the Audit and Investigations functional area acts as the national food fraud contact point for the European Commission. During 2022, FSAI representatives participated in two



EU Food Fraud Network meetings. A series of webinars were organised for the network by the European Commission for Member States to present best practice examples. The Audit, Incidents and Investigations team presented at one such webinar. The network also began drafting guidance on fighting fraudulent and deceptive practices in the agri-food chain.

In addition, the European Commission’s Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) database was monitored. Ireland published five cases in 2022 relating to counterfeit alcohol, meat products and other products on the market that were subject to fraud investigations.

The Authority continues to participate in the Food Industry Intelligence Network (FIIN) and meets with members of the management board on a quarterly basis. FIIN currently represents a number of large food industry companies from Ireland and the UK.

The quarterly intelligence report is discussed and relevant information on food fraud is shared. In Ireland, the Authority sits on the Emerging Risks and Threats Forum jointly chaired by IBEC and FSAI.



In collaboration with the Gardaí and Revenue’s Customs Service, the Audit

and Investigations team participated in the joint Europol/INTERPOL operation know as Operation OPSON XI which targeted counterfeit and fraudulent food. Returns submitted by Ireland to Europol included seizures of food of animal origin (meat/dairy) and CBD.

Prosecutions

In May of 2022, the FSAI welcomed the outcome of [a District Court prosecution](#) against Mr Domenico Venditti, the former operator of Domenico Take Away, Newcastle, County Tipperary. The Court found that the premises was run in an unhygienic way and expressed significant concern that Mr Venditti continued to trade in breach of the Closure Order and showed blatant disregard for the function of the FSAI.

Food incidents – alerting the public

A key aspect of liaison with both the food industry and the official agencies is dealing with food incidents, that is where food is, or is suspected of, being contaminated, and poses a threat to consumers at home or abroad. In such situations, a fast risk management response is required in order to determine whether food should be recalled or withdrawn and whether the public needs to be informed. In 2022, on





average, three public warnings per week were issued in relation to foods that posed a danger to the public. These were issued in the form of food alerts and food allergen alerts.

The FSAI's Food Incidents team is the national contact point for the RASFF, a network to exchange information between its members – EU Member States, the European Commission and EFSA – on hazards identified in food, feed, and food contact materials. The group is also the contact point for the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), a global network of national food safety authorities whose secretariat is hosted by the WHO. In 2022, the RASFF dealt with 4,339 notifications. Of these, 80 were notified by Ireland. There were 29 notifications in respect of food which had originated in Ireland; a total of 213 notifications were related to foods distributed in Ireland.

In 2022, there was a regular and increasing flow of food incidents to which a response capability was required on a 24/7 basis. In 2022, the Food Incidents team dealt with 847 food incidents, compared with 724 in 2021, a 17% increase on the previous year. Of these 847 food incidents, 458 were full incidents (compared with 378 in 2021).

A key activity on the Food Incidents team is the management of food-related incidents together with FSAI staff and staff in the

inspection and laboratory services, the official agencies, and affected food businesses.



comparison to 2021 figures (154).

In 2022, 88 food alerts were issued, advising the public and the food sector of the need for a withdrawal (from the food chain) or recall (from consumers). The principal reasons for these alerts were a direct or indirect threat to consumers due to the presence of foreign matter, pathogenic microbes such as Salmonella or Listeria, or chemical contaminants such as ethylene oxide.

In 2022, the FI managed two significant incidents of public health concern in the form of Salmonella in chocolate products from Belgium and Listeria in coleslaw mix products.

A total of 126 public warnings about food being recalled or withdrawn from the market were issued in the form of food alerts (88) and food allergen alerts (38), a decrease overall in



Three in every 100 people in Ireland have food allergies. It is therefore important that they are made aware of any product which contains an undeclared allergen.

There are 14 categories of allergens which by law must be declared on a label. In 2022, the Authority issued 38 food allergen alerts. Subscribers to the Authority's alert system are informed of these alerts by text message.



Dr Wayne Anderson Director, Food Science and Standards



The Food Science and Standards (FSS) functional area provides expert food safety scientific services for the FSAI. FSS staff focus on collating and critically evaluating scientific evidence as well as generating data to support risk assessment and underpin technical advice.

The FSS functional area has a team of dedicated scientists and administrators who work together to expand its expertise and apply this knowledge to protect consumers' health and interests. In addition to risk assessment, its work includes developing compliance tools and drafting technical guidance for the food industry and enforcement officers, providing expert support for food incidents and investigations, conducting direct official controls on certain foods, and providing technical insight for Government Departments into the development of food legislation at European level.

The FSS functional area ensures that the best scientific advice is available to the FSAI through management and support of the FSAI Scientific Committee, which comprises of 15 independent scientists appointed by the Minister of Health. It contributes to the wider scientific community through lectures at third level and by delivering papers at national and international scientific meetings. Its scientists collaborate extensively with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and provide technical input into the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission which sets international food safety standards.

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Supporting food law enforcement

The official agencies strive for consistent, effective, and efficient food law enforcement by inspection officers and official laboratory

staff. The FSS functional area supports this effort with scientific and technical advice. In 2022, the first comprehensive national chemical safety sampling plan was developed in conjunction with the official agencies for 2023, in line with new EU requirements. In addition, the FSS chemical safety team reviewed the DAFM 2022 sampling plans for veterinary medicines and pesticides.

The participation of FSS scientists in the development of chemical safety legislation at EU level enabled the FSAI to identify nine new testing requirements in upcoming legislation, thus helping official laboratories to get a head start on developing methods in preparation for this new legislation.

In 2022, the FSS team updated guidance note 28 *Food Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods in Ireland*. The team also coordinated national comments and provided extensive input into the development of EU guidance on food safety management systems by the European Commission. Guidance on the safety and legislation concerning botanical foods was also provided for the

HSE. Technical training was developed and delivered to DAFM Meat Hygiene staff on shelf life validation and to all official agencies on sampling under the legislation on chemical contaminants; in addition, the FSS team delivered a workshop on the use of digital tools in official controls to the HSE Environmental Health Service. Additionally, the FSS team prepared several case studies on *Listeria monocytogenes* for European-wide BTSF training on shelf-life determination.

In view of the service contract process, the FSS team supported colleagues in the Enforcement Policy functional area in meetings with the official agencies, where technical information was provided on digital tools for official controls, data analysis of enforcement patterns in retail food businesses and microbiological sampling. Detailed scientific and technical support was particularly necessary for 19 of the larger 2022 food incidents, including the *Salmonella* contamination of some Kinder chocolates, safety of rice-based infant formula, selenium poisoning in sheep, as well as multiple incidents of unsafe levels of THC in food. Similarly, the FSS scientific team supported three FSAI official controls investigations with scientific advice, thus enabling satisfactory progress towards resolution. The FSAI's microbiological expertise was also pivotal in assisting the HSE and a company to resolve an issue with *Listeria monocytogenes* in short shelf-life chilled foods.



In 2022, there was severe disruption to staffing in the public health nutrition team, thus requiring recruitment into all posts during the year. This delayed official controls checks on food for specific groups. Nevertheless, all infant formulas and follow-on formulas were prioritised and checked against EU composition regulations (66 products) and nutrition and health claims regulations (76 products). A total of 117 foods for special medical purposes (FSMPs) were notified to the FSAI for official controls checks in 2022. Forty-four of these were checked against the FSMP legislation, with six non-compliances identified. A further 48 FSMPs were notified in the last half of 2022 for checks in the first half of 2023, 29 of these have already been checked against the FSMP legislation. The remaining backlog should be cleared in 2023. The FSS team also checked notified foods against the additives legislation, and in 2022 this included 237 food supplements, 33 infant formulas, 14 follow-on formulas and 75 FSMPs.

In the novel foods area, preliminary comments were provided to the notifier of a traditional food, Bambara groundnut. Feedback was provided on 18 novel food consultations with other EU Member States. Five novel foods requests were finalised by the FSAI and a further four are being processed.

Strengthening science and evidence

In 2022, the FSAI Scientific Committee met three times during the year and reviewed its 5-year workplan. Work on five draft opinions continued in the various subcommittees. They amended and approved a new request for advice on 'Scientific recommendations on food-based dietary guidelines for adolescents' which the Public Health Nutrition Subcommittee will work on over the next 2 years. At the end of 2022, the Scientific Committee completed and approved an opinion titled *Vitamin D – Scientific Recommendations for 5 to 65 Year Olds Living in Ireland* and this will be published early 2023.

FSS scientists produced 362 risk assessments to support food safety incidents and investigations in 2022; this represented a 59% increase over 2021 demands. The biggest impacts were in the chemical safety area (171% increase) and in the biological safety area (108% increase). These scientists maintained FSAI influence on the direction of important food safety research by serving on the steering boards of eight major national research programmes funded by the DAFM and the EPA, covering topics such as the safety of horticulture foods, *Campylobacter* control in chickens, control of mycotoxins, waterborne infection with Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC), and the food safety implications



of *C. difficile*. The FSAI also directly funded research in University College Dublin (UCD) into additive intakes in the Irish population, in order to inform EU additive monitoring obligations as well as research in University College Cork (UCC) to estimate salt intake by the Irish population, which will be reported in 2023. The FSAI became a consortium partner in an EU-funded research project, FoodSafeR, aimed at developing tools for emerging risk identification and evaluation. The FSAI also conducted research on reformulation in the retail environment with the cooperation of Supervalu, Aldi and Lidl. Several food studies were progressed to establish the exposure of consumers to sulphites, establish the microbiological safety and quality of bottled water in Ireland, evaluate the microbiological status of coated chicken, study the safety of frozen vegetables, fruits and herbs with respect to *Listeria monocytogenes* and examine the methylmercury content of canned fish.

2022 saw the establishment of the national [Food Reformulation Task Force](#) within the FSS functional area under a service level agreement (SLA) with Healthy Ireland in the Department of Health. A new team was recruited and it commissioned research and produced four publications: *Monitoring Sodium and Potassium in Processed Foods*; *Nutritional Characteristics of Priority Food Categories for Reformulation in Ireland*; *Priority Food Categories for*



Reformulation in Ireland; and *A technical report on the methodology for setting nutrient baseline values and evaluating progress*. The Task Force held two successful stakeholder events and ran a social media campaign to create an

awareness of the reformulation road map, which reached more than 215,000 people across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. This SLA is a 4-year agreement ending in 2025.

In the field of zoonosis, the [2020 national zoonosis data](#) were published on the FSAI website and the 2021 data were submitted to EFSA in time for inclusion in the *EU Summary report*.

Scientific collaboration and technical advice

The FSAI organises and hosts the EFSA Focal Point for Ireland and makes other significant contributions to the work of EFSA. This continued in 2022, with a major overhaul of the EFSA Focal Point agreement in consultation with Member States, resulting in a new Focal Point framework agreement, new specific tailor-made tasks and enhanced funding opportunities for participants.

The Focal Point facilitated EFSA training on zoonosis data submission for national data providers and it also facilitated a larger workshop on Standard Sample Description 2.0 (SSD2), which was



attended by approximately 70 participants from 13 Member States. Forty-four information requests from EFSA and other Member States were disseminated and responded to, and the Focal Point directed more than 100 direct communications from EFSA to the appropriate body in Ireland.

FSS scientists participated in two meetings of the EFSA Advisory Forum, and also contributed scientific advice to EFSA and five EFSA network meetings with EU Member States on subjects such as nanotechnology, microbiological risk assessment, zoonosis reporting, and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). In a welcome development, one of our scientists was selected to serve on the editorial advisory board for a new EFSA journal for Member States risk assessments. Our scientists also provided EFSA with a significant tranche of data on persistent organic pollutants since 2017, in order to support EFSA's risk assessment work.

EFSA also has the European brief for identifying emerging risks, and the FSAI participated in both meetings of the Emerging Risks Exchange Network. The FSAI presented two emerging risks topics for discussion and completed both surveys on emerging risks signals issued by EFSA. To support this activity, the FSAI Emerging Risks Screening Group met four times in 2022 to consider 17 briefing notes on possible signals of emerging risks, and the

emerging risks team used an in-house-developed artificial intelligence (AI) system to search the peer-reviewed literature, and subsequently screened 8,000 papers for signals of emerging risks. FSAI representatives attended the Food Drink Ireland Emerging Risks and Threats Forum on three occasions to share information with the food industry, including a meeting dedicated to food chain risks and threats resulting from the war in Ukraine.

In 2022, the European Commission continued holding its meetings virtually or occasionally in hybrid format. FSS team members attended 33 expert meetings as well as 14 meetings of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed. They also provided 37 briefing documents for Government Departments, in particular the Department of Health, on issues leading to votes for adoption of new EU legislation.

On the international stage, Codex Alimentarius Commission meetings, where global food standards are agreed, resumed face-to-face meetings. The FSAI participated in the Codex Committee on Food Contaminants and two meetings of the Food Hygiene Committee. FSS scientists also participated in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Task Force for the Safety of Novel Foods and Feed. The last expert meeting of the World Health Organisation group on Food Allergens took place in

2022, and this meeting was attended by the FSS Chief Specialist in Food Science and Technology.

Engagement and communication

FSS scientists deal with many queries from stakeholders both directly and through the FSAI Advice Line. In 2022, they responded to 828 queries. Of these, 274 related to chemical safety matters, 26 to nutrition, 199 to biological safety, 40 to food allergens, 244 to novel foods and 45 to other food technology issues.

During 2022, seven chemical safety fact sheets were reviewed for publication. In 2023, draft guidance on nitrite and nitrate use in foods was commissioned and developed, and information on nutrition and health claims was reviewed and updated on the FSAI website. Guidance note 18 *Validation of product shelf-life (Revision 5)* was published. The FSAI also provided extensive comments to the NSAI for the development of its standard I.S. 342:2022 on food hygiene in food manufacturing. In cooperation with *safe food*, training was provided to food businesses on the interpretation of microbiological testing results.

During 2022, there were many engagements between the FSAI and the food industry and its trade bodies, including Food Drink Ireland. The FSAI met the Food Drink Ireland Regulatory Affairs Committee on four occasions, each time providing briefings on legislation



development at EU level and updates on FSAI activities, as well as giving presentations on specific issues.

FSS scientists are also active in national and international conferences and meetings, where they provide technical food safety and legislative information to a wide range of audiences. In 2022, they delivered 10 presentations at international meetings on topics such as *Campylobacter* control, risk ranking of chemical contaminants and novel foods. They also delivered five presentations at national meetings on topics such as mycotoxins and plant toxins in food, and they delivered three presentations on food reformulation. As part of the FSAI Science Strategy 2020–2024, FSS scientists continued to support third-level institutions, including delivering 21 lectures to both undergraduate and postgraduate students at five universities and technical universities.



Corporate governance

In compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016), the Authority has a Corporate Governance Framework in place. This Framework was developed in order to assist in improving efficiency and enhancing openness and transparency. The Framework provides guidance for the organisation, detailing aspects such as conducting Board business, strategic planning, operational processes, risk management, financial controls, and standards of behaviour. During 2022, the Authority ensured and maintained compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

The Board

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

- Number of meetings in 2022: Nine
- Chairperson: Mr Martin Higgins
- Membership: Professor Francis Butler, Professor Martin Cormican, Ms Mary Cullen, Dr Cliodhna Foley-Nolan, Ms Ann Horan, Mr Patrick Knight, Mr Gerry McCurdy.

Board Audit and Risk Committee

The Authority has a fully functioning Board Audit and Risk Committee which undertook the following audits during 2022: review of internal financial controls, governance review. In 2022, the Audit and Risk Committee carried out an Effectiveness Survey and presented a report on its findings to the Board for consideration. 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. The Board Audit and Risk Committee has an independent role in providing the Board with assurance on internal controls, risk management, audit, and assurance matters as part of the systematic review of the Authority's control environment and governance procedures. The Board Audit and Risk Committee operates under an agreed charter and prepares a formal annual report for the Board.

- Number of meetings in 2022: Four
- Chairperson: Mr Gerry McCurdy
- Membership; Ms Ann Horan, Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan and Fergal O'Briain (non-executive member)

Performance Development Committee

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

- Number of meetings: Four
- Chairperson: Martin Higgins
- Membership: Ms Mary Cullen, Mr Patrick Knight

Statutory and other notices

In accordance with Section 41 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act, 2001, members of the Authority's Board, Scientific Committee and designated FSAI staff are required to submit a declaration of interests annually. Declarations are disclosed within the FSAI Annual Report.

Protected Disclosures Act 2014

In 2022, there were 16 protected disclosures made to the FSAI by employees or former employees in the food industry.

Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997

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

Data protection

In 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 came into effect. Since then, the FSAI has carried out work required, and has updated its policies within this legislative framework. It has produced an Information Governance Strategy, which includes maintaining compliance with data protection legislation, and it is being rolled out on an organisation-wide basis.

In 2022, two data subject access requests (DSARs) were made under data protection legislation. At year end, one case remained open.

Freedom of Information Act 2014

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, the FSAI is a designated Freedom of Information (FOI) body. In compliance with this legislation, it provides its Freedom of Information Publication Scheme on its website and processes requests for information on a continuing basis.

In 2022, the FSAI received 15 requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2014. Of these requests, two were granted, four were part-granted, five were withdrawn, none were transferred and four were refused. At year end, no cases remained open. The majority of requests for information processed under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 are for non-personal (i.e. corporate) information. Requests generally ask for information on the FSAI and its work.

Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) Regulations

The Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) Regulations give people the right to request access to environmental information held by public authorities.

In 2022, the FSAI received one request under the AIE Regulations. At year end, no cases remained open.

Customer Charter

The FSAI has a Customer Charter detailing its full commitment to providing customers with an efficient, timely, professional, and courteous service. The Charter, available at www.fsai.ie, sets out the standards of service customers can expect to receive from the FSAI.





Strategic goals and achievements

Goal 1 Enforcement and compliance

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

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

- In 2022, the Authority enforced food legislation through service contracts with 30 official agencies. A comprehensive suite of service contracts was maintained with the official agencies to cover their official controls on food safety.
- The service contract with the State Laboratory was renegotiated during the year.
- The service contract with the Marine Institute (MI) was extended into 2023 to permit a new service contract to be finalised.
- The contracts with the Local Authorities (LA) were extended during 2022 to permit inter-departmental discussions on the future of this service. Management and monitoring of the service contracts continued to be carried out by the FSAI and the official agencies through a combination of virtual and face-to-face meetings.
- Several case studies were prepared on *Listeria monocytogenes* for European wide Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) training on shelf life determination.
- A coordinated official control survey of 'The National Microbiological Survey and Consumer Habits in relation to Frozen Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs' was published with safefood and a study on microbiological safety and suitability of bottled water was carried out.
- A chemical safety sampling plan was agreed and provided to the HSE to execute in 2023 and the FSAI provided significant input into Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) pesticides and veterinary medicines sampling programmes for 2022.
- Detailed technical input was provided to the official agencies on digital tools for official controls, data analysis of enforcement patterns in retail food businesses and microbiological sampling.
- An update of guidance on laboratory practice with respect to the Official Controls Regulation was circulated to the official agencies. Guidance on the safety and legislation concerning botanical foods was also provided to the HSE.



- Official agency staff undertook face-to-face, virtual and self-serve training throughout the year.
- Eighty-one Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and LA inspectors took part in live, virtual training on Assessing the Appropriateness of Product Shelf-life Declared by Food Businesses.
- Two hundred and fifty-eight food business operators, their staff and veterinary inspectors attended training on the national guide entitled '*Food Safety Management System (FSMS) Guide for Low-Throughput Cattle, Sheep, Goat and Pig Slaughterhouses*'.
- The EU funded BTSF saw inspectors and FSAI staff attending 39 BTSF courses, across a range of food safety topics in 2022, in a mixture of virtual and face-to-face courses.
- Inspectors and FSAI staff took seven hundred and seventy-five courses on the FSAI Learning Management System in 2022.
- The FSAI funded the food safety controls conducted by Local Authorities and the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) in 2022.

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

- Thirty-two Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (iRASFF) Food Fraud Notifications were received by the FSAI in 2022. Five iRASFF Food Fraud notifications were created by the FSAI in 2022.
- The Authority contributed to Governments ongoing work in relation to Brexit through the Department of Health's Brexit Operations Team which continued to meet throughout 2022. The FSAI provided advice on food safety and authenticity issues arising from Brexit and worked with official agencies and the food industry on relevant issues.
- In 2022 systems were set up to monitor and examine the implications of regulatory divergence between the EU and the UK on foods on the Irish market and provided advice to Government, official agencies and industry on enforcement and compliance issues.
- In 2022, the Authority dealt with 847 food incidents.
- The FSAI, supported by its official agencies, identified and reported 28 products to the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). This operates on a 24/7/365 basis.
- The FSAI worked with the official agencies to raise awareness of the food safety threats associated with the war in Ukraine that need to be incorporated into official controls. Working with the food industry, the FSAI sought to raise general awareness of the threats associated with the crisis and also responded to specific food safety, compliance and authenticity threats, including issuing advisory notices to industry in relation to the supply and rising cost of food-grade CO₂, and on temperature maintenance and food safety in relation to rising energy costs.



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

- A total of 126 public warnings about food being recalled or withdrawn from the market were issued in the form of food alerts (88) and food allergen alerts (38), a slight decrease overall compared to the number of alerts issued in 2021.
- 362 risk assessments were conducted to support risk management decisions on food safety incidents and investigations; a 59% increase on 2021 requirements.
- Fifty-nine investigations were carried out in conjunction with other State regulatory authorities and the official agencies.
- Sixteen protected disclosures were investigated.
- In 2022, the FSAI published 77 Enforcement Orders (including 65 Closure Orders, 12 Prohibition Orders) served to food businesses for breaches of food safety legislation. This was a 31% increase on the 59 orders served in 2021, reflecting a recovery in enforcement activity, though still not at pre-pandemic levels - 125 orders were served in 2019.
- Six prosecutions were taken during 2022 for breaches of food safety legislation: five by the HSE and one by the FSAI.

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

- Sixty-six Infant formulas and follow-on formulas were notified to FSAI and assessed against relevant safety and labelling legislation.
- One hundred and seventeen foods for special medical purposes (FSMPs) were notified to FSAI and forty-four of these were checked against the FSMP legislation.
- During 2022, 3532 food supplements were notified to the Authority.
- Under novel foods regulations, preliminary comments were provided to the notifier of a traditional food; feedback was given on 18 novel food consultations with other EU Member States; and 5 novel foods requests were finalised by the FSAI and a further 4 are being processed.
- The FSAI also provided EFSA with a significant tranche of data on persistent organic pollutants since 2017 to aid their risk assessment work.
- Two audit projects to assess the effectiveness of official controls were developed.



- The FSAI worked with the HSE in relation to responsibilities for registration and other requirements of food law relevant to e-commerce operators which facilitate delivery of prepared food from restaurants and takeaways.
- During 2022, the FSAI continued work on the implementation of the revised EU legislation on official controls, Regulation (EU) 2017/625. This Regulation sets out rules for the performance by EU Member States of controls in the agri-food sector. S.I. No. 79 of 2020, which gave effect to the revised EU legislation on official controls, Regulation (EU) 2017/625, assigned some new responsibilities to the FSAI, including oversight of official laboratories designated by Department of Health, and a requirement for the FSAI and the HSE to publish guidelines to support the implementation of various aspects of the Regulation, including use of its enforcement powers. A significant programme of work was carried out by the FSAI and the HSE to develop this guidance.
- The FSAI coordinated the preparation and follow-up of the official agencies for audits that the European Commission (DG-Santé) conducted to verify the compliance of Ireland with the official controls legislation. In 2022, this work included:
 - Coordinating submissions of follow up actions to address recommendations from the DG (SANTE) 2021 - 7203 audit, to evaluate the control of residues and contaminants in live animals and animal products, within the deadlines requested.
 - Imports audit: Coordinating extensive cross-agency preparations for an audit carried out to evaluate the system of official controls on animals and goods entering the European Union and verification of compliance of Border Control Posts (BCPs) with European Union requirements. The hybrid audit consisting of remote technical meetings and on-site visits to BCPs was carried out over three weeks in September 2022.
- The FSAI coordinated a technical review by the official agencies for accuracy of a draft report from the US FDA on their 'Food Safety Systems Recognition' assessment of Ireland in 2018 (as part of the engagement between the US FDA, the European Commission and Member States).

Goal 2 Science, expertise and evidence

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

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

- In 2022, the FSAI Scientific Committee met three times during the year. Work is ongoing on five draft opinions in the various subcommittees.
- The Scientific Committee amended and approved a new request for advice on ‘Scientific recommendations on food based dietary guidelines for adolescents’ which the Public Health Nutrition Subcommittee will work on over the next two years. At the end of 2022 the Scientific Committee completed and approved an opinion on ‘Vitamin D - Scientific Recommendations for 5 to 65 Year Olds Living in Ireland’ and this was published in early 2023.
- The FSAI prepared advice for Department of Health on developments in national and EU legislation. For example:
 - This advice supported the preparation by Department of Health of a new order (S.I. No. 310 of 2022) under Section 5 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland 1998 Act to update the list of food laws within the remit of the FSAI and the service contracts and of two statutory orders designating the State Laboratory and a Dutch laboratory as official laboratories.
 - The FSAI also provided advice on the cross-Departmental development of national legislation to transpose the recast of the Drinking Water Directive (EU) 2020/2184, to be finalised in early 2023. FSAI scientists produced 362 risk assessments to support food safety incidents and investigations.
 - The FSAI advised the Department of Health on revised legislation to set the extent of retail-to-retail supply of animal-origin foods that should be permitted under a ‘marginal, localised and restricted’ (MLR) exemption from certain EU food hygiene laws.
- The Food Reformulation Task Force commissioned research and produced four publications: *Monitoring Sodium and Potassium in Processed Foods*, *Nutritional Characteristics of Priority Food Categories for Reformulation in Ireland*, *Priority Food Categories for Reformulation in Ireland*, *A technical report on the methodology for setting nutrient baseline values and evaluating progress*.
- The Food Reformulation Task Force held two stakeholder events and ran a social media campaign to create an awareness of the reformulation roadmap which reached over 215,000 people across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.



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

- The FSAI contributed to the direction of important food safety research by serving on the steering boards of eight major national research programmes funded by DAFM and the EPA, covering topics such as the safety of horticulture foods, *Campylobacter* control in chickens, control of mycotoxins, waterborne infection with STEC, and the food safety implications of AI. The FSAI directly funded research in UCD into additive intakes in the Irish population to inform EU additive monitoring obligations as well as research in UCC to estimate salt intake by the Irish population which will be reported in 2023. The FSAI also became a consortium partner in an EU funded research project, FoodSafeR aimed at developing tools for emerging risk identification and evaluation.
- The Authority conducted research on reformulation in the retail environment with the cooperation of Supervalu, Aldi and Lidl.
- Several food studies were progressed to establish the exposure of consumers to sulphites, establish the microbiological safety and quality of bottled water in Ireland, evaluate the microbiological status of coated chicken, and examine the methyl-mercury content of canned fish.
- Data on salt in foods was updated on the FSAI website as part of ongoing monitoring of food reformulation for the Department of Health.
- The 2020 national zoonosis data was published on the FSAI website, this was created using a new semi-automated programme developed by our scientists that will ensure faster publication of data in the future.
- The FSAI continued participation in the Science Foundation Ireland initiative that places researchers in public bodies. One researcher reviewed the FSAI notifications database for food supplements which contain probiotics, carried out an online review of probiotic foods on the market in Ireland and completed a literature review of specific microbial strains used in probiotic foods. This information will feed into the Scientific Committee opinion on the safety of probiotic bacteria used in food supplements.



Objective 2.3 Advance risk assessment practice to promote trust and engagement

- The last expert meeting of the WHO group on Food Allergens took place in 2022. This meeting was attended by the FSS Chief Specialist in Food Science and Technology. Scientific expertise was shared with Food Standards Scotland and safefood via a series of planned exchanges throughout the year.
- The FSAI organises and hosts the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Focal Point for Ireland. There was a major overhaul of the EFSA Focal Point agreement in consultation with Member States resulting in a new Focal Point framework agreement, new specific 'Tailor Made Tasks' and enhanced funding opportunities for participants.

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

- The FSAI participated in European Commission Joint Research Centre meetings on food fraud and quality.
- The FSAI participated in meetings of the Emerging Risks Exchange Network, presented two emerging risk topics for discussion and completed both surveys on emerging risk signals issued by EFSA. To support this activity, the FSAI Emerging Risk Screening Group met during 2022 to consider 17 briefing notes on possible signals of emerging risk and the emerging risk team used an in-house developed AI system to search peer-reviewed literature and consequently screened 8000 papers for signals of emerging risk.
- The FSAI attended the Food Drink Ireland Emerging Risks and Threats Forum on three occasions to share information with the food industry, including a meeting dedicated to food chain risks and threats resulting from the war in Ukraine.

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

- Numerous expert meetings were attended on legislation development organised by the European Commission and the European Council. The Department of Health were also briefed on the completion of this work. Submissions were also made to the European Commission pertaining to the development and enforcement of legislation.
- In 2022 the Authority also provided advice in relation to a major change to food labelling legislation proposed under the EU's 'Farm to Fork' strategy. The FSAI, engaged with the Government, official agencies and industry stakeholders in relation to the EU proposals and attended EU several working groups in relation to this. On behalf of the Department of Health, the FSAI facilitated a

stakeholder consultation event to inform national policy on the Commission proposals. The FSAI were members of the Interdepartmental Group examining Commission proposals and they helped to coordinate national responses to EC position papers and questionnaires to inform policy and future direction as part of Farm to Fork.

- On the international stage, Codex Alimentarius Commission meetings where global food standards are agreed resumed as face-to face meetings. The FSAI participated in the Codex Committee on Food Contaminants, and meetings of the Food Hygiene committee, the Food Allergens Committee as well as others. The FSAI provided input into the development of tertiary legislation (implementing and delegated EU Acts) in relation to the revised EU legislation on official controls, Regulation (EU) No 2017/625 as members of the European Commission Expert Group and Working Group on the Official Controls Regulation and the European Commission Working group on temporary measures for the import of food and feed of non-animal origin (Regulation (EU) No 2019/1793). The Authority also attended the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) task force meeting on novel food and feed.

Goal 3: Engagement and communication

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

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

- The Authority's website, www.fsai.ie, was updated regularly and maintained in order to ensure accessibility for all users on all devices. A new website was created based on current user feedback. This new website aims to cater to FSAI stakeholders with a new user interface optimized for mobile. The website was published in 2023.
- During 2022, the FSAI website generated approx. 1,392,000 page views. The Food Alerts section was the most popular. *'Enforcement Orders'* and the *'Food business'* section, particularly *'Starting a new business'*, also attracted high volumes of traffic throughout the year.
- Regular ezines were distributed to subscriber groups during the year. The FSAI continues to use webinars and e-learning tools to support increased compliance with food safety legislation.



- Active two-way engagement with the FSAI's stakeholders was achieved on FSAI social media channels in 2022. An increase in the number of followers was recorded, with 23,667 followers on Facebook (2021: 20,400); 11,104 followers on Twitter (2021: 10,500), 31,314 followers on LinkedIn (2021: 26,771) and 2,160 followers on Instagram (2021: 1,400) at the end of 2022.
- Engagement with the official agencies was facilitated through SafetyNet, an extranet for the FSAI and the official agencies staff. Documentation and meeting information was shared through this portal; the FSAI also provided access to online training for both internal and external users.
- In 2022, 7,363 queries were received by the FSAI Advice Line from people working in the food service sector; manufacturers; retailers; researchers; distributors; consultants; and consumers. All queries were responded to by our internal experts.
- 'Safe Food To Go', the FSAI booklet that outlines the food safety skills that food handlers must be able to demonstrate before they start handling food in the workplace was translated into several languages increasing its reach to a wider range of food business staff.
- The Authority developed and rolled out a number of training materials and sessions for food businesses and inspectors in 2022.
- The FSAI's Food Safety and You training programme was redeveloped in 2022. It is a 4-hour induction level food safety course for food handlers, that promotes active learning and the application of training in the work environment. The FSAI employs a train-the-trainer approach with this programme; whereby managers, supervisors and trainers from food businesses are trained by FSAI so they can deliver the Food Safety and You programme to their own staff. The training team also delivered the induction level programme to a number of charitable organisations as well as FSAI staff.
- In cooperation with safefood, training was given to food businesses on the interpretation of microbiological testing results.
- Guidance for the food industry was published on food reformulation, food labelling flexibilities associated with the war in Ukraine as well as guidance for business operators supervised by the health service executive on their right to second expert opinion. Various publications were also revised including '*Guidance note 18 Validation of product shelf-life*' and '*Guidance note 28 Food Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods in Ireland*'.
- A major technical contribution was also made to the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) food hygiene standard for food processing: IS342.
- Work progressed on a compliance building project in 2022. The project aims to create an innovative compliance solution to assist Irish food and drink producers to make compliant health and nutrition claims on their products.



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

- Meetings of the Food Fraud Task Force were held in 2022; this task force is chaired by the FSAI. The role of this Task Force is to act as a communications, coordination and networking group where intelligence and research can be shared at national and international level. Issues that are considered include raising awareness, improving mechanisms for monitoring and surveillance and training of enforcement officers.
- Quarterly Food Industry Intelligence Network (FIIN) meetings were attended. These regulator meetings involve the review of anonymised food product category industry information to gain insight into areas of risk to protect consumers from fraudulent and deceptive practices.
- The FSAI chaired meetings of the Cross-Border Task Force on Food and Rural Crime.
- The Authority participated in multi-agency operations, including the execution of search warrants in domestic dwellings where fraudulent and deceptive practices were suspected.
- The Authority participated in An Garda Síochána lead multi-agency roads policing checkpoints.
- The FSAI continued to support third-level institutes and delivered over 50 hours of lectures to a mix of undergraduate and post graduate students at universities and institutes of technology in Ireland.
- The FSS functional area presented 10 presentations at international meetings on topics like *Campylobacter* control, risk ranking of chemical contaminants and novel foods. They also made 5 presentations at national meetings on topics like mycotoxins and plant toxins in food and three on food reformulation.
- Four peer-reviewed papers were published where our scientists were the authors/co-authors.
- The FSAI participated in two international local organising committees for scientific conferences.
- 2022 saw continued engagement with the Food Safety Trainers' Network.
- During 2022, the FSAI held breakfast bite webinars on '*Shelf-life*', '*What to Expect From Your Inspector*', '*The Safe Catering Pack – Your Food Safety Management System*' and '*Food Safety Training*'.
- Meetings of the FSAI Food Safety Consultative Council were held and work carried out in line with their workplan. An open meeting was held in November 2022. The theme of the open meeting was '*Click and eat - what's cooking in online food delivery?*'.



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

- The FSAI's industry and food sector groups – the Retail Forum, Artisan Forum, and the Food Service Forum met regularly during 2022 and included a range of inputs from FSAI specialists and from official agencies aimed at supporting compliance with food legislation. The Service Contract Committee overseeing enforcement consistency between the HSE Environmental Health Service and the FSAI met during 2022.
- The FSAI engaged regularly with Food Drink Ireland groups and other trade bodies in relation to specific regulatory issues during 2022.
- During 2022, the FSAI had regular liaison with the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) and industry representative groups on enforcement and compliance issues.
- The Cross-agency Committee on Import of Food of Non-animal Origin met three times during 2022 to coordinate and support the enforcement of import controls and to support the development of legislation nationally and at EU level.
- During 2022, the FSAI continued engagement with the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee, a collaborative forum with the Irish shellfisheries industry.
- The authority contributed to An Garda Síochána training of the Criminal Asset Bureau in matters relating to food fraud/food crime.

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

- The FSAI continued the role of Secretariat of the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies group until July 2022. Over the course of their role as secretariat, the FSAI organised a meeting of this group in collaboration with the Presidency. Many FSAI staff members sit on the European Heads of Food Safety Agencies expert working groups as well as chairing some groups..
- In 2020, the FSAI co-founded the International Heads of Food Agencies Forum with colleagues in the Saudi Food and Drug Authority and the Food Standards Agency Australia New Zealand. This group continued to meet virtually in 2022. During 2022, preparations began, to host the group's 4th International meeting in Dublin in May 2023.
- The FSAI contributed to industry stakeholder initiative including but not limited to, the Bord Bia Quality Assurance Scheme, the ACBI Butchery Apprenticeship Scheme and the Irish Grain & Feed Association HACCP.

Goal 4 Organisational excellence

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

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

- During 2022, in line with Government guidelines, FSAI staff continued to work from home until April when staff began a return to the office working at a pace that took cognisance of the FSAI staff and operational needs. Following consultation with staff, the FSAI's Blended Working Strategy and Policy was launched at the beginning of September and a pilot commenced in October. The pilot will be reviewed during 2023.
- The Authority's values of integrity, respect, passion, transparency, teamwork and collaboration continue to be an important driver in how we work and in ensuring the FSAI's culture evolves and develops to support the delivery of work programmes and to achieve our mission to protect consumers. Our Values Framework was reviewed and updated to reflect a hybrid work environment in 2022.
- The Authority progressed a detailed programme seeking to further develop an even more positive, collaborative, and high-performing working environment. This included actioning responses from the staff survey, organising themed workshops for all staff, and implementing a development programme for staff, management and the FSAI leadership team.
- The Staff Committee, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the Green Team, the Health and Safety Committee, the Innovation Group, the Social Committee, the Staff Wellbeing Group, the Values Group and the Working@FSAI Group worked towards enhancing FSAI culture in 2022. They organised and promoted initiatives focussed on improving staff experiences of working at the FSAI.
- A strategic workforce plan was developed during 2022. The Authority's recruitment needs were reviewed, and recruitment progressed throughout the year, in line with sanctions received from the Department of Health. A skills gap analysis and learning and development plan was delivered to enhance the FSAI's capability to meet current and future needs.
- Human resources policies were reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with relevant employment legislation and best practice. The Authority hosted a number of students throughout the year across all functional areas.
- The performance management system continued to be embedded into the Authority's management system, facilitating regular feedback and review to guide the organisation's team and individual performance.



- The internal communications strategy was revised throughout the year in line with organisational change and the move to hybrid working. The role of internal communications has been critical to our success in implementing necessary changes to working arrangements while ensuring a high performing organisation was maintained.
- Regular staff meetings and quarterly staff seminars were held throughout the year. In addition, the Senior Leadership Team met on average, once a week to discuss issues and make decisions on key areas for the organisation. Functional area meetings, team meetings, and project meetings were also held with all teams on a monthly basis.
- In late 2022, an innovation team was established in alignment with the FSAI's values and the public sector reform programme. The objective of the team is to drive positive change and foster a culture of innovation within the organisation. Through actions such as promoting innovation, shared values, teamwork, and feedback mechanisms, the team aims to increase staff engagement, creativity, and collaboration. These efforts contribute to maximizing the FSAI's principal function of protecting consumers and raising compliance
- A number of project briefings were held throughout the year. Project briefings are recognised as a key communications tool to inform staff about organisational activities that they may not be directly involved in.

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

- During 2022, the FSAI updated software development applications to support business activities to meet increased and changing business needs.
- Further improvements were carried out to processes used to ensure Ireland meets its mandatory official food control data reporting requirements to EFSA and the Commission.
- The transfer of a key official food control database from legacy software was completed to ensure continued availability of the data and its associated reports.
- The FSAI continued to participate in high level strategic data working groups at EU level to ensure that the Irish viewpoint is considered during these discussions and strengthen relationships with colleagues in other Member States and agencies.
- Meeting rooms were upgraded to include visual display (room camera); sound (room microphone) and faster computers to enhance presentation deliveries when using hybrid working collaboration tools.



- The FSAI continued to progress work relating to its Data Strategy, with some system work completed to begin the process of retiring outdated and unsupported systems. As well as planning various review processes to build and improve on existing data collection processes and frameworks.
- Many of the key databases that the FSAI requires in order to carry out its corporate functions were updated. They included the Internal Audit and Continual Improvement Database, the database for managing FSAI Advice Line queries, and the RASFF Database, which is used to manage and collate food alerts and notifications.
- The FSAI managed the redeveloped food notification system, in line with the principles defined within the FSAI Data Strategy. The new food notification system has improved end-user functionality, and it includes a broader remit for the capture of notification information on food supplements and foods for special groups.
- In 2022, the FSAI's electronic document management system and intranet 'Ourspace' continued to serve as a repository for document management and as an internal communication tool for staff. Sections that had been set up for remote working, advice, resources and tips, well-being content, IT information, and learning resources etc. continued to be added to and updated throughout 2022 with further sections set up for blended working and returning to the office."
- The FSAI is committed to the aims of the Official Languages Acts 2003 and 2021. All stationery, signage and recorded announcements are in Irish and English, and the Annual Report is published in Irish and English. Staff attended a number of information seminars through the year organised by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media on the new requirements of the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021. They also began putting systems in place to meet future obligations of the Act.
- The FSAI's library service focused on the enhanced delivery of electronic resources to staff working remotely.
- All FSAI Advice Line queries were responded to, in line with the FSAI Customer Charter.
 - The FSAI received 4,058 complaints from consumers in 2022, with 31% of complaints relating to unfit food and 28% to poor hygiene standards. Overall, the 2022 complaints saw a 18.9% increase compared with 2021 figures, continuing an overall upwards trend over the past decade.
 - The Advice Line dealt with 3,305 food safety queries from people working in the food service sector; manufacturers; retailers; distributors; researchers; consultants; and consumers.

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

- The FSAI continued to implement its 2019–2023 strategy, ensuring that its resources, were allocated in an efficient and appropriate manner to maximise the benefits and impacts of the strategy. The 2023 business plan was also developed and submitted to the Department of Health for consultation and agreement.
- The 2022 business plan was substantially delivered by the end of the year and any deviations from the original plan were reported on and discussed between the FSAI Board and the Department of Health during their quarterly governance meetings. In addition to the annual business plan the organisation also prioritised the allocation of resources and addressed issues which arose, while ensuring that public health and food safety were at the core of all such decisions.
- The FSAI operates under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, 2016 (CoP 2016). Under the guidance of the Board, the Authority continued to review, ensure compliance with, and report on its full compliance with the Code. The FSAI Oversight Agreement/Performance Delivery Agreement was agreed with the Department of Health.
- The FSAI adhered to its risk management framework and it continued to embed risk management into all aspects of its business planning, delivery and alignment to appropriate decision-making. In line with the CoP 2016, the FSAI agreed the organisation's risk appetite in June 2022.
- In 2022, the FSAI received 15 requests under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014.
- In 2022, two Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs) were processed under data protection legislation.

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

- The FSAI operates a business management system to ensure organisational excellence, quality of service and compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and relevant legislation. The business management system ensures that risks and opportunities are identified and addressed, that a customer focus is maintained, and that a consistent, process-based approach underpins activities. Following an external audit in 2022, certification to the international quality standard ISO 9001:2015 was maintained.



- In 2022, the FSAI supported a fully hybrid workforce which enabled staff members to work remotely and in the office environment effectively and collaboratively. This included the migration of the email environment cloud and the provision of email archiving and an enhanced cloud-based backup solution. The deliverables were business operational enhancements with an increase to staff mailbox capacity, IT operational enhancements with fully managed software upgrades, increased security, and governance processes with the introduction of multi-factor authentication (MFA) and the delivery of a more resilient email infrastructure to include higher predefined service levels of availability. The integration of a chat-based collaboration platform was also completed with document sharing, online meetings, and calling features was also delivered as part of the project.
- The IT team further developed the IT infrastructure to support and enhance business operations. This was achieved using the core server infrastructure; the work included upgrading hardware and software to meet best practice industry standards. This included redesigning and streamlining the backup architecture, which has enhanced business continuity benchmarks.
- The Storage Area Network (SAN) which hosts all the local onsite data and essential business applications located in The Exchange was upgraded to SAN technologies with a high capacity and secure infrastructure underpinned by a robust support contract which inputs into the FSAI's business continuity and disaster recovery planning process.
- Key FSAI databases were redeveloped to include the anonymisation of data and records in order to meet regulatory requirements.
- Increased measures were put in place to protect the Authority from cyber-attacks, which included technology enhancements and staff awareness programmes. This is in response to an increase in global cyber-attacks. The cyber awareness information highlighted how users are the last line of defence and that they need to remain vigilant when using corporate IT assets and systems.
- The FSAI received a high rating score from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) as part of its annual legislative energy returns. The SEAI report highlighted how the FSAI is working towards becoming a more energy-efficient organisation and that the move to an LED building has significantly contributed to the rating. The FSAI continues to contribute positively to the overall Government Climate Action Plan through both staff engagement and environmentally impacting initiatives. Initiatives such as The FSAI Green Team and the FSAI Food Waste Group improve awareness at an organisational and national level.

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

- The FSAI's prompt and responsive Advice Line acts as a useful touchpoint to industry, consumers and other interested stakeholders.
- The Authority ran a digital awareness campaign 'See Something, Say Something' (7 June – 18 July), encouraging consumers to make a complaint if they experience unfit food or poor hygiene practices when buying food or eating out. The campaign is estimated to have



resulted in a 33% increase in complaints in 2022 compared to 2019 for the same period and overall greater awareness of the complaints facility provided by the Authority.

- Regular local, national and international stakeholder engagement allows the FSAI to be well respected and valued for its knowledge and expertise in the field of food safety.
- The FSAI continues to influence the global food safety community through the publication of world-class scientific publications.
- Ongoing press activities enhance recognition and awareness about the work of the FSAI.
- FSAI staff regularly speak at local, national and international events. This enables the organisation to reach larger groups in a more accessible way.
- During 2022 the FSAI's participation in the EU Food Safety Project continued. This involved participation on the implementation of activities in Albania to strengthen food safety, veterinary and plant health standards.
- The FSAI's active presence on social media allows it to facilitate two-way communication with its stakeholders. This enables it to remain relevant and to meet its stakeholders on the social media platforms where they are spending their time.



Appendix 1 Industry fora members

Artisan Forum, 2022

Mr Tim Camon, (Chairperson)
Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Darina Allen
Slow Food Ireland/Ballymaloe
Cookery School

Ms Sally Barnes
Woodcock Smokery

Mr Eoin Cluskey
Bread 41

Mr John Brennan
Leitrim Organic Farmers Co-op

Mr Kevin Brennan
Teagasc

Mr William Cleary
Irish Beekeeping Association

Ms Jeffa Gill
Durrus Cheese

Ms Simone Kelly
The Rocket Man Café

Mr Sean Kent
Poultry Expert

Mr Donal Lehane
Chair of Community Food Group

Mr David Lang
Associated Craft Butchers of
Ireland

Mr Tom Dinneen
Cáis

Ms Mary Regan
Regan's Organic Farm

Ms Dearbhla Reynolds
The Cultured Club

Mr Declan Ryan
Arbutus Breads

Ms Elisabeth Ryan
Independent Micro Breweries

Ms Penny Porteous Allen
Ballymaloe Cookery School

Mr Hugh Maguire
Maguires Butchers

Food Service Forum, 2022

Mr Rob Phillips (Chairperson)
Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Lana McGinn
Gather and Gather

Ms Louise Collins
Eddie Rocket's (IRL) Limited

Mr Pat Crotty
Vintners' Federation of Ireland

Mr Adrian Cummins
Restaurants Association of Ireland

Ms Martina Donohoe
Aramark

Mr Adam Heyes
Subway Ireland

Ms Gaynor Noonan
McDonald's Restaurants of Ireland

Ms Mary Flynn
Catering Management Association
of Ireland

Mr Ronan Walsh
Irish Hotels Federation

Eoghan McLoughlin
Irish Prison Service

Ms Manuela Spinelli
Euro-Toques Ireland

Ms Helen Stratham
SSP

Ms Lynsey Mitchell
KFC

Ms Rachael Elliott
Sodexo UK & Ireland

Retail Forum, 2022



**Mr Rob Phillips
(Chairperson)**

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Lucy O'Connor

Musgrave Group – SuperValu,
Centra, Daybreak

Ms Samira Nicolo

Retail Ireland/Ibec

**Ms Katie Creamer/Ms
Antoinette Kennedy**

Aldi

Ms Tara Buckley

Retail Grocery Dairy & Allied
Trades Association (RGDATA)

Ms Catriona Norris

Avoca

Mr Gareth Coburn

Sysco

Ms Aileen Nolan

Dunnes Stores

Ms Elaine Clohosey

BWG Foods

Mr Jonathan Halls

Boots

Ms Aoife Noonan

Lidl Ireland

Mr Mark Gannon

Circle K

Ms Claire Briody

Tesco Ireland

Ms Joanne Barry

Barry Group

Mr Ben McGinn

Gala Retail

Mr Neil Spreadbury

Iceland Foods

Mr Ash Stretton

Marks & Spencer

Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee, 2022

**Mr David Lyons/Ms Christine
King (Chairpersons)**

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

**Mr Dave Clarke/Mr Conor Duffy
/Dr Sinead Keaveney/Mr Joe
Silke/Mr Patrick Costello**

Marine Institute

**Ms Patricia Daly/Ms Vicky
Lyons/Mr Geoff Robinson/Ms
Joanne Gaffney**

Bord Iascaigh Mhara

**Dr Sarah Buckley/Dr Gary
McCoy/Mr Brian Nolan/Mr
Bernard O'Donovan/Dr Micheál
O'Mahony/Ms Aileen O'Sullivan**

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

**Ms Teresa Morrissey/Mr John
Harrington/Mr Pat Mulloy/Mr
Finian O'Sullivan/Mr Kian Louet-
Feisser/Mr Des Moore/Ms Nadia
Ferguson**

Irish Shellfish Association and
Processing Industry

**Ms Valerie Hannon/Ms Kate
Harrington/Ms Maeve
O'Reilly/Ms Claire Cremin/Ms
Marie Feehan**

Irish Water

Mr Paul Hickey

Health Service Executive

Dr Sarah McLean

Loughs Agency

Mr Liam Ó Súilleabháin

Environmental Protection Agency



Appendix 2 Scientific Committee – Subcommittee members

Biological Safety Subcommittee, 2022

Dr Geraldine Duffy (Chair)

Teagasc

Dr Declan Bolton

Teagasc

Dr Michael Callanan

Munster Technological University

Prof. Theo de Waal

University College Dublin

Ms Anne Dwan

Health Service Executive

Prof. Séamus Fanning

University College Dublin

Prof. Cormac Gahan

University College Cork

Dr Patricia Garvey

Health Protection Surveillance
Centre

Dr Montserrat Gutierrez

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Dr Sinead Keaveney

Marine Institute

Prof. Noel McCarthy

Trinity College Dublin

Prof. Grace Mulcahy

University College Dublin

Dr Lois O'Connor

Health Protection Surveillance
Centre and Health Service
Executive

Dr Micheál O'Mahony

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

Dr Helen O'Shea

Munster Technological University

Prof. Fiona Walsh

Maynooth University



Chemical Safety Subcommittee, 2022

Dr Andrew Flanagan (Chair)

Dublin Public Analyst's Laboratory

Prof. David Brayden

University College Dublin

Mr Alan Breen

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Prof. Enda Cummins

University College Dublin

Ms Jenny Fortune

Health Service Executive

Prof. Iouri Gounko

Trinity College Dublin

Ms Rosemary Hayden

Irish National Accreditation Board
(INAB)

Ms Ita Kinahan

State Laboratory (retired)

Dr Celine Mannion

Department of Agriculture, Food &
the Marine

Dr Declan McKernan

University of Galway

Assoc. Prof. Tara McMorrow

University College Dublin

Dr Breige McNulty

University College Dublin

Dr Micheál O'Mahony

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority
(Until Nov 2022)

Dr Finbarr O'Regan

Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Prof. Fiona Regan

Dublin City University

Dr Craig Slattery

University College Dublin



Public Health Nutrition Subcommittee, 2022

Prof. Kevin Cashman (Chair) University College Cork	Dr Eamon Laird Trinity College Dublin	Dr Lisa Owens St James's Hospital
Dr Annemarie Bennett Trinity College Dublin	Dr Sinéad McCarthy Teagasc	Dr Lisa Ryan Atlantic Technological University
Dr Cathy Breen Health Service Executive	Prof. Helene McNulty Ulster University	Dr Audrey Tierney University of Limerick
Prof. Lorraine Brennan University College Dublin	Dr Emeir McSorley Ulster University	Dr Janette Walton Munster Technological University
Prof. Eileen Gibney University College Dublin	Prof. Anne Molloy Trinity College Dublin (retired)	Ms Fiona Ward Children's Health Ireland (Crumlin)
Dr Laura Kehoe University College Cork	Dr Anne Nugent Queen's University Belfast	Prof. Mary Ward Ulster University

Ad hoc Subcommittee on Analytical Methods, 2022

Ms Ita Kinahan (Chair) State Laboratory (retired)	Dr Montserrat Gutierrez DA	Mr David Lee Cork Public Analyst's Laboratory
Dr Martin Danaher Teagasc	Prof. Alan Kelly University College Cork	Dr Ed Malone State Laboratory
Dr Conor Graham Atlantic Technological University	Prof. Kieran Kilcawley Teagasc	Prof. Anne Molloy Trinity College Dublin (retired)
		Dr Tom O'Callaghan University College Cork



Appendix 3 Statement of Board members', Chief Executive Officer's, and Scientific Committee members' interests (1/01/2022 to 31/12/2022)

Board member	Commercial interest		Non-commercial interest	
	Name of organisation	Nature of interest	Name of organisation	Nature of interest
Prof. Francis Butler	None	–	Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food, UK Food Standards Agency	Committee member
Prof. Martin Cormican	National Treasury Management Agency	Advisory	None	–
Ms Mary Cullen	None	–	None	–
Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan	None	–	None	–
Mr Martin Higgins	None	–	None	–
Ms Ann Horan	Glanbia Associated British Foods	Ordinary Shares Ordinary Shares	None	–
Mr Patrick Knight	None	–	None	–
Mr Gerard McCurdy	None	–	None	–
Chief Executive Officer				
Dr Pamela A Byrne	None	–	None	–

Scientific Committee member	Commercial interest		Non-commercial interest	
	Name of organisation	Nature of interest	Name of organisation	Nature of interest
Prof. Kevin Cashman	None	–	None	–
Dr Geraldine Duffy	None	–	None	–
Prof. Seamus Fanning	Dawn Farm Foods Ltd.	Providing scientific direction	None	–
Dr Mark Fenelon	None	–	None	–
Dr Andrew Flanagan	None	–	None	–
Dr Montserrat Gutierrez	None	–	None	–
Prof. Alan Kelly	None	–	None	–
Ms Ita Kinahan	None	–	None	–
Prof. Anne Molloy	None	–	European Food Safety Authority	Expert Advisor
Dr Micheál O'Mahony	None	–	None	–
Prof. Dolores O'Riordan	Kerry Group	Shares	None	–
Ms Ann Marie Part	None	–	None	–
Prof. Dagmar Stengel	None	–	None	–
Prof. Martin Wilkinson	None	–	None	–



Appendix 4 Board members' biographies

1. Mr Martin Higgins



2. Ms Ann Horan



3. Ms Mary Cullen



4. Prof. Martin Cormican



5. Dr Ciódhna Foley-Nolan



6. Mr Patrick Knight



7. Mr Gerry McCurdy



8. Prof. Francis Butler



1. Mr Martin Higgins (Chairperson)

Martin Higgins was the 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 (FSAI), having previously been a Principal Officer in the Department of Health, specialising in finance and health agency regulation. He has professional qualifications in accountancy, international regulation and governance, and is a qualified mediator and executive and leadership coach. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute. He has in the past been a Board member of the Irish Medicines Board, CORU, the health and social care professionals regulator, and the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland. In 2021, he was appointed to the Board of Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA). Martin Higgins term as Chairperson ended in February 2023.

2. Ms Ann Horan

Ann Horan is a former Chair of the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA). Her executive roles have included the positions of Chief Executive of the DCU Ryan Academy, Managing Director, Bank of Ireland Finance and Bank of Ireland Commercial Finance, and Head of Group Risk & Compliance at Bank of Ireland. She served on several boards, including Dublin City University, the Institute of Bankers, South Dublin Chamber of Commerce, and chaired associations, including the UK-based Factors and Discounters Association and the International Women's Forum. In addition, she chaired the audit committees of the HPRA and South Dublin County Council. During her successful career, she developed expertise in the areas of leadership, strategic planning, financial control, and corporate governance. She has proven ability to operate in both the public and private sectors and has direct experience in the areas of regulation, finance, education, and public health. She is a Chartered Certified Accountant with a master's in finance from DCU. Ann Horan became Chair Designate of the FSAI board in July 2023.

3. Ms Mary Cullen

Ms Mary Cullen is a chartered accountant. She attended Trinity College Dublin, where she studied Business, Economics and Social Studies (BESS), following which she joined Price Waterhouse, now PwC. She held a number of senior executive roles with PwC, including responsibility for partnership and company secretarial matters and partner affairs. She currently holds a number of non-executive positions including roles as an Independent Director of the Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board (IHRB) and as a member of the Audit Committee of The Office of the Attorney General and The Chief State Solicitor's Office. She is a former member of the Foundation Board of the Royal Dublin Society (RDS) and a Trustee of the RDS Pension Funds. Previously, she was a Board Member of Temple Street Children's University Hospital, Chairperson of the Board of Cappagh National Orthopaedic Hospital and a Board Member of Beaumont Hospital.



4. Professor Martin Cormican

Professor Martin Cormican graduated from University of Galway Medical School in 1986. He trained in Ireland, the UK and the USA. In 1999, he was appointed Consultant Microbiologist at Galway University Hospital and Professor of Bacteriology at the University of Galway. Since May 2017, he has held the position of HSE National Lead for Healthcare Associated Infection and Antimicrobial Resistance. He has also contributed to the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccination and therapeutics. His research interests are antimicrobial resistance, foodborne infection and the links between the environment and human health.

5. Dr Clíodhna Foley-Nolan

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

6. Mr Patrick (Pat) Knight

Formerly An Post Group HR Director / Chief People Officer from 2004 to 2019. Prior to that, he was General Manager HR with Waterford Crystal (1986-2004), and before that he was Personnel Officer with Bord na Móna. He is currently working selectively as a Strategic HR and Change Management Consultant. Pat has more than 30 years' management executive / C-suite experience, and many years' experience as a full Board member - he is currently a member of the Board of the Irish Aviation Authority. He has a proven track record in successful business transformation, including; developing, negotiating, and implementing strategic, operational, cultural and organisational change; establishing and maintaining high standards of corporate governance - including ethical behaviour at senior management level, sourcing top talent, and building leadership capability at all levels of management. He has a Masters degree (M.Sc. Mgmt) from Trinity College and is a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.



7. Mr Gerry McCurdy

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

8. Prof. Francis Butler

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



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Governance statement and board members' report

For the year ended 31 December 2022

Governance

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

Board responsibilities

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

out the matters specifically reserved for Board decision. Standing items considered by the Board include:

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

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

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

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



- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The Board confirms that it has complied with the above requirements in preparing the financial statements.

The Board is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Authority and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 26 of the Act. The maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information on the Food Safety Authority's website is the responsibility of the Board. The Board is responsible for approving the annual plan and budget. There is an on-going evaluation of the performance of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland by reference to its annual business plan and budget. The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Board considers that the financial statements of the Authority give a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland at 31 December 2022 except for non-compliance with the requirements of FRS

102 in relation to retirement benefit entitlements, as directed by the Minister for Health. The Board approved the signing of this statement and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 on 27 June 2023.

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



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

Board Members	Role	Date Appointed	Latest re-appointment	Additional detail
Mr. Martin Higgins	Chairperson	February 2016 (Ordinary Member)	Appointed Chairperson in February 2018	Term ended Feb 2023
Ms. Mary Cullen	Ordinary Member	June 2016	June 2021	–
Prof. Francis Butler	Ordinary Member	May 2019	–	–
Mr. Gerard McCurdy	Ordinary Member	May 2019	May 2022	–
Dr. Clodhna Foley-Nolan	Ordinary Member	October 2019	October 2022	–
Prof. Martin Cormican	Ordinary Member	June 2021	–	–
Ms. Ann Horan	Ordinary Member	June 2021	–	Appointed as Interim Chairperson February 2023 and Chair Designate July 2023
Mr. Patrick Knight	Ordinary Member	June 2021	–	–
Ms. Ellis O'Brien	Ordinary Member	January 2023	–	–
Ms. Lisa Manselli	Ordinary Member	January 2023	–	–

During 2022 the Board completed an effectiveness survey which sought to assess the Board's performance, the strength of its enabling processes and structures as well as its obligations under the annex on gender balance, diversity and inclusion. The Board is scheduled to review the resulting report from the survey in 2023.

Gender Balance in the Board membership

As at 31 December, the Board had 3 (37.5%) female and 5 (62.5%) male members, with 2

positions vacant. The Board therefore did not meet the Government target of a minimum of 40% representation of each gender in the membership of State Boards. In January 2023, the Department of Health appointed 2 new Board members. The impact of these appointments resulted in the gender balance of the Board becoming 50% female, 50% male.

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

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

The members of the Audit and Risk Committee are: Mr. Gerry McCurdy (Chair), Dr. Clíodhna Foley-Nolan, Ms. Ann Horan and Mr. Fergal Ó'Briain. There were four meetings of the ARC in 2022.

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

The members of the PDC are Mr. Martin Higgins (Chair), Ms. Mary Cullen and Mr. Patrick Knight. There were four meetings of the PDC in 2022.

Schedule of attendance, fees and expenses

A schedule of attendance at the Board and Committee meetings for 2022 is set out in note 4(c) of the Financial Statements.

Key personnel changes

There were no changes in the make-up of the Board during 2022. In January 2023 Ms. Eilis O'Brien and Ms. Lisa Manselli were both appointed for a 3-year term.

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

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

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



Statement of Compliance

The Board has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) and has put procedures in place to ensure compliance with the Code. The Food Safety Authority of Ireland operated in compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies for 2022.

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

Ms. Ann Horan

Dr Pamela A Byrne

Acting Chairperson

Chief Executive Officer

27 June 2023

27 June 2023



Statement on Internal Control

For the year ended 31 December 2022

Scope of responsibility

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

Purpose of the system of internal control

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

The system of internal control, which accords with guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, has been in place in the Authority for the year ended 31 December 2022 and has been maintained up to the date at the time of approval of the financial statements. In addition, the Board is provided with further assurance as to the quality of the Authority's internal control as the FSAI is certified to the Quality Management System Standard ISO 9001:2015. This

Standard confirms that the Authority operates a set of policies, processes and procedures appropriate for planning and execution of its core business.

Capacity to handle risk

The FSAI has an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) comprising three Board members and one external member, with financial and audit expertise. The ARC met four times in 2022.

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

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



and assume responsibility for risks and controls within their own area of work.

Risk and control framework

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

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

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

- procedures for all key business processes have been documented,
- financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability,
- there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management,

- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems,
- there are systems in place to safeguard the assets, and
- control procedures over the use of grant monies and the allocation of funding to outside agencies to ensure adequate control over approval of such monies and also to ensure that grant funding has been applied for the purpose intended.

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

Ongoing monitoring and review

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

- key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies,
- reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where

responsibility for financial management has been assigned, and

- there are regular reviews by senior management of periodic and annual performance and financial reports which indicate performance against budgets/forecasts.

Procurement

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

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Control Environment

The onset of the COVID 19 pandemic, in early 2020, and the resulting public health advice and safety measures rapidly changed the working practices of the FSAI. The FSAI monitored the developments closely and sought to mitigate the risks that may have impacted affect the FSAI's business operations, staff and stakeholders.

Actions taken by the FSAI, during 2022, included:

- Maintain the operation of the FSAI in a remote working environment

for the purpose of ensuring continuity of service provision. In October 2022 the FSAI commenced a pilot hybrid working environment to assess the impact on business deliverables. An assessment of this pilot is due to be completed by Q2 2023.

- Ongoing COVID-19 risk assessments for staff and stakeholders.
- Continual assessment of significant risks affecting the FSAI, the impact of COVID-19 on these risks and the agility of FSAI to respond effectively.
- Ensuring robust segregation of duties remains and adequate cover is in place should specific approving authorities be unavailable.
- Ensuring all existing data protection and records management policies and continue to apply as normal.
- Assess potential for weaknesses in internal controls resulting from COVID-19 and took measures to monitor and update internal controls where necessary.



Review of effectiveness

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

We confirm that the Board conducted an annual review of the effectiveness of the internal controls for 2022 in March 2023.

Internal Control Issues

Procurement

During 2022 expenditure of €694,750 including VAT was incurred in relation to seven contracts for services where the procedures employed did not comply with procurement guidelines:

- Approximately €221,000 relates to the provision of temporary ICT staff. These were previously disclosed in 2021. FSAI expects to regularise these contracts, as part of capital project developments, however market constraints have hampered progress in this regard.
- Approximately €107,750 relates to the provision of legal services. A procurement exercise with the OGP has been concluded to regularise this contract.
- The remaining amounts, totalling €366,000, relate to expenditure incurred on expired contracts. The Authority is currently considering its service requirements regarding these contracts.

There were no internal control weaknesses identified during 2022 other than those disclosed above.

Ms. Ann Horan
Acting Chairperson

27 June 2023

Dr Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

27 June 2023



Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General

Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas

Qualified opinion on financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2022 as required under the provisions of section 26 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 — The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland and comprise

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

In my opinion, except for the non-compliance with the requirements of FRS 102 in relation to retirement benefit entitlements referred to below, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland at 31 December 2022 and of its income and expenditure for 2022 in accordance with FRS 102.

Basis for qualified opinion on financial statements

In compliance with the directions of the Minister for Health, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland accounts for the costs of retirement benefit entitlements only as they become payable. This does not comply with FRS 102 which requires that the financial statements recognise the full cost of retirement benefit entitlements earned in the period and the accrued liability at the reporting date. The effect of the non-compliance on the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's financial statements for 2022 has not been quantified.

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



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

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

Non-compliant procurement

The statement on internal control discloses that in 2022 the Authority incurred significant expenditure where the procedures followed did not comply with public procurement guidelines. The statement on internal control also sets out steps taken or planned by the Authority to address the weaknesses that gave rise to this.

Seamus McCarthy

Comptroller and Auditor General

30 June 2023

Appendix to the report

Responsibilities of Board members

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

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

Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

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

My objective in carrying out the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement due to fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of



assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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

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

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

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



I report by exception if, in my opinion,

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

Information other than the financial statements

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

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, I am required under the ISAs to read the other information presented and, in doing so, consider whether the other

information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or with knowledge obtained during the audit, or if it otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

Reporting on other matters

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

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



Statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves

For the year ended 31 December 2022

	Notes	2022 €'000	2021 €'000
Income			
Oireachtas Grant	2	19,091	19,959
Other Income	3	2,162	1,532
Operating Income		21,253	21,491
Total Income		21,253	21,491
Expenditure			
Administration, Operations & Promotion	4	11,326	10,655
Communications activities	5	372	384
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	6 & 14	719	613
Albanian Project	14	1,267	769
Reformulation Taskforce	15	272	148
Local Authority Veterinary Service	7	6,962	8,090
Total Expenditure		20,918	20,659
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Appropriations			
		335	832
Transfer from/(to) the Capital Account	8	97	400
Loss on Disposal		0	0
Surplus/(Deficit) for year after Appropriations		432	1,232
Balance at 1 January		1,090	(142)
Balance at 31 December		1,522	1,090

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 18 form part of these financial statements. On behalf of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland:

Ms. Ann Horan
Acting Chairperson
27 June 2023

Dr Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer
27 June 2023



Statement of financial position

as at 31 December 2022

	Notes	2022 €'000	2021 €'000
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	6	685	852
Intangible Assets	6 (a)	103	33
Current Assets			
Receivables	9	762	661
Cash and Cash Equivalents		2,760	3,285
Net Current Assets		3,522	3,946
Current Liabilities (amounts falling due within one year)			
Payables	10	2,000	2,856
Net Current Assets / Liabilities		1,522	1,090
Total Assets less Liabilities before Pensions		2,310	1,975
Representing			
Capital Account	8	788	885
Retained Revenue Reserves		1,522	1,090
		2,310	1,975

The Statement of cash flows and notes 1 to 18 form part of these financial statements.

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

Ms. Ann Horan
Acting Chairperson

27 June 2023

Dr Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer

27 June 2023



Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2022

		2022	2021
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Net cash inflow from operating activities			
(Deficit)/Excess Income over Expenditure		335	832
Depreciation and Impairment of Fixed Assets	6 & 14	719	624
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	9	(101)	(67)
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	10	(855)	(486)
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities		98	903
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Payments to acquire Plant & Equipment	6	(483)	(199)
Payments to acquire Intangible Assets	6 (a)	(140)	(25)
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities		(623)	(224)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		(525)	679
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January		3,285	2,606
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December		2,760	3,285

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2022

1. Accounting policies

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

a) General information

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

To take all reasonable steps to ensure that:

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

practice aimed at ensuring the achievement of high standards of food hygiene and food safety.

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

b) Statement of compliance

The financial statements of Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2022 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 the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority, as modified by the direction of the Minister for Health in relation to superannuation. In compliance with the directions of the Minister for Health, the Authority accounts for the costs of superannuation entitlements only as they become payable (see 1 (i) below). This basis of accounting does not comply with FRS 102, which requires such costs to be recognised in the year in which entitlement is earned.

c) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the accruals method of accounting, except as stated below, and under the historical cost convention in the form approved by the Minister for Health with the

concurrence of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform under Section 26(5) of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's financial statements.

d) Capital funding

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

e) Revenue

Oireachtas Grants

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

Deferred Income

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

Other Revenue

Other Revenue is recognised on an accrual's basis.

f) Plant and equipment

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

(I) Leasehold improvements	15% per annum
(II) Computer equipment	33% per annum
(III) Office furniture	15% per annum
(IV) Office equipment	15% per annum
(V) Scientific equipment	15% per annum
(VI) Motor vehicles	33% per annum

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

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

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

g) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at fair value.

h) Operating leases

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

i) Employee benefits**Short-term Benefits**

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

Retirement Benefits

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

January 2013. All new employees to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, who are new entrants to the Public Sector, on or after 1 January 2013 are members of the Single Scheme. Single Scheme members' contributions are paid over to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

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

j) Local Authority veterinary scheme

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

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

k) Key estimates and judgements

The preparation of these financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities at the reporting date and the amounts reported for income and expenditure during the year. Judgements and estimates are continually evaluated and are based on historical experiences and other factors, including



expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The nature of estimation, by definition, means that the actual results may differ from the estimates made. The estimates and assumptions that can have a material effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are set out below:

(i) **Establishing useful lives for depreciation purposes of equipment and leases**

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

(ii) **Establishing useful economic lives for amortisation purposes of capital grants**

The annual amortisation charge depends primarily on the estimated useful lives of each type of asset. The useful economic lives are subject to regular review. Details of the useful economic lives are included in the accounting policies.

2. Oireachtas grants

The Oireachtas Grants voted to Food Safety Authority of Ireland from Vote 38 Department

of Health as shown in the financial statements consist of:

Sub-head	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Grants for current expenditure	18,583	19,713
Grant for capital expenditure	508	246
	19,091	19,959

3. Other income

Note	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Superannuation Deductions	235	234
Sale of Publications	209	184
Sundry Income	166	198
Reformulation taskforce	285	147
Albania CE Fund	14	769
	2,162	1,532

4. Administration, operations & promotion

Note	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Remuneration and Other Pay Costs	7,377	6,832
Rent, rates, service charges and insurance	1,544	1,470
Research costs	93	54

Legal and consulting fees	4(h)	272	212
IT, telephone and internet		1,349	1,064
Operating expenditure	4(g)	691	1,023
		11,326	10,655

(a) Remuneration and other pay costs

	Note	2022	2021
		€'000	€'000
Staff Salaries, basic pay		5,645	5,346
Staff salaries, overtime	1	1	2
Retirement benefit costs		240	205
Retirement lump sum costs		157	364
Employer's contributions to social welfare		588	552
Staff training and development		163	174
Staff travel and subsistence cost - national travel		41	32
Staff travel and subsistence cost - international travel		41	2
Agency staff		448	105
Board members' emoluments	4(c)	53	50
		7,377	6,832

The FSAI paid €118,079 (2021: €86,472) to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in respect of employee contributions under the single pension scheme.

In 2022 €218,278 was paid to the Department of Health in respect of additional superannuation contributions (ASC) deducted from staff salaries (2021: €204,931).

(b) Employee benefits breakdown

Range of total employee benefits		Number of Employees	
From	To	2022	2021
60,000	69,999	15	16
70,000	79,999	9	8
80,000	89,999	4	7
90,000	99,999	4	3
100,000	109,999	8	2
110,000	119,999	1	4
120,000	129,999	2	0
130,000	139,999	0	0
140,000	149,999	0	0
150,000	159,999	0	0
160,000	169,999	0	1
170,000	179,999	1	0

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



(c) Board members' attendance, fees and expense

Board Member		Board Fee	Travel Expenses	Meetings Attended Board	Meetings Attended Audit and Risk
		€	€		
Martin Higgins	Chairperson	11,970	483	9 of 9	
Mary Cullen		7,695		8 of 9	
Gerard McCurdy		7,695	228	7 of 9	3 of 4
Clíodhna Foley-Nolan		7,695	678	7 of 9	3 of 4
Francis Butler		0		8 of 9	
Martin Cormican		0	40	9 of 9	
Ann Horan		7,695		9 of 9	4 of 4
Patrick Knight		7,695	127	9 of 9	
		50,446	1,555		

During 2022, 9 Board meetings were held (2021: 6).

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

The Audit and Risk Committee includes one external member. This position is held by Fergal Ó'Briain. Fergal Ó'Briain attended 4 of 4 ARC meetings in the year and was not in receipt of a fee under the OPOS principle.

(d) Chief Executive Officer salary

	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Chief Executive Officer, Pamela Byrne	172	163
	172	163

The CEO remuneration package for 2022 was annual basic salary of €172,400 (2021: €163,300) with standard public sector arrangements.

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

(e) Key management personnel compensation

Key management personnel in the Food Safety Authority of Ireland consist of the CEO, five Directors and members of the Board. Total compensation paid to key management personnel, including Board members' fees and expenses and total CEO remuneration amounted to €758,060 (2021: €762,275).

(f) Hospitality expenditure

	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Staff hospitality	4	2
Advisory Committee hospitality	0	0
Client hospitality	0	0
Board hospitality	2	0
	6	2

In 2022 a voucher for €100 was given to members of the FSAI Scientific Committee, and subcommittees, who work on a voluntary basis. The total value of these vouchers was €6,300. No such vouchers were provided in 2021.

(g) Operating expenditure

	Note	2022	2021
		€'000	€'000
Recruitment Expenditure		76	45
Stationery and Postage		24	42
Cleaning and Catering		13	0
Repairs and Maintenance		234	210
Audit Fee		15	15
Food Legislation Compliance		149	115
Training – official agency staff		134	23

Food supplement database		14	14
Committee Expenses		7	0
Library Supplies		73	60
Dilapidations		0	208
General Expenditure (including hospitality)	4(f)	(48)	291
		691	1,023

h) Consultancy costs

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

	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Legal (i)	97	148
Consultancy	175	64
Total consultancy costs	272	212
Legal costs capitalised	0	0
Consultancy costs capitalised	0	0
Consultancy costs charged to income and expenditure	272	212
	272	212

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

5. Communication activities

	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Public Relations	151	115
Industry Events	78	61
Industry Liaison	0	11
Publications	143	197
	372	384

6. Tangible fixed assets

	Motor Vehicles	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Office Furniture	Leasehold Improvements	Scientific Equipment	Total
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cost							
At 1 January 2022	22	1,268	145	329	2,165	311	4,240
Additions	0	439	0	0	14	30	483
Disposals		(29)				(73)	(102)
At 31 December 2022	22	1,678	145	329	2,179	268	4,621
Accumulated Depreciation							
At 1 January 2022	21	1,090	113	249	1,604	311	3,388
Charge for the year	1	258	13	46	327	4	649
Depreciation on Disposals		(28)				(73)	(101)
At 31 December 2022	22	1,320	126	295	1,931	242	3,936
Net Book Value							
At 31 December 2022	0	358	19	34	248	26	685
At 31 December 2021	1	178	32	80	561	0	852

The assets disclosed above include motor vehicles, computer equipment, office equipment and office furniture assets, relating to the Albanian project, for which FSAI is receiving the benefit. The original cost of these assets is €36,655 (2021: €36,655). These assets will transfer to the Albanian equivalent of FSAI at the end of the project. See note 14 for further information in relation to the project.

(a) Intangible Fixed Assets

	2022 €'000	2021 €'000
1 January, Opening Net Book Value	34	74
Additions at Cost	140	25
Less Depreciation Charge for the year	(71)	(66)
31 December, Closing Net Book Value	103	33

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

7. Local Authority Veterinary Service (LAVS)

	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
LAVS Payments	6,962	8,090

Payments are made to 24 Local Authorities for the provision of veterinary services, quarterly in arrears. Funding is channelled through the Department of Health and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and is included as part of the annual determination.

The obligation to transfer funding to LAVS is only triggered when corresponding funding is received from the Department of Health.

8. Capital account

	2022	2022	2021	2021
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
At 1 January		885		1,285
Transfer from/(to) Income and Expenditure and Retained Reserves Account				
Additional funds allocated to acquire Fixed Assets	483		199	
Funded through operations				
Funds allocated to acquire Intangible Assets	140		25	
Amount Released on Disposal	0		0	
Amortisation in line with asset depreciation	(720)	(97)	(624)	(400)
Balance at 31 December		788		885

9. Receivables

	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Prepayments	756	661
Debtors	6	0
	762	661

10. Payables

Amounts falling due within one year.

	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Trade Creditors	79	363
Accruals	195	279
Deferred Rent Accrual *	914	974
Payroll Accruals	234	223
Deferred Albanian income	263	773
Deferred project income	16	16
Tax Creditor - VAT	22	10
Tax Creditor - PAYE/PRSI	214	171
Tax Creditor - PSWT	63	46
	2,000	2,855

* Under the terms of the lease agreement there was a provision for a rent free period of one year, which occurred in 2018.

FRS 102 requires that this rent free period be recognised over the lifetime of the lease. The Deferred Rent Accrual represents the balance of the rent free period, which will be recognised in the Statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves in future years.

11. Operating Leases

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



At 31 December 2022 the FSAI had the following future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases:

	The Exchange
	€'000
Lease obligations falling due:	1,147
within 1 year	4,587
between years 2 to 5 after 5 years	11,179

The lease for The Exchange provides for a rent review every 5 years. The FSAI received notification of the first review under this lease in December 2022. Engagement with the landlord is ongoing in order to achieve the best outcome for the FSAI in relation to this review.

12. Dilapidations

In 2017 the FSAI moved premises from Abbey Court to The Exchange. Since moving premises the FSAI have engaged with the former landlord, along with the OPW, in relation to a dilapidation charge arising from the finalisation of the former lease agreement. Following consultation with the OPW, an independent property valuer and with the assistance of the CSSO an amount of approximately €358,000 was paid to the former landlord. A provision for €150,000 had previously been recognised in the financial statements in relation to this matter.

13. Board Members' Interests

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

There were no transactions in the year in relation to the Board's activities in which a Board Member had a beneficial interest.

14. External Projects – The Food Safety Project, Albania

A consortium of Irish government agencies and their international partners has successfully tendered for a €5m EU grant to support Albania as a candidate for accession to the European Union, by strengthening its food safety, veterinary and plant health standards. The project covers the period 14 Jan 2019 to 13 Jan 2023. The impact of COVID has resulted in an extension of this contract, on a no cost basis, to 14 October 2023 to ensure the deliverables of the project are achieved. The consortium is led by FSAI and includes the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Sustainable Food Systems Ireland, the Finnish Food Authority, and an Albanian partner, Creative Business Solutions. The FSAI has received cumulative funding of €3.363 million to date to deliver the project with €757,000 of this received in 2022. Cumulative expenditure to 31 December 2022 was €3.101 million and a balance of €263,000 was on hand at year end (note 10). The expenditure incurred in relation to this project is set out below.

	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Remuneration and Other Pay Costs	319	248
Project travel- national	14	3
Project travel - international	59	5
International Expert Support*	617	303
Rent, rates, service charges and insurance	9	13
Industry events	38	44
Publications	131	72
Depreciation of project assets	1	11
Other	79	70
	1,267	769

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

15. Food Reformulation Taskforce

In October 2022 the FSAI signed a service level agreement with the Department of Health to establish and operate a Food Reformulation Taskforce (FRT), to deliver on a food reformulation



action plan developed by the Obesity Policy Implementation Oversight Group who are charged with delivery on the Government's Obesity Policy and Action Plan 2016-2025. The FRT will be in operation until 31 December 2025 and is expected to cost approximately €2.06 million over the course of the project.

The expenditure incurred during 2022 in relation to the project, funded by the Department of Health is set out below:

	2022	2021
	€'000	€'000
Remuneration and other pay costs	226	
Project travel	5	
Other	12	
Licensing/nutritional information analysis	29	148
	272	148

16. Events after the reporting date

There are no events between the reporting date and the date of approval of these financial statements that require adjustment.

The Board recognises that the Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact the FSAI during 2022. The FSAI, in conjunction with the Board, continues to take the situation seriously and is monitoring it on an ongoing basis. The business continues to operate with measures in place to protect staff with staff working remotely and services continue to be provided. To date, the operations and most of the entity's activities are being maintained while adjusting to the different way in which the business is being delivered. In October 2022 a pilot hybrid working model was introduced to maximise the benefits of remote working while delivering the FSAI's business objectives. This pilot will be monitored and assessed throughout 2023.

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

17. Financial position

Arising from the financial outturn in 2021 resulting in a cash surplus of €903,000, the FSAI engaged with the Department of Health to identify an appropriate use for this funding. It was agreed that this would be offset against the FSAI's 2022 allocation.



18. Approval of Financial Statements

The Financial Statements were approved by the Board on 27 June 2023.



Food Safety Authority of Ireland

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