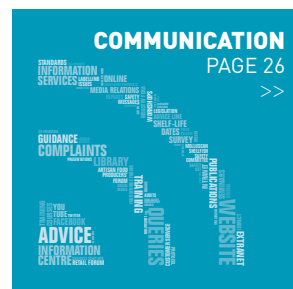


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CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

It was an honour for me to be appointed as Chairman of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland by the Minister for Health in early 2013. I have had a long association with the Authority, as I was a member of the first Board and was the Chair of the Authority's first Scientific Committee. Since the early days, I have watched the Authority grow from strength to strength and establish itself as one of Europe's leading national food safety regulatory agencies.



Ireland was one of the first countries in the European Union to establish a food safety authority and over the past fourteen years this has been shown to have been a very wise decision. The Authority was charged with being an independent, science-based body, dedicated to protecting consumers' health and consumers' interests in the area of food safety and hygiene. To achieve this requires continually improving standards across the food chain in terms of food production and delivery, whilst also ensuring that food on sale provides appropriate information for consumers to make informed purchasing choices.

Key to the success of the Authority has been the collaboration with all official agencies in the employment of a risk-based and evidence-based approach to the consistent enforcement of food and feed law. The work undertaken by the Authority during 2012 shows how it has continuously provided the scientific evidence base to underpin advice to Ministers on the development of food and feed safety policy, food and health nutrition policy and associated legislation. The Authority helps ensure that our legislation is proportionate, effective and supports Government departments on the European stage in providing scientific data and advice to underpin the national position. In the provision of scientific advice, the Authority has worked closely with the European Food Safety Authority and other national food safety agencies across the European Union.



THE WORK OF THE FOOD SAFETY INSPECTORATE ALSO PROVIDES A VALUABLE SPIN-OFF IN PROTECTING IRELAND'S REPUTATION INTERNATIONALLY AS A COUNTRY THAT PROVIDES SAFE FOOD.



Over the past few years the agri-food sector has consolidated its position as the cornerstone of the Irish economic revival. In 2012, the sector had an annual turnover of €26 billion, employed around 230,000 people and the value of exports was over €9 billion. While the primary goal of the Authority is to protect people's health in relation to food, the work of the food safety inspectorate also provides a valuable spin-off in protecting Ireland's reputation internationally as a country that provides safe food. Purchasers of Irish exported foodstuffs have the reassurance that the products they purchase have come from a market where there is a robust and independent food safety regulatory framework in place.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly, TD and the staff of the Department of Health who have supported the work of the Authority during 2012. I pay special tribute to the former Board of the Authority, particularly the Chairman, Mr Eamonn Ryan, for their commitment and contribution to the corporate governance of the Authority. I would like to thank members of the Scientific Committee and Sub-committees who, under the chairmanship of Prof. Albert Flynn, have added weight to the scientific evidence-based work of the Authority. To the members of the Food Safety Consultative Council, under the leadership of Ms Veronica Campbell, I express my thanks, as they have provided a valuable sounding board for the Authority on food safety issues throughout the year.

€26bn

The agri-food sector had an annual turnover of €26 billion.

230,000

The agri-food sector employed around 230,000 people.

I would also like to pay tribute to our Chief Executive, Prof. Alan Reilly and the staff of the Authority for their ongoing dedication and commitment to the values and mission of the Authority, particularly at a time when public sector salaries are being reduced and the focus is on doing more with less.

During 2012, the Authority has focused on key areas of work encompassing the enforcement of food law, using the best scientific advice to underpin all food safety decisions, working in partnership with all stakeholders in improving standards and ensuring the Authority is an organisation that is responsive, adaptable, efficient and effective. The Authority has made a very valuable contribution to ensuring that consumers of Irish produced food, both at home and abroad are fully protected and that Ireland's reputation as a producer of safe and wholesome food remains intact.

Prof. Michael Gibney

Chairman

(from February 2013)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT

2012 marked the 13th year of operations for the Authority. In simple terms, we might be regarded as a mere teenager, while the complexity of our experience, opportunity and changing responses required for the external work environment has conferred a certain degree of organisational maturity.

We believe in being active listeners to those we serve and also in actively explaining who we are, what we do and why we do it. Through our industry fora, public consultations, liaison meetings with official agencies, seminars, Advice Line and regular interaction with the media, we also try to maintain lines of communication through which we can learn and respond and not just in times of crisis. Although we live in a refined and technologically sophisticated era, the risks to our food supply are still real and present. Communicating the risks and the importance of food safety is still as vital as applying the technical and scientific solutions.

In recognition of the need to communicate and explain our thinking, following consultation, we prepared and published the Statement of Strategy 2012-2015. This sets out a medium-term framework for planning, evaluation and review of work programmes. It identifies our priorities which are: enforcing food law; using the best scientific advice to underpin food safety decisions; working in partnership with all stakeholders to maintain and improve standards and ensuring that the Authority is responsive, proportionate and adaptable.



We also developed the National Control Plan 2012-2016. The plan, produced in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, covers controls on food and feed, animal health and welfare, and plant health. The food controls are mainly carried out on behalf of the Authority under service contract by the official agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Health Service Executive and the local authorities. Revised service contracts were agreed with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority and the National Standards Authority of Ireland during 2012. The National Standards Authority of Ireland is now responsible for the enforcement of legislation on food contact materials in businesses that manufacture, import and distribute food packaging materials.

In 2012, the Authority continued its programme of auditing official agencies to verify the effectiveness and appropriateness of food controls and to monitor conformance by official agencies with the terms and requirements of the service contracts. An initiative in 2012 to improve openness and transparency was the publication of audit reports and corrective action plans on the Authority's website.

The national food safety control system is not immune to the Government policy of reducing public sector numbers in the current economic conditions. Staff numbers in the Authority reduced by 15% in five years. In the same period, reductions of between 6%–11% in staff numbers occurred in the official agencies.

Managing a service with fewer staff requires adapting work practices. The Authority wants to ensure that consumers' health and consumers' interests are not compromised. During 2012, the Authority worked closely with the Environmental Health Service of the Health Service Executive to adjust inspections targets and frequencies to focus more on food businesses that pose the highest risk. New risk categories for food businesses were introduced, as well as new requirements for dealing with non-compliances. The philosophy is to address any non-compliance appropriately and without delay. Enforcement actions increased during 2012. Other official agencies introduced similar initiatives on risk-based inspection.

404

The Authority investigated 404 food incidents in 2012, which required issuing public notices in 18 instances.

8,797

As the national contact point for the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, the Authority evaluated and assessed 8,797 notifications from the system in 2012 and submitted 53 notifications to it on foods exported from Ireland.

Despite the best official controls, food incidents remain a growing feature and managing them is a priority for the Authority. The Authority investigated 404 food incidents in 2012, which required issuing public notices in 18 instances. In addition, as the national contact point for the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, the Authority evaluated and assessed 8,797 notifications from the system in 2012 and submitted 53 notifications to it on foods exported from Ireland.

An emerging aspect of food incidents is related to food fraud. This can require the collective response of various State agencies. For this reason, the Authority established a Food Fraud Task Force in 2012. This is a multi-agency group consisting of experienced individuals from different enforcement arms of the State who will work to share intelligence and research on food fraud and assist in improving our ability to detect and deal with food crime.

Many incidents are minor, but can develop into major events. In response to the threat posed by outbreaks of foodborne illness, the Authority and agencies responsible for official food control and public health developed and tested a protocol for the management of such outbreaks. A very successful simulation exercise was conducted to test and improve response abilities. The collective experience gained during the simulation exercise was used to facilitate a review of the national outbreak control protocol and to improve the coordinated outbreak response in Ireland's public health system.

Managing incidents is dependent on having a credible risk assessment. While the Authority maintains an in-house scientific ability to conduct assessments, in very major incidents it may require assistance. This is readily available to the Authority from the European Food Safety Authority. In 2012, the Authority and the European Food Safety Authority hosted a joint international conference to mark the 10th anniversary of the European Food Safety Authority and in so doing, brought together regulatory and parliamentary representatives with stakeholders in the food chain, to discuss the current state of food safety in Europe and to examine emerging threats and risks.

The current threat to public health which is now widely recognised is poor dietary intake and obesity. At the request of the Minister for Health, the Authority undertook a programme to assist with the introduction of calories on menus in restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets. The aim is to provide consumers with more information about the foods they eat, so that they can make informed healthier food choices. The Authority also developed a booklet on healthy eating and active living. Over 10,000 copies of the booklet designed for use by health professionals, caterers and consumers were distributed.

LOOKING FORWARD

In looking forward, I am confident that the development of a strategic plan and national control plan ensures that the Authority has a clear set of objectives and targets which are appropriate. The Authority will continue to work closely with the official agencies, whilst also holding them accountable.

The Authority will provide the highest standards of scientific evidence for Ministers in their deliberations on food safety policy and legislation. In so doing, the Authority will work with its Scientific Committee, and it will collaborate with the European Food Safety Authority and the food control agencies across the EU. Achieving the highest standards of food safety cannot be delivered by enforcement activities alone. Collaboration with all stakeholders in the agri-food sector and maintaining the support of the Food Safety Consultative Council are key issues for the Authority.

“

MANY INCIDENTS ARE MINOR, BUT CAN DEVELOP INTO MAJOR EVENTS. IN RESPONSE TO THE THREAT POSED BY OUTBREAKS OF FOODBORNE ILLNESS, THE AUTHORITY AND AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR OFFICIAL FOOD CONTROL AND PUBLIC HEALTH DEVELOPED AND TESTED A PROTOCOL FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF SUCH OUTBREAKS.

”

I cannot let the opportunity pass without recording our sadness at the tragic deaths during 2012 of two of our esteemed colleagues, Prof. Dan Collins and Prof. John Scott. Prof. Collins was a member of our Board and of our Scientific Committee. He was both a great friend and treasured collaborator, who supported the Authority since its establishment. His wisdom and vast experience in the field of food safety is sadly missed by all staff. Prof. Scott advised the Authority on the role of dietary folic acid in reducing the risk of neural tube defects. The impact of his pioneering work on the lives of countless children worldwide who would otherwise have suffered with spina bifida, is immeasurable. His work underpinned the Authority's policy advice on folic acid food fortification to the Minister for Health and his passing saddened staff and colleagues.

My appreciation for the solid support we received also goes to our Board, Scientific Committee and Food Safety Consultative Council. I would particularly like to thank the outgoing Chairman of the Board, Mr Eamonn Ryan for his guidance and maintaining our focus on good governance. I am also grateful for the continuing support for the Authority by the Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly, T.D. and the staff of his department.

I would like to thank the staff of the official agencies for their ongoing commitment and collaboration in achieving a common goal of consumer protection by ensuring food produced and marketed in Ireland is of the highest standards.

Finally, I am very happy to record, without hesitation, my heartfelt thanks to the staff of the Authority for their support, good will, professionalism and dedication, and for doing more with less.



Prof. Alan Reilly

Chief Executive

The official agencies working under this service contract agreement in 2012 were: the Health Service Executive; the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; 28 local authorities; the National Standards Authority of Ireland; and the Marine Institute. The Authority's role is to coordinate and monitor the activities of these official agencies, through the service contracts, which outline an agreed level and standard of food safety activity that the official agencies perform. The service contracts are in place for a minimum duration of three years, and subject to the request of either the Authority or the official agency, may be reviewed during that time. Each official agency submitted a service plan for the year and regular meetings were held during 2012 with senior management and line managers responsible for the delivery of inspection and analysis.

During 2012, revised service contracts were negotiated and agreed with the National Standards Authority of Ireland and the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority. The revised service contract with the National Standards Authority of Ireland has a significantly greater scope than the previous contract, which only covered the recognition of natural mineral water supplies. The new service contract includes responsibility for the enforcement of legislation on food contact materials in the businesses that manufacture, import and distribute food packaging and other food contact materials. Inspections of these premises started during 2012 and indicated the need for enhanced compliance with the specific legislative requirements for supplying food contact materials. The service contract with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority was revised to cover the involvement of the agency in the National Control Plan and in auditing official controls. Its service contract, along with those of the other official agencies, was also updated to contain the updated list of food legislation.

As an efficiency measure, Kilkenny County Council agreed to extend its service contract to include official controls in meat plants in County Carlow which will begin in January 2013. The Authority participated in the discussions during the year within an inter-agency group established by the City and County Managers' Association regarding the wider development of a shared provision of veterinary services within local authorities.

33

33 official agencies working under service contract agreement in 2012.

The revised service contract with the Health Service Executive commenced and is in place for three years. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine agreed and implemented a streamlined process for dealing with food complaints referred on from other agencies that related to food business operators under its supervision. This revised procedure has provided a quicker turnaround on complaints and more comprehensive information being provided to the originating agency.

During 2012, a number of initiatives with the network of official laboratories and national reference laboratories within the official agencies were progressed, namely: an inter-agency document to facilitate the operation of the laboratory network was published; the first inter-agency meeting of the official food chemical laboratories took place and official agency microbiology laboratories continued to submit data to the Authority on typed pathogens, which the Authority then collates and shares with all relevant laboratories.

A memorandum of understanding was signed with the Loughs Agency, which is an agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission. Under this new memorandum of understanding, the Loughs Agency will undertake shellfish and water sampling as part of the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme.

In common with all European Union Member States, Ireland has a Multi-Annual National Control Plan in place, which is a requirement of European official food and feed control regulations. This plan covers controls on food; feed; animal welfare and animal and plant health. The Authority developed a new plan, in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, to cover the period 2012-2016. The plan and an annual report on the operation of the previous plan were submitted to the European Commission in 2012.

INSPECTION OF FOOD BUSINESSES

About 50,000 food businesses in Ireland are inspected by the official agencies, under service contract to the Authority. In 2012, 92% of registered food businesses were inspected by the Health Service Executive; 5.5% by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; 1.5% by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and 1% by the local authorities. This distribution of percentage of food businesses inspected by the official agencies was similar over the last five years. There are a wide range of activities carried out by these food businesses, from importation and manufacturing, through to distributing, retailing and catering operations.

NUMBER AND TYPE OF FOOD BUSINESS INSPECTED BY OFFICIAL AGENCIES (2008 - 2012)

OFFICIAL AGENCY	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine					
Meat Processors	163	156	154	154	153
Egg Producers	231	264	285	376	354
Milk Processors	233	231	230	233	240
	627	651	669	763	747
Health Service Executive					
Primary Producers	37	30	27	23	21
Manufacturers and Packers	1,370	1,649	1,921	2,253	2,534
Distributors and Transporters	1,249	1,246	1,370	1,487	1,472
Food Service Businesses	30,478	31,055	30,567	31,404	3,0311
Retailers	9,982	10,533	10,732	11,166	10,978
Manufacturers Selling Primarily on a Retail Basis	810	790	1,738	724	695
	43,926	45,303	46,355	47,057	46,011
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority					
Approved Establishment	174	177	183	183	189
Aquaculture Sites*	82	86	86	0	0
Factory and Freezer Vessels (Approved - Irish)	5	21	23	23	34
Fishing Vessels	2,067	2,095	2,129	2,201	2,216
Ice Plants	13	12	13	12	12
Molluscan Production Areas	150	150	130	131	131
Registered Food Business on Land	0	35	45	56	81
	2,491	2,576	2,609	2,606	2,663
Local Authorities					
Slaughterhouses	222	237	219	212	206
Small Meat Manufacturing Plants	175	186	175	180	189
Poultry Plants	13	27	37	41	35
Other	0	7	20	17	26
	410	457	451	450	456
Total	47,449	48,966	50,093	50,853	49,877

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



The Authority carried out audits in catering establishments and food manufacturing plants to determine how food allergens are controlled and how information relating to food allergens is provided to customers. The purpose of these audits was to determine the level of preparedness by the catering and manufacturing industries to implement new food labelling legislation to declare the use of specified food allergens, regardless of whether the food is pre-packed or not pre-packed. From December 2014 it will be mandatory for all catering businesses to declare and label allergens used in their food. Results of the audits revealed that the management and control of food allergens in some food businesses was insufficient to protect the health of people with food allergies or intolerances.

Pictured at the announcement of the audits are (l-r): Ms Eibhlin O'Leary, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Ms Ruth Conefrey, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

Each food business is categorised by risk, according to the activities carried out and the food produced. Food businesses which carry out activities that present the greatest potential risk to human health are prioritised for inspection. Having a risk-based system for inspections and sampling programmes is a requirement of the European regulations on official food controls. It is also an increasingly important approach to ensuring the most efficient use of public sector resources. In 2012, the Authority, in collaboration with the Environmental Health Service of the Health Service Executive, revised the guidance on risk for the food businesses the Health Service Executive inspects, to refine the risk categories and set proportionate inspection frequencies.

NUMBER OF STAFF WORKING IN OFFICIAL CONTROL

The official agencies report annually to the Authority on the staff resources they have dedicated to official controls, under the service contracts. Overall since 2008, there has been an 8% decrease in the numbers of whole-time equivalent staff, though with larger decreases in some agencies. The Authority has seen a 15% decrease in its staffing over this five-year period. This decrease is an effect of the imposition of the moratorium on public sector recruitment and the challenge for the official agencies is to deliver efficient food safety controls with the reduced staffing, to ensure effective consumer protection is not compromised.

NUMBER OF STAFF* BY OFFICIAL AGENCY, 2008-2012

AGENCY	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% CHANGE 2008-2012
Dept of Agriculture, Food and the Marine^a	463	501	511	454	433	-6%
Health Service Executive:						
Environmental Health Service	376	379	361	333	344	-8%
Food Microbiology Laboratories	81	83	79	74	73	-10%
Public Analyst Laboratories	72	67	69	68	65	-9%
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	47	46	43	45	42	-11%
Local Authorities^a	76	75	72	72	71	-8%
Marine Institute	21	28	28	31	28	35%
National Standards Authority of Ireland	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0%
Food Safety Authority of Ireland^b	85	84	75	74	72	-15%
Total	1,221	1,263	1,238	1,151	1,128	- 8%

* Whole time equivalent

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

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

INSPECTIONS

All official agencies operate risk-based programmes of official controls. Unannounced inspections in food businesses are a key element of the official controls, as well as other activities such as, food sampling, and investigation of incidents and outbreaks. In some agencies, particularly the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Health Service Executive, there has been a long-term decrease in the number of inspections, with an increasing focus on more thorough audits of food safety management systems in larger food businesses and of establishments presenting higher risks to public health.

NUMBER OF INSPECTIONS BY OFFICIAL AGENCIES, 2008-2012

AGENCY	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% CHANGE 2008-2012
Dept of Agriculture, Food and the Marine^a	17,083	14,303	13,169	11,495	10,830	-36%
Health Service Executive	46,873	45,485	41,966	37,973	36,584	-22%
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	2,217	2,792	2,521	2,330	2,386	8%
Local Authorities^b	-	-	-	5,156	4,630	N/A

^a Inspections in meat, milk and egg processors

^b Inspection activity before 2011 was recorded differently and the numbers are not comparable

AUDITS BY THE AUTHORITY

The Authority carries out audits of the official agencies to verify the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls conducted by the relevant inspectorates. These audits also verify conformance with the terms and requirements of the service contracts and adherence by the official agencies to the Multi-Annual National Control Plan requirements relevant to their activities. The findings from the audits and any associated corrective actions are monitored by the Authority, through the service contract monitoring process. During 2012, the Authority carried out official control audits of the Health Service Executive on

controls in hospitals and crèches and, in food businesses classified as high risk. Official control audits were carried out on the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in poultry slaughtering and processing plants; on-farm emergency slaughter animals at approved premises and on follow-up and close-out of non-compliances identified during official control audits in meat premises it supervises. Official control audits were carried out with the Local Authority Veterinary Service in food businesses under its supervision and on-farm emergency slaughter at approved premises. An audit of official control was carried out with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority in fish and fishery product food businesses. Finally, two targeted audits were also carried out with the Health Service Executive on food business compliance with allergen controls in catering establishments and on food business compliance with labelling legislation.

To improve transparency, the Authority now publishes its audit reports and corrective action plans on its website. This initiative allows access by interested parties to the outcomes of audits and allows the Authority to reassure stakeholders, consumers and other interested parties that official controls are in place, are appropriate, are effective and are subject to continuing improvement.

The European Commission is responsible for ensuring that European legislation on food safety, animal health, plant health and animal welfare is properly implemented and enforced. As a Commission service, the Food and Veterinary Office plays an important role in fulfilling this task through its audits, inspections and related activities. During 2012, the Food and Veterinary Office carried out two missions to Ireland, one on contaminants and residues of veterinary medicines in live animals and animal products, and another on controls of imports not carried out at Border Inspection Posts. The Authority coordinated and facilitated these missions. Following each mission, any necessary corrective actions were identified and an action plan submitted to the Commission. The Food and Veterinary Office also conducted a general review of the progress made in the implementation of its recommendations from its missions to Ireland since 2010 (when it last published a general review). The final report of this review will be published in 2013.

The Food and Veterinary Office carried out additional missions on controls on feed safety and animal welfare of poultry broilers. However, as these areas fall outside the Authority's remit, there was only limited participation by the Authority.

AUDITS OF FOOD BUSINESSES

As part of the Authority's audit function, it carries out audits to investigate if the highest standards of food safety and legal compliance are applied by all sectors in the food chain. Investigations may be initiated as a result of food safety incidents, emerging risks or where food fraud is suspected. These audits examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls and/or food business operators' compliance with respect to a specific aspect of food law. In 2012, audits were carried out in catering establishments and food manufacturing plants to determine how food allergens are controlled and how information relating to food allergens is provided to customers. The purpose of these two audits was to determine the level of preparedness of the catering and manufacturing industries to implement new food labelling rules which require the declaration of the use of specified food allergens, regardless of whether the food is pre-packed or not. Results of the audits revealed that the management and control of food allergens in some food businesses was insufficient to protect the health of people with food allergies or intolerances. The Authority is working closely with the food industry to establish best practices for the management and control of food allergens.

A targeted audit was carried out with the Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland to determine the level of compliance with traceability requirements by food businesses in both jurisdictions. It found that food businesses that had incorporated traceability procedures into their food safety management systems were in a better position to respond quickly and more accurately to requests for specific traceability information. A number of recommendations arose from this audit such as: an assessment of compliance with traceability requirements should form part of official control; food businesses should be encouraged to incorporate traceability into their food safety management systems and the current working agreement between the Authority and the Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland should be kept under continuous review.



The Authority hosted a seminar which looked at the upcoming changes under the EU food information regulations which will have a significant impact on how food businesses communicate with consumers and will overhaul labelling and advertising rules that have been in place since 2000. The new regulation extends beyond food labelling to cover activities concerning the provision of food information to consumers, including by means of internet marketing. It applies to food businesses at all stages of the food chain and addresses diverse issues such as font size, allergen labelling of non-prepacked foods, nutrition declaration, front of pack labelling and origin labelling. The Authority launched a booklet at the seminar: *Overview of Changes to Food Labelling Introduced under the New Food Information Regulation* which gives food businesses an easy-to-understand overview of the new labelling requirements, including timelines for implementation.

Pictured at the seminar are (l-r): Dr Wayne Anderson, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Ms Anne-Marie Boland, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

ENFORCEMENT NOTICES AND ORDERS

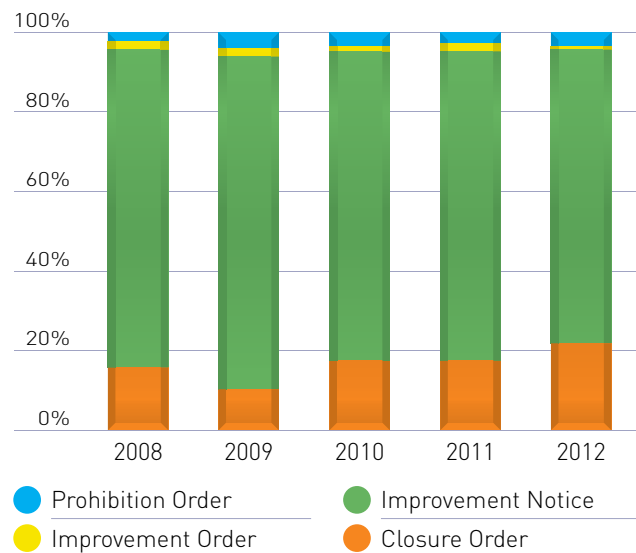
The Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 is one of the pieces of legislation which gives authorised officers the power to inspect food businesses for compliance with food safety legislation. Under this Act, authorised officers may, if conditions present risks to public health, serve an Improvement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

During 2012, 416 Enforcement Notices and Orders were served on food businesses that were found to be in breach of food safety legislation. This is an increase on the figures for 2011 (378). Improvement Notices (307) accounted for the majority of enforcements served in 2012, followed by Closure Orders (91), Prohibition Orders (15) and Improvement Orders (3). The majority of these enforcements were issued by the Health Service Executive.

In 2012, following the trend of previous years, most Closure Orders (86%) were served on the service sector, in particular on take-aways (28 Closure Orders) which made up 30% of all food businesses ordered to close. The number of Closure Orders was the most recorded in any year to date. This can be partially explained by the increased use of the power to issue Closure Orders for serious non-compliance with food legislation, available as a result of the introduction by the Minister for Health of the European Communities (Official Control of Foodstuffs) Regulations, 2010.

Since 2008, 1,348 Improvement Notices, 343 Closure Orders, 59 Prohibition Orders and 27 Improvement Orders were served on food businesses. For each type of enforcement, the majority were served on the service sector (1,301 or 73%), followed by the retail sector (281 or 16%). Of these 1,301 enforcements served on the service sector, 685 (53%) were on restaurants/canteens and 308 (24%) on take-aways.

ENFORCEMENTS SERVED, 2008 - 2012



CLOSURE ORDERS SERVED UNDER FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND ACT, 1998 IN 2012

CATEGORY	NATURE OF BUSINESS	CLOSURE ORDER
Manufacturer/ Packer	Bakery/Confectionery	1
	Fish Processing	1
	Shellfish Purification	1
Retailer	Grocery Cat. II (Pre-packed Food)	1
	Supermarket Cat. I (Mixed Activities, Open Food and Preparing to Order)	3
Service Sector Business	Food Stall Cat. I (Preparation)	1
	Hotel Cat. I (Mass Catering/ Full Meal Service)	1
	Public house 1: Serving Food	4
	Public house Cat. III (Not Serving Food)	1
	Public house Cat. I (Preparation of Food)	1
	Restaurant/Canteen	1
	Restaurant Cat. I (Including Coffee Shops, Canteens, etc)	20
	Take-away	10
	Take-away Cat. I (Preparation)	9
	Total	

416

During 2012, 416 Enforcement Notices and Orders were served on food businesses that were found to be in breach of food safety legislation.

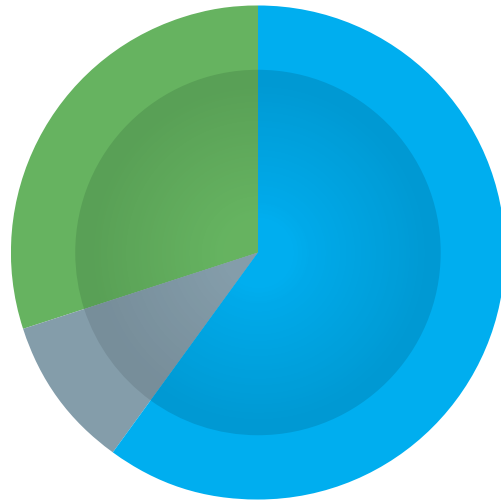
CLOSURE ORDERS SERVED UNDER EC (OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOODSTUFFS) REGULATION, 2010 IN 2012

CATEGORY	NATURE OF BUSINESS	CLOSURE ORDER
Manufacturer/ Packer	Bakery/Confectionery Cat. III (Bread, Cake and Similar)	1
Retailer	Delicatessen	1
	Fishmonger 1: Raw Only	1
	Grocery Cat. I (Portioning/Open Food)	2
	Supermarket Cat. I (Mixed Activities, Open Food and Preparing to Order)	1
	Service Sector Business	Food Stall Cat. I (Preparation)
	Hotel Cat. I (Mass Catering/ Full Meal Service)	1
	Public house 1: Serving food	3
	Public house Cat. I (Preparation of Food)	2
	Restaurant Cat. I (Including Coffee Shops, Canteens, etc) (Preparation)	15
	Take-away	1
	Take-away Cat. I (Preparation)	8
Total		38

PROSECUTIONS

Information on successful prosecutions is published on the Authority's website. In 2012, the Authority was notified of ten successful prosecutions for breaches of food law, all undertaken by the Health Service Executive. This is the same number initiated in 2011 (10).

PROSECUTIONS BY BUSINESS TYPE, 2012 (TOTAL 10)



Distributors/Transporters	60%
Manufacturer/Packager	10%
Service Sector Business	30%

MONITORING

In collaboration with the official agencies, the Authority agrees a diversity of annual food surveillance and monitoring programmes and specific reports are published. Data from these programmes are submitted to the Authority and provided, as requested, to the European Commission or to the European Food Safety Authority. During 2012, surveys were conducted on the safety of dried seeds and nuts and, fish authenticity.

As in the case of all surveys, due to the amount of data to be collated and analysed, at times, the reports cannot be finalised and published until the following year. Due to this, a protocol is agreed in advance of each survey which includes immediate follow-up actions to be taken in the interest of consumer protection, where necessary, in the event of detection of legal non-compliance. Therefore, action is taken when the laboratory result is known so that there is no delay and the matter is dealt with as a food incident including legal sanctions, recalls and issuing food alerts.

1,095

In 2012, a total of 1,095 food supplements were notified to the Authority.

Dried Seeds and Nuts Survey

A survey was undertaken to examine the bacteriological and chemical safety of ready-to-eat dried seeds and nuts. The aim of the survey was to investigate the presence of *Salmonella* spp., *Escherichia coli* and aflatoxins in 891 pre-packaged ready-to-eat nut and seed products on sale in Ireland. The survey revealed that 0.3% (3/891) of samples were categorised as 'unacceptable/potentially hazardous' for *Salmonella* spp., i.e. detected in 25g. *E. coli* was detected at 'unsatisfactory' levels, i.e. 100 colony forming units per gram (cfu/g), in 0.3% (3/891) of samples. All products with 'unsatisfactory' *E. coli* levels and 'unacceptable/potentially hazardous' levels of *Salmonella* were seed products. All of the samples analysed for aflatoxins were categorised as 'satisfactory'.

A number of recommendations for the industry arose from this survey, for example: a requirement for guidance on good hygiene and manufacturing practices throughout all stages of ready-to-eat nut and seed production, but particularly focussing on the critical processes of cleaning and drying of seeds and; good hygiene practice is necessary when these products are being re-packaged into smaller packets for retail sale.

Fish Authenticity Survey

The Authority included fish and fish product label monitoring into the annual routine surveillance programme in 2012. Sixteen fish or fish products on sale in supermarkets or fish mongers in Ireland were sampled and analysed. The products were labelled to indicate that they consisted of or contained cod and the analysis determined the presence of cod in all samples. These findings are positive, considering a similar survey the previous year which found 19% of products sampled to be labelled incorrectly. The Authority will continue to monitor fish and fish product labels as part of annual routine surveillance programmes.

Authenticity of Meat Products Survey

The Authority continually monitors foods on the Irish market to ensure that they are complying with the requirements of food law and are safe. As part of this routine activity, work began in late 2012 on a survey to investigate the authenticity of meat products on the Irish market. This survey is part of the Authority's monitoring and surveillance programme on labelling of foods, specifically to check on the type of animal species in meat products. Results of this survey will be published in 2013.

IRRADIATED FOOD

The Authority is the competent authority for the enforcement of legislation governing irradiated food. It monitors the Irish market to ensure that only foods authorised for irradiation within the EU are on sale and that they are labelled correctly. In 2012, a total of 78 food samples were analysed by the public analyst laboratories, but none were found to have been irradiated. The results from Ireland are sent to the European Commission for incorporation into its annual report on food and food ingredients treated with ionising radiation, which is compiled for the whole of the European Union.

FOOD TESTED FOR IRRADIATION, 2012

FOOD TYPES ANALYSED	NUMBER
Herbs/Spices	29
Tea	27
Noodles	9
Seeds	6
Supplements	4
Breadcrumbs	1
Seasonings	1
Sauce	1
Total	78

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

The Authority is the competent authority for genetically modified food in Ireland. With the assistance of external scientific experts, the Authority reviewed safety assessments carried out by the European Food Safety Authority on a number of genetically modified food ingredients, namely: maize MON162; maize MON87460; soybean MON 87701 x MON89788; oilseed rape MS8, RF3 and MS8xRF3 and cotton MON531 x MON1445. The conclusions of the Authority's reviews were then relayed to the Department of Health, which is the competent authority for policy matters relating to genetically modified food.

The Authority also coordinated the sampling and analysis of 46 food samples by the public analyst laboratories for the authorised presence and appropriate labelling of genetically modified ingredients. All samples analysed were found to be compliant with the relevant legislation.

FOOD TESTED FOR GENETICALLY MODIFIED INGREDIENTS, 2012

FOOD TYPES ANALYSED	NUMBER
Maize/Maize Products	20
Food with Maize Ingredients	9
Soya Products	10
Rice/Rice Products	6
Others	1
Total	46

NOVEL FOOD

The Authority is the competent authority for novel food in Ireland and carries out safety assessments or reviews those of other Member States, as part of the EU authorisation process. With the assistance of external scientific experts, the Authority conducted safety assessments on three novel foods/ingredients in 2012, namely: UV treated pasteurised milk, Citicoline and rapeseed protein. In addition, the Authority reviewed the safety assessments of five novel foods/ingredients carried out by other Member States in respect of: Vitamin D yeast; Nattokinase; DHA and EPA rich oil from the microalgae schizochytrium; chia seed and synthetic vitamin K2.

Four applications were submitted to the Authority for an opinion on the substantial equivalence of novel food ingredients to similar ingredients already on the EU market. The Authority provided positive opinions on: vitamin K2; inca inchi virgin oil; L-alanyl-L-glutamine and yeast beta glucans.

FOOD SUPPLEMENTS, PARNUTS AND FOODS FOR SPECIAL MEDICAL PURPOSES

Under the food supplements legislation, food business operators must notify the Authority of their intention to place a food supplement on the Irish market for the first time. This allows for more efficient organisation of official control. In 2012, a total of 1,095 food supplements were notified to the Authority, 449 of which were assessed for compliance.

The Authority also received nine notifications for general PARNUTS (foods for particular nutritional uses) and 32 notifications for foods for special medical purposes. Of these, three of the PARNUTS and eight of the foods for special medical purposes were selected for assessments. Under the notification procedure, the food business operator must submit a completed notification form, a label of the product and any other supplementary information to the Authority for assessment. The food is then assessed for compliance against the relevant legislation.

FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

The Authority is the competent authority for the enforcement of the legislation on food contact materials in businesses that manufacture, import and distribute food packaging and other food contact materials. The regulations exist to control the use of food packaging which applies to all materials and there are also specific laws on individual materials such as plastics. The reason for these regulations is to reduce the risk that food packaging could release harmful substances into food. Inspections of these premises by the National Standards Authority of Ireland started during 2012 and indicated the need for enhanced compliance with the specific legislative requirements for supplying food contact materials.

The Authority also provides a service for food business operators in the provision of export certificates for food contact materials and in 2012, two certificates were issued.



INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

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

FOOD INCIDENTS

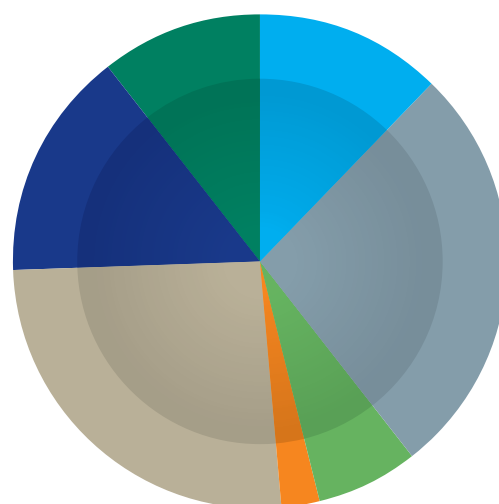
A food incident may arise from a problem identified by a food business, by an official agency in the course of official controls, or from information received from other countries, usually through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed.

In 2012, the Authority handled 404 food incidents, which was broadly similar to 2011 (396). The incidents were categorised as full food incidents, minor food incidents and cross-country food complaints. 405 hazards were identified in the 395 food incidents and five incidents involved more than one hazard. In the case of two incidents relating to allergens, hazards were identified in respect of four different allergens in each.

The Authority investigated 162 full food incidents in 2012, a small increase of six (4%), as compared to 2011. Chemical hazards were most frequently identified (44); followed by microbiological hazards (42); other hazards (24); allergens (20) and; other biological hazards including mycotoxins (17). Most of the 44 chemical hazards were as a result of migration (15); composition/additives (11) and pesticides/residues of veterinary medicines (11).

A total of 167 minor incidents were investigated by the Authority in 2012. This was a small decrease of three (2%), as compared with 2011. In addition, the Authority managed 75 cross-country food complaints compared with 79 in 2011. There were 35 countries of origin for foods associated with the 395 incidents and 11 of these were from European Union Member States. The Republic of Ireland was the country of origin in 37% (147) of the incidents, followed by the United Kingdom 15.4% (61), Northern Ireland 6.1% (24), China 4.6% (18) and Poland 3.8% (15).

HAZARD CATEGORISATION OF FULL FOOD INCIDENTS IN 2012 (TOTAL 162)



● Allergen	20
● Chemical	44
● Foreign Body	11
● Labelling	4
● Micro	42
● Other	24
● Other Biological	17

NUMBER OF FOOD INCIDENTS, 2008-2012

YEAR	FULL INCIDENTS	MINOR INCIDENTS	INDUSTRY NOTIFICATIONS*	CROSS-COUNTRY COMPLAINTS	TOTAL
2012	162	167	-	75	404
2011	147	170	-	79	396
2010	129	165	1	60	355
2009	98	120	15	64	297
2008	90	115	18	68	291

* Notifications from industry now included as full or minor incidents

NATIONAL FOOD ALERTS

The Authority issued 21 food alerts during 2012 relating to 18 incidents. Four of these were Category 1 alerts for action and 17 were Category 2 alerts for information. Nine of these related to microbiological spoilage or possible presence of pathogenic organisms. The remaining alerts related to the presence of foreign bodies or heavy metals (5); mycotoxins (2); incorrect labelling or processing errors (3) and food supplements containing illegal ingredients (2). All food alerts were published on the Authority's website and text messages and email notifications were issued to subscribers.

In addition, the Authority published 14 food allergen alerts in 2012, a decrease of 30% (6) from 2011 and 2010 when there were 20 food allergen alerts issued. Ten of these related to undeclared allergens on the labelling and four related to inconsistent labelling. One of these products declared to be gluten-free on the label, while another declared to be egg-free, but both were found on analysis to contain the allergens. Food allergen alerts are not categorised. Text messages and email notifications were issued to online subscribers and Anaphylaxis Ireland was also informed.

404

The Authority handled 404 food incidents in 2012.

RAPID ALERT SYSTEM FOR FOOD AND FEED

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

In 2012, a total of 3,516 original notifications were transmitted through this system, of which 547 were classified as an alert; 521 as information for follow-up; 705 as information for attention and 1,743 as border rejection notifications. These original notifications gave rise to 5,281 follow-up notifications, representing an average of 1.5 follow-ups per original notification. In addition, there were 19 news items and 83 associated follow-ups circulated. These figures represent a decrease of 7.8% in original notifications.

The Authority issued 53 of the 3,516 original notifications under the system in respect of food and food contact materials that were distributed to or from Ireland. This is an increase of seven notifications, as compared to 2011. Ireland was the country of origin of products for 18 of the notifications issued through the system in 2012, an increase of seven, as compared to 2011.

RISK ASSESSMENT

As a regular aspect of everyday incident management, the Authority provides a risk assessment on the identified hazards found in food. This supports food control activities to ensure that actions are based on science. In 2012, around 100 such assessments were conducted on chemical hazards in foods, such as residues of veterinary drugs; chemical contaminants; the presence of food additives above maximum levels and the migration of excessive levels of components of food contact material. A risk assessment on the safety of nitrate reduced ham was conducted for the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. In addition, the Authority reviewed risk assessments of maximum residue limit breaches for pesticide residues identified by the Pesticide Control Service of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.



The Authority attended a number of industry exhibitions and events such as: Cork and Kerry Food Forum; Hospitality Expo; Waterford Harvest Festival; Taking Care of Business; Meath Showcase and Who to Talk to Expo which provide valuable opportunities to directly meet with people who are either thinking of setting up a new food business or those who own or work in a small food business. Visitors to the Authority's information stand at these events accessed advice on the regulatory requirements for food businesses, such as food labelling; food safety training; food safety legislation; traceability and best food safety practices.

Pictured at the Hospitality Expo in the RDS, Dublin with a visitor to the Authority's information stand are (l-r): Ms Vanessa Cooling, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Ms Noeleen Murtagh, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

FOODBORNE DISEASE OUTBREAKS

When an outbreak occurs in which food is suspected to be a vehicle of transmission, the Authority works closely with the official agencies and the Health Protection Surveillance Centre of the Health Service Executive, the agency involved in the surveillance and epidemiological investigation of infectious diseases.

Provisional data indicates that, in 2012, there were 14 outbreaks of illness reported to the Health Protection Surveillance Centre for which food was suspected as a cause. These outbreaks were Verocytotoxigenic *Escherichia coli* infection (5); salmonellosis (4); acute infectious gastroenteritis (2); campylobacteriosis (1); norovirus infection (1) and typhoid (1). 138 people became ill and three were hospitalised.

For one such outbreak, there were four cases of *Salmonella* Newport infection and watermelon was the suspected source. This outbreak may have been linked to infections of the same strain of *Salmonella* Newport reported in the UK and Germany.

OUTBREAK CONTROL SIMULATION EXERCISE

In response to the potential threat of foodborne illness outbreaks, a protocol is in place that the Authority and the official agencies with responsibility for food control and public health use for the management of outbreaks of foodborne illness. This protocol details the collective agency response should such an event materialise. To examine the effectiveness of this protocol, the Authority and the Health Service Executive coordinated an outbreak control simulation exercise to test how staff in food control and public health agencies would respond to a major food poisoning outbreak in the country.

FOOD FRAUD TASK FORCE

Food fraud is committed when food is deliberately placed on the market with the intention of deceiving the customer, usually for financial gain. While food fraud is not extensive in Ireland, there have been incidences over the past few years of consumer deception involving incorrect labelling of imported meat, substituting lower grade honey for more expensive brands and labelling of farmed fish as wild captured species. To this end, the Authority established a Food Fraud Task Force consisting of experienced individuals from different enforcement arms of the State who will work to share intelligence and research on food fraud, and assist in improving our ability to detect and deal with food crime. The Task Force consists of representatives from a number of enforcement agencies namely: An Garda Síochána; Customs and Excise Service of the Revenue Commissioners; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland; Health Service Executive; Irish Medicines Board, the local authorities and Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority.



SCIENCE

The Authority has always recognised the importance and value of science underpinning consumer protection programmes.

Science is the basis for risk assessments from which risk management policies or decisions are derived. In addition to the high level of scientific expertise of its staff, the Authority's Scientific Committee and Sub-committees play a very valuable role in providing scientific advice. It provides scientific advice to the Board in three areas, namely: scientific and technical questions relating to food safety and hygiene; the implementation and administration of the food inspection service; and the nutritional value or content of food.

During 2012, work programmes and terms of reference were developed for the three Sub-committees which look at the areas of biological safety; chemical safety and; public health nutrition. Meetings took place during the year to progress specific opinions and minutes of these meetings were published on the Authority's website. The Scientific Committee produced reports on recommendations for healthy eating guidelines in Ireland and recommendations for national infant feeding policy.

Work began on collaborative reports on the dioxin in pork crisis; dioxins and flame retardant contamination of Irish fish and shellfish; speciation of arsenic in Irish fish and fatty acid profiles of farmed and wild salmon, and these will be published in 2013.

CAMPYLOBACTER CONTROL PROGRAMME

Ireland has a very high prevalence of *Campylobacter* in its broiler flocks and as a result, a high level of contamination of poultry meat on retail sale. *Campylobacter* does not make chickens ill but, it is the number one bacterial cause of foodborne illness in Ireland. In addition, the measures which have been successful in controlling *Salmonella* in poultry have had no impact on *Campylobacter*. In 2012, the Authority formed a *Campylobacter* Control Steering Group with the aim of advancing the recommendations of its 2011 Scientific Committee report which outlined a science-based control programme for *Campylobacter* in poultry meat. This Steering Group consists of the Authority, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Bord Bia; safefood; the Irish Farmers' Association; poultry processors and retailers.



The Authority hosted a seminar for healthcare professionals and the food industry working in the area of maternal and infant health which examined the key nutritional issues affecting infants in Ireland. The seminar presented the evidence underpinning best practice for infant feeding in Ireland. In addition, practical information was provided on maternal diet and lifestyle; breastfeeding; safe preparation of infant formula and weaning an infant on to solid food. The Authority launched its report: *Scientific Recommendations for a National Infant Feeding Policy in Ireland and Best Practice for Infant Feeding* - a new guide for healthcare professionals outlining the practicalities of putting best infant feeding guidelines into practice.

Pictured at the seminar are (l-r): Ms Roberta McCarthy, National Maternity Hospital, Holles Street; Prof. Mary Flynn, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Ms Annemarie Bennett, Dublin Institute of Technology.

In 2012, a research consortium, including the Authority, was successful in gaining funding to address knowledge and data gaps identified by the 2011 Scientific Committee report. During the year, aspects of the proposed programme were discussed by the Steering Group and presentations from UK researchers helped to provide information on new developments. The Irish Farmers' Association organised bio-security training for poultry farmers and it is planned that in 2013, this will be built upon by organising training highlighting the bio-security aspects of the Bord Bia quality assurance standard, together with the additional recommendations from the Authority's Scientific Committee report.

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION

The Authority provides advice to Government on issues of food safety and nutrition and launched a scientific report on healthy eating in 2012. The Authority, in association with the Health Service Executive, *safeFood* and the Department of Health, published a guide for health professionals to help promote healthy eating and active living in the Irish population.

Infant feeding is also an important issue to ensure the best start in life for children in Ireland. In 2012, the Scientific Committee published its report on infant feeding together with a guideline booklet to provide a practical interpretation of the scientific advice.

In 2012, the Authority took part in a steering group set up by the Public Health Institute to carry out a health impact assessment on sugar sweetened drinks, at the request of the Minister for Health. The Authority contributed to the process by highlighting relevant papers for the literature review; reviewing and commenting on the scientific papers used for the literature review; providing a constructive critique of the modelling exercise and; developing a draft conclusion section for review by the group. Ultimately, the advice of the Authority to the steering group was not to progress with the initiative as the science was, at best, suggestive and not conclusive.

CALORIES ON MENUS PROGRAMME

Ireland currently has the second highest rate of obesity in Europe and research shows that displaying calories on menus helps consumers to make healthier and more informed choices about what they eat, whilst also encouraging them to eat smaller portions. At the request of the Minister for Health, the Authority carried out a national consultation in 2012, to seek opinions on the best way to put calorie information on menus in Ireland. The consultation called for opinions on calorie on menu labelling and received over 3,300 submissions from consumers, food businesses, health professionals and other interested parties. Almost 80% of responses (over 2,600) were from consumers. The Authority published a report which recommended the introduction of a calorie menu labelling scheme for food service businesses. The report also recommended that the scheme should be operated on a voluntary basis initially to allow a period of time for the development of a system, including technical tools, to support the food service sector. Two technical documents were published describing best practice for the industry.



The Authority and the European Food Safety Authority hosted a joint international conference to mark the 10th anniversary of the European Food Safety Authority. The conference brought together EU regulatory and parliamentary representatives, together with stakeholders in the food chain to discuss the current state of food safety in Europe and to examine emerging threats and risks. Delegates heard how greater cooperation between EU Member States in the area of food regulation and enforcement is underpinning efforts to ensure food produced and consumed in Europe meets the highest standards of food safety and hygiene. Closer cooperation and coordination of activities is key to ensuring the safety of Europe's food chain. This has been central to the mission of the European Food Safety Authority, which provides the highest possible standards of independent scientific advice and risk assessments.

Pictured at the conference are (l-r): Prof. Alan Reilly, Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Ms Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle, European Food Safety Authority and Simon Coveney, T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Following the consultation, the Authority began a number of initiatives. Meetings took place with the food industry to discuss the programme and how best to implement it. Work began on the development of an online calculator to help chefs calculate the calories in their dishes and this will be launched in 2013. The Authority liaised with third level institutes to agree a plan for training chefs that will facilitate an understanding of the practicalities of calorie menu labelling. Finally, to evaluate the uptake of the calorie menu labelling programme to date, a telephone survey and an audit evaluation programme began. The results will be forwarded to the Minister for Health in 2013.

SALT REDUCTION PROGRAMME

During 2012, the salt reduction programme continued with the sampling and testing of over 120 products. The updated results of the Authority's monitoring programme of salt reduction from September 2003 to December 2012 will be published in early 2013. Initial discussions began between the Authority and industry representatives about the future of the salt reduction programme and a seminar to discuss these issues is planned for 2013.

SCIENTIFIC PARTICIPATION ON EXPERT WORKING GROUPS

One of the functions of the Authority is to advise Ministers on technical and scientific aspects of food safety policy and regulation. Staff from the Authority represented Ireland on a number of expert working groups or committees at international level within the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority. Staff also participated in advisory working groups or committees of the World Health Organization; the Food and Agriculture Organization; Codex Alimentarius and the Organization for European Cooperation and Development.

In some cases, participation is in support of the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. These meetings allow the Authority to gain up-to-date information on, and contribute to, the development of regulations and standards, as well as fulfilling its national obligations.

SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT FOR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

The Authority provides regular input into the work of the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. During 2012, input was by way of advice on draft legislation; provision of material in the preparation of responses to parliamentary questions; scientific advice on various issues, such as the proposal for a tax on sugar sweetened drinks; traffic light labelling; the advertising code for children and the folic acid supplementation policy. The Authority continues to be a member of the Emergency Response Coordination Committee as part of the National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents; the Expert Body on Fluorides and Health and, has staff on the scientific committees of *safe food*; the Health Protection Surveillance Centre and the Irish National Accreditation Board.

SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATION WITH THE EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY

The Authority represents Ireland on the European Food Safety Authority's Advisory Forum. This Advisory Forum brings together representatives from the national food safety authorities of all 27 EU Member States, Iceland and Norway, with observers from Switzerland and the European Commission. Through the Forum, the European Food Safety Authority and the Member States

join forces in addressing European risk assessment and risk communications issues. Members use the Forum to advise the European Food Safety Authority on scientific matters, its work programme and priorities, and to address emerging risk issues as early as possible. Members are currently implementing a strategy for closer networking which focuses on sharing scientific information, pooling resources and coordinating work programmes. They have committed to: exchange scientific data; coordinate risk communications activities and messages; address contentious issues and diverging opinions; set up working groups to focus collectively on specific issues and; co-ordinate work and avoid duplication. The Forum also helps national authorities share information and co-ordinate activities between themselves.

Staff from the Authority participated in various European Food Safety Authority working groups, forums and panels in 2012, providing input into important areas of activity such as: risk assessment; emerging risks; zoonoses; nanotechnology; food consumption and chemical contaminants.

Other areas of the Authority's collaboration with the European Food Safety Authority during 2012 included assisting in the development of standard schemes for the collection and reporting of data to it. The Authority also completed a funded task by providing a disaggregated version of the National Adult Consumption Survey in a format that allowed the European Food Safety Authority to incorporate the information into its consolidated European food consumption database. This ensures that eating habits in Ireland are accounted for in exposure assessments carried out by the European Food Safety Authority.

In addition to its scientific collaboration with the European Food Safety Authority, the Authority continued its participation on its Advisory Forum Communication Working Group. This Working Group works with the communications departments of national food safety agencies to build a more collaborative and informed approach to communicating risk in the food chain and to promote a coherence of food safety messages across the Community. The Authority also acts as the national Focal Point, which facilitates cooperation and data sharing between the European Food Safety Authority and all European Union food safety agencies.

INFORMATION SERVICES

The Authority’s Advice Line, website, extranet, social media pages and Information Centre play a large role in facilitating this exchange of information, providing up-to-date information on a wide range of food safety issues.

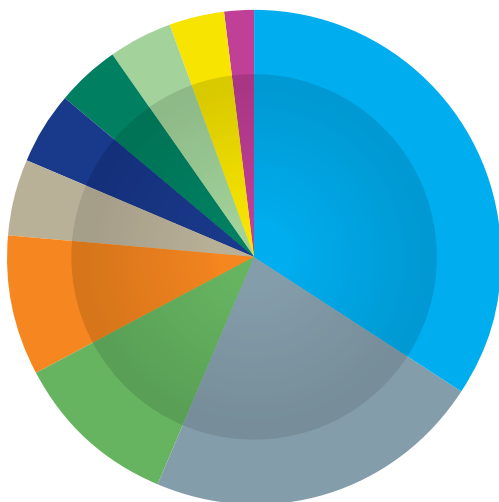
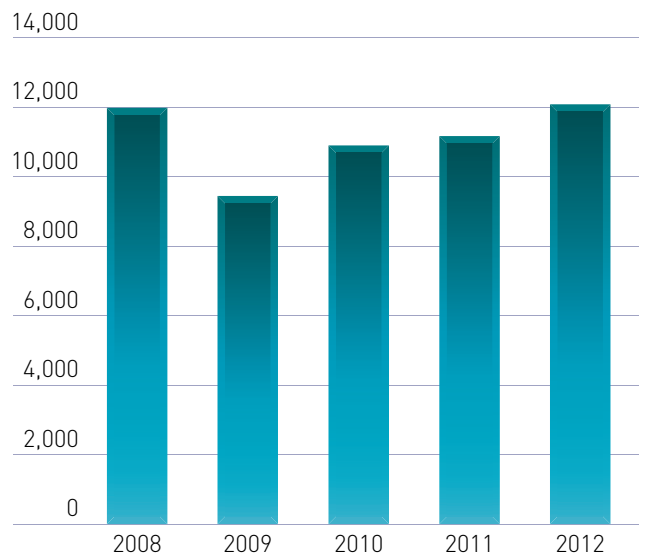
The Advice Line is available to all stakeholders and it operates Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm. Year on year, requests to the Advice Line have increased, with over 12,000 queries handled in 2012. Of these, 60% were received by telephone and 30% were by email. The remaining 10% arose mainly from visitors to the Authority’s office and also to information stands at various exhibitions throughout the country which the Authority attended. Almost 50% of the queries received came from the food industry (which includes caterers, retailers, manufacturers, distributors, etc.), while 26% were from consumers. Requests for information were also received from enforcement officers (7%), teachers/lecturers (6%), health professionals (3%), as well as Government departments, State agencies and legal services providers.

Requests for information on starting a new food business were popular in 2012, with information being sought on the legislation that applies to food businesses; how to register a food business; what equipment is required; premises layout and operating a mobile food business or food stall. Questions on labelling legislation represented almost 10% of total queries and included requests for information on the new regulation on food information to consumers, as well as general labelling and product specific labelling legislation requirements.

12,000

The Authority’s Advice Line handled over 12,000 queries in 2012, 50% of which came from the food industry.

NUMBER OF REQUESTS, 2008-2012

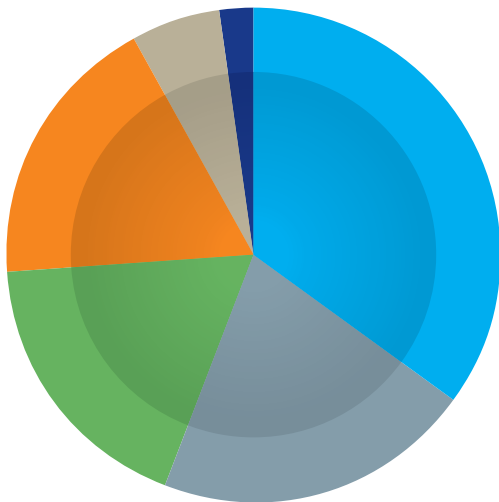


TOP TEN MOST POPULAR REQUEST TOPICS IN 2012

Information Request	3,892	Training	548
Complaints	2,530	Legislation	474
Business Start-up	1,230	Nutrition	468
Labelling	1,018	Other	391
Standards	568	Domestic Practice	219

Approximately 20% of queries received by the Advice Line relate to complaints about foods or food premises. In 2012, over 2,500 such complaints were dealt with and referred to environmental health officers for investigation. Complaints related to: unfit food (e.g. presence of a foreign object like glass, hair, an insect, etc.) (36%); suspected food poisoning (18%); poor hygiene standards (visible dirt on surfaces, unsafe handling of foods by staff, unsatisfactory toilet facilities, etc.) (18%) and labelling (6%). Finally, 20% of the complaints were of a general nature (e.g. complainants were not happy about EU rules) and went no further, or were not under the Authority's remit and had to be referred to a different agency.

FOOD COMPLAINTS, 2012



● Unfit Food	35%
● Other	21%
● Suspect Food Poisoning	18%
● Hygiene Standards	18%
● Labelling	6%
● Advertising	2%

20%

Approximately 20% of queries received by the Advice Line relate to complaints about foods or food premises.

The Authority is committed to the continued development of its website, extranet, intranet and social media pages as key sources of information for its staff and stakeholders. In 2012, the website received 450,706 visits, which was an increase of over 13%, as compared to 2011. These visitors accounted for a total of 1,596,940 pageviews (an increase of 17%) and 450,706 visits (an increase of 13%). The most popular sections of the website were resources and publications and, legislation. In particular, though, the section specifically tailored for food businesses continues to attract an increasing level of interest. Visitors came to the site from 208 countries in 2012, with 65% coming from Ireland and almost 10% from the UK. Although the number of visits from Ireland increased, there was a substantial rise in interest from overseas, particularly the USA, India and Australia.

The Authority's facebook page, Twitter page and YouTube channel continued to grow in popularity during the year. The Authority's objectives for utilising social media sites as a communications tool are: to reach a wider audience; to interact with and seek input from stakeholders; to be proactive; to improve customer service; to build a greater online profile and to build a community around food safety.

The extranet site, Safety Net, is a communication tool between the Authority and staff of the official agencies. This online resource allows for the sharing of internal documentation such as contacts, standard operating procedures and publications.

During 2012, the Authority's library continued to develop its collection of resources of books, journals and online databases. The library is primarily a resource for staff of the Authority, consisting of a physical space housing print books, journals and newspapers. It also provides inter-library loans and a search facility for specific topics for research, videoconferencing facilities and study spaces. Staff working in the official agencies can also borrow books, avail of the journal updates and request articles.

The library is open to members of the public where they can consult with all the books and journals on-site. During 2012, the library took part in Library Ireland Week, where it hosted a 'human library' event. This event was designed to give small food businesses an opportunity to meet on a one-to-one basis with food safety experts who acted as 'human books' providing advice across a range of food safety areas.



The Authority published its *Statement of Strategy 2012-2015* which sets out clear priorities which will extend its outputs, enhance consumer protection in relation to food and further support securing Ireland's reputation as achieving the highest standards in food safety. The four year strategy reflects a consultative process with its stakeholders and charts an ambitious programme to achieve each objective and its associated and anticipated outcomes. The strategy focuses the Authority on continuing to maintain and develop a regulatory system that is trusted by consumers, has the confidence of the food industry and is acknowledged both in Ireland and abroad as balanced in its actions which rely on best science and robust risk assessment.

Pictured at the launch of the publication are (l-r): Mr Eamonn Ryan, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Prof. Alan Reilly, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

PUBLICATIONS

New publications in 2012, all of which are available from the website, included: a statement of strategy 2012 to 2015; recommendations for a national infant feeding policy report; leaflets on preventing the spread of *E. coli* on the farm and also in childcare facilities; healthy eating guidelines; a number of audits of official controls and a leaflet on food hypersensitivity. The *Safe Catering Pack*, which assists food businesses to implement their food safety management system, was updated in 2012 and over 1,300 packs were purchased by food businesses during the year. Six editions of the newsletter, *fsainews*, were published. The postal distribution for the newsletter was approx 4,481 and 3,545 subscribers received the online version of the newsletter.

MEDIA RELATIONS

The Authority recognises the importance of engaging with the media in order to communicate information and advice on food safety to the wider food sector. It also allows the Authority to impart advice on food incidents to consumers through the wide variety of media channels now available for people. To this end, the Authority provides 24/7 cover in its press office. In 2012, the Authority issued 31 press releases to the media covering a range of issues such as, Enforcement Orders; audits; surveys; nutritional information and food alerts. It also dealt with queries from the media on a wide variety of food safety and nutrition issues which resulted in numerous print and online news articles, and radio and TV interviews.

1,300+

Over 1,300 Safe Catering Packs were purchased by food businesses during the year.

TRAINING

Training is an important means of communicating food safety messages. The Authority's objectives for training are to provide relevant training for official agency staff on food control to reinforce enforcement activities and to assist the food industry to understand and comply with the legal and technical requirements of food law. In 2012, as in past years, the Authority provided training on food control for official agency staff and for people working in the food industry.

A number of training courses on hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP) systems for staff in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Local Authority Veterinary Service and the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority were held during the year. A series of regional workshops were held for staff in the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority which covered topics such as seafood labelling, shellfish monitoring and handling food incidents. The Authority provided a training workshop for the Environmental Health Service on the application and inspection of good manufacturing practice in establishments which manufacture, pack or distribute food supplements. Internal audit training was carried out for the Local Authority Veterinary Service which carries out cross-county audits throughout the year.

The Authority is represented on the EU Expert Group on Better Training for Safer Food and coordinates participation for official agency staff on training programmes run by the European Commission. During 2012, staff from the official agencies took part in training courses on a variety of food control issues such as: auditing Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point principles; food additives; food contact materials; feed law and residues of veterinary medicinal products.

The well established *Food Safety and You* training programme, which is aimed at managers or trainers working in the food industry, continued in 2012.

E-LEARNING

A new online learning management system was launched to support the professional development of staff in the Authority and in the official agencies. It provides people with a variety of learning resources such as e-learning courses, factsheets, videos and other digital resources that will be developed over time as the training needs arise. The online materials can be used to get up-to-date information on a topic relevant to a particular work area, refresh on a topic that was covered at recent training, or in some cases, just to broaden the knowledge base of a particular subject. Training modules on food additives and flavourings are available and further training programmes and resources will be developed in the future.

SEMINARS

The Authority hosted a number of food safety seminars throughout the year on new or topical issues. In collaboration with the European Food Safety Authority, an international conference was held to mark the European Food Safety Authority's tenth anniversary. The event brought together EU regulatory and parliamentary representatives, together with stakeholders in the food industry, to discuss the current state of food safety in Europe and to examine emerging threats and risks. Responding to new demands of evaluating regulated products, harmonising risk assessment approaches, protecting the independence of its scientific advice and strengthening collaboration with EU Member States are just some of the challenges facing the European Food Safety Authority over the next decade.

Over 100 industry representatives attended the seminar on the upcoming changes under the EU food information regulations. This new regulation extends beyond food labelling to cover activities concerning the provision of food information to consumers, including by means of internet marketing. It will have a significant impact on how food businesses communicate with consumers. It applies to food businesses at all stages of the food chain and addresses diverse issues such as font size, allergen labelling of non pre-packed foods, nutrition declaration, front of pack labelling and origin labelling. A seminar on food flavouring legislation and the regulatory controls on the use of flavourings in food was held for food businesses and enforcement officers. Speakers focused on topics such as legislation and safety assessment, application and use, labelling and enforcement.

A seminar for healthcare professionals and the food industry working in the area of maternal and infant health examined the key nutritional issues affecting infants in Ireland. It is widely recognised that the period stretching from conception to the end of the first year of life is a critical period of development and can have far-reaching effects on health in childhood and throughout adult life. Diet is one of the most important environmental factors during this stage. The seminar presented the evidence underpinning best practice for infant feeding in Ireland. In addition, practical information was provided on maternal diet and lifestyle, breastfeeding, safe preparation of infant formula and weaning an infant on to solid food.



The Authority published a report: *Calories on Menus in Ireland – A Report on a National Consultation* following a public consultation where views on calorie menu labelling were sought from consumers and stakeholders. The report's findings revealed an overwhelming demand by consumers (96%) for calorie menu labelling in all or some food outlets, with 89% saying that calories should be displayed beside the price of food and drink items on the menu. Nearly three in four food service businesses (73%) were in favour of calorie menu labelling in all or some food establishments. However, when considering the technical aspects of implementing such a scheme, the numbers of food businesses in favour of calorie menu labelling fell to just over 50%. The report recommends the introduction of a calorie menu labelling scheme for food service businesses. It also recommends that the scheme should be operated on a voluntary basis initially, to allow a period of time for the development of a system, including technical tools, to support the food service sector.

Pictured at the launch of the report are (l-r): Dr James Reilly, T.D., Minister for Health and Prof. Mary Flynn, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

INDUSTRY FORA

The Authority works with all stakeholders in the food industry to achieve compliance with food law and maintain high standards. This partnership approach has brought about a positive influence to bear on the food chain. Legislation and enforcement are important tools, but seldom achieve all that is desired. To meet this need, the Authority operates a number of schemes through which it effectively engages with the food industry – promoting best food safety practices, a shared approach to safe food production and communicating the need to comply with food legislation. The four industry fora created by the Authority continue to function as a platform for specific industry sectors to access the Authority and progress issues concerning food safety and hygiene.

Artisan Food Producers' Forum

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

In 2012, members discussed a wide range of topics, including: *Salmonella* in duck eggs; proposed changes to food labelling legislation; consistency in inspections; food tourism; mobile abattoirs; proposed sugar tax and shelf-life testing.

100+

Over 100 industry representatives attended the seminar on the upcoming changes under the EU food information regulations.

Retail Forum

The Retail Forum includes members from the main supermarkets and the major symbol groups. The Forum met three times in 2012. The Forum serves as a useful mechanism to increase understanding of food legislation and disseminate food safety advice. During 2012, members were briefed on a wide range of topics, including: food allergens; the *Campylobacter* Control Programme; packaging of poultry meat; proposed sugar tax; food labelling; traceability; calories on menus and sprouted seeds.

Food Service Forum

The Food Service Forum draws its membership from catering businesses, food service businesses and representative organisations. The Forum met twice in 2012 and members discussed a wide range of issues, including: calories on menus; sprouted seeds legislation; control and labelling of food allergens; the revised *Safe Catering Pack*, salt reduction; acrylamide and the proposed sugar tax.

Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee

The Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee, chaired by the Authority, is the national stakeholder Committee for the production and placing on the market of bivalve molluscs. Representatives from the official agencies (including the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, the Marine Institute and Health Services Executive), Bord Iascaigh Mhara, industry and other stakeholder groups participate on the Committee. During 2012, the Committee met four times and members discussed a wide range of issues, such as: norovirus; biotoxin sampling; phytoplankton sampling; recreational gathering and consumption; toxicity trends and development of methodologies. In terms of specific hazards, the Committee dealt with issues associated with biotoxins and norovirus.

FOOD SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

Established under the FSAI Act, 1998, the Food Safety Consultative Council is one of the key elements of the Authority's structure. The Council's main purpose is to allow the Authority to meet its obligation to consult widely about its activities. Matters are referred for consideration to the Council, but it may also bring issues to the attention of the Authority. Half of the members are appointed by the Authority and half by the Minister for Health. During 2012, a new Council was established and the Authority appointed twelve members. A further twelve members will be appointed by the Minister for Health in due course. The Council held three meetings in 2012 and members discussed a range of issues, including: calories on menus; sprouting seeds legislation; proposed fat tax; the Q mark for hygiene and food safety; rapid alerts and discussions began for one of its meetings in 2013, which will held in an open forum.

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

During 2012, the Authority continued its collaborations with a number of organisations both in Ireland and abroad. Its close cooperation and collaboration with the Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland continued and is by means of a memorandum of understanding that is designed to ensure rapid and effective co-operation in the event of a food incident and common enforcement matters in both jurisdictions.

Collaborative working continued through cooperation agreements between the Health Protection Surveillance Centre in the Health Service Executive and Teagasc. Staff of the Authority sit on *safefood's* Scientific Advisory Committee.

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

The Authority also assists agencies in other countries who regard it as a model for single national food control agencies. Staff from the Authority are part of the International Commission for Microbiological Specifications for Foods and took part in the annual meeting of this expert group in 2012. The Authority maintained its memorandum of understanding with the Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority. Staff from the Authority took part in expert consultations of the World Health Organization, and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. The Authority continued its involvement as the emergency contact point for Ireland in the International Food Safety Authorities Network. This network is a joint initiative between the World Health Organization and the Food and Agricultural Organization. It involves 177 member states in the exchange of routine information on food safety issues, sharing experiences and expertise, and allows for rapid access to information in case of food safety emergencies. The Authority chairs the Scientific Advisory Board of the European Food Information Council which is a non-profit organisation which communicates science-based information on nutrition and health, food safety and quality, to help consumers to be better informed when choosing a well-balanced, safe and healthy diet.

177

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



The Authority hosted a seminar on food flavourings legislation to give food businesses and enforcement officers an opportunity to gain a thorough understanding of the regulatory controls on the use of flavourings in food. The seminar addressed issues surrounding flavourings for use in food, including the legislation by which they are regulated and the labelling rules related to food to which flavourings have been added. Delegates also heard about safety assessment; application and use and enforcement. The Authority launched a report at the seminar: *Guidance on Flavourings, 2012*.

Pictured at the seminar are (l-r): Dr Rhodri Evans, Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Dr Iona Pratt, Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Ms Joy Hardinge, AJH Consulting, UK and Ms Anne-Marie Boland, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

While the main function of the Authority is to protect consumers' health and interests, unless the organisation is properly oriented and effective use is made of the principal resource which is at its disposal, namely the executive and staff, the Authority cannot meet its main function. For this reason, the Authority is committed to a quality management system which is essentially based on the concept of: identifying customers and their requirements; planning how to meet these requirements; documenting procedures where appropriate; setting measurable objectives for all divisions and all staff; and regularly reviewing achievements. The system is certified to the international standard ISO 9001:2008, against which the Authority is subject to an annual external audit.

A comprehensive Service Plan 2012 was developed detailing the planned work programmes for the year. Progress in achieving the plan was reviewed mid-year and also at the year end, in order to ensure work programmes were delivered. All staff have a detailed work plan for the year ahead which identifies relevant training and development needs for the period. Each work plan is linked to team and divisional objectives, which in turn are linked to the organisation's annual service plan. Planning, performance management and review are an integral part of the Authority and are supported by the quality management system in place.

In 2012, the Authority took part in a peer reviewed benchmarking programme in which it and the Food Standards Agency, UK were organised to assess each other against twelve key performance indicators. These key performance indicators included the assessment of management systems against the requirements of ISO 9004, the organisation of official controls and the management of risk against the requirements of EU legislation. This programme is part of the work programme of the Heads of European Food Safety Agencies and through self assessment and external review, the findings are then centralised through the European benchmarking steering committee to evaluate and share best practice.

An efficient finance function is in place which ensures that the highest accounting standards are met and that effective financial management systems are in place. The Authority also ensured that Department of Finance budgetary measures were implemented, in terms of salary and other expenditure savings.



The Authority hosted a national seminar for the local authority veterinary inspectors who are engaged in official controls on its behalf. The seminar addressed the upcoming changes to the regulations on the protection of animals in slaughterhouses, which will apply from 1st January 2013. Delegates also heard about European Union provisions for flexibility in the hygiene package; a review of meat inspections by the European Commission and the local authority microbiological sampling programme.

Pictured at the seminar are (l-r): Ms Sinead Murphy, Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Mr John Matthews, Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Mr Pablo Romero Barrios, European Food Safety Authority; Ms Sharon Williams, Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Ms Sabine Juelicher, Food and Veterinary Office; Mr Martin Blake, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Mr Dan Crowley, Cork County Council and Mr Pat Farrell, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.



The Authority published a booklet: *Healthy Eating and Active Living for Adults, Teenagers and Children over Five Years* to advise health professionals and catering services. The booklet describes the types and amounts of food from the food pyramid that people need to eat to stay healthy. Guidance is also given on the average calories needed by consumers, depending on body size, age, gender and activity level. Other important issues are also covered such as physical activity; healthy eating in pregnancy; breastfeeding; vitamin D; fluids; salt; healthy eating on a budget; food safety and food labelling.

Pictured at the launch of the booklet are (l-r): Dr James Reilly, T.D., Minister for Health, and Prof. Alan Reilly, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

A Staff Committee is in place which comprises of staff at all levels throughout the Authority. It is consulted on many organisational issues, including the development of human resource policies. The Authority is fully committed to complying with the requirements of the relevant health and safety legislation. A Health and Safety Committee is in place, which met regularly in 2012.

A number of safety awareness initiatives and training for relevant staff were implemented during the year.

Whilst maintaining services to the greatest extent possible, staff numbers continued to be managed within the context of the public sector embargo on recruitment and in line with the employment control framework for the health sector. Staff numbers have fallen by 10% in the period since the imposition of the moratorium on recruitment in 2009.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

As required of all State agencies, the Authority adheres to standard corporate governance criteria as set out in the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies, 2009. In light of this, a corporate governance framework is in place which was developed in order to assist in improving efficiency and enhance openness and transparency. The framework gives clear guidance for the organisation, detailing aspects such as: conducting Board business; strategic planning; operational processes; risk management; financial control and standards of behaviour. The Authority maintains a risk register and a fixed assets register, both of which are reviewed and audited annually.

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

INTERNAL AUDIT

The Board has appointed an Audit Committee which utilises the services of external professional auditors who conduct a programme of internal audits. Four such audits were completed in 2012, namely: review of internal financial controls; procurement; risk management and service contracts. Reports were submitted to the Board Audit Committee and also to the Authority's Board. Action plans were prepared by the Authority's executive to address findings and these were monitored by the Board Audit Committee. Four financial audits to verify the funding claims received from the local authorities in relation to food safety activities also took place.

SHARED SERVICES

In 2012, the Authority commenced the provision of payroll and pension services for the Health and Social Care Professionals Council in line with the Government policy on shared services.

The Authority is the lead partner in the establishment of procurement framework agreements with 16 other public sector agencies through the Health and Social Care Regulatory Forum. During 2012, framework agreements for print and design services were established. Each framework has up to eight suppliers in order to provide for the varied and complex requirements of each agency.

57

The Authority provided advice in response to 57 parliamentary questions from various political representatives that were submitted to the Department of Health or the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in 2012. This is an increase from 37 in 2011.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Information and communications technology systems continue to be key in enabling the Authority manage information and systems to facilitate the delivery of services. The Authority regularly maintains and upgrades its IT infrastructure and systems in order to provide the most up-to-date support and technologies suitable for the environment. During 2012, upgrades of the network infrastructure, security systems and antivirus systems were completed.

The Authority has developed systems for the collection, analysis and dissemination of data in relation to food inspections and testing. These systems are utilised for the collection of data in line with service contract arrangements and also the transmission of data to the European Food Safety Authority. These systems are continually being developed and enhanced to allow use by multiple official agencies, transmissions from other sources and publication of data such as the Enforcement Orders on the Authority's website.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

The Authority continues to meet its obligations in relation to responding to Freedom of Information requests and parliamentary questions. During 2012, the Authority received eight Freedom of Information requests. Five of the requests were from journalists, one from a solicitor on behalf of a client and two from members of the public. Request topics included: records relating to Board meetings; Enforcement Orders; dioxin contamination incident; unpasteurised milk and staff salary scales. The Authority provided advice in response to 57 parliamentary questions from various political representatives that were submitted to the Department of Health or the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in 2012. This is an increase from 37 in 2011. Questions received included those on financial and staffing arrangements; genetically modified food; labelling; traceability and inspections; and sampling.

SERVICE CONTRACTS AND MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

The Authority is responsible for the enforcement of food legislation in Ireland and carries out this enforcement function through service contracts with official agencies. Section 48 of the FSAI Act, 1998 provides the legislative basis for this.

The contracts drawn up between the Authority and official agencies outline the level and standard of food safety activity that the agencies will perform, as agents of the Authority. Key clauses in these contracts require the agencies to undertake official controls under the following schedules:

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

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

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

Schedule 4: Reporting requirements for the agency.

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

The Authority has also signed a memorandum of understanding with various other organisations both in Ireland and abroad, in order to facilitate cooperation and the exchange of information related to food safety. A service contract is a legal agreement to enforce food safety legislation, whereas, a memorandum of understanding sets out a framework for cooperation between organisations in their food safety activities.

Official Agencies with which the Authority had Service Contracts in 2012

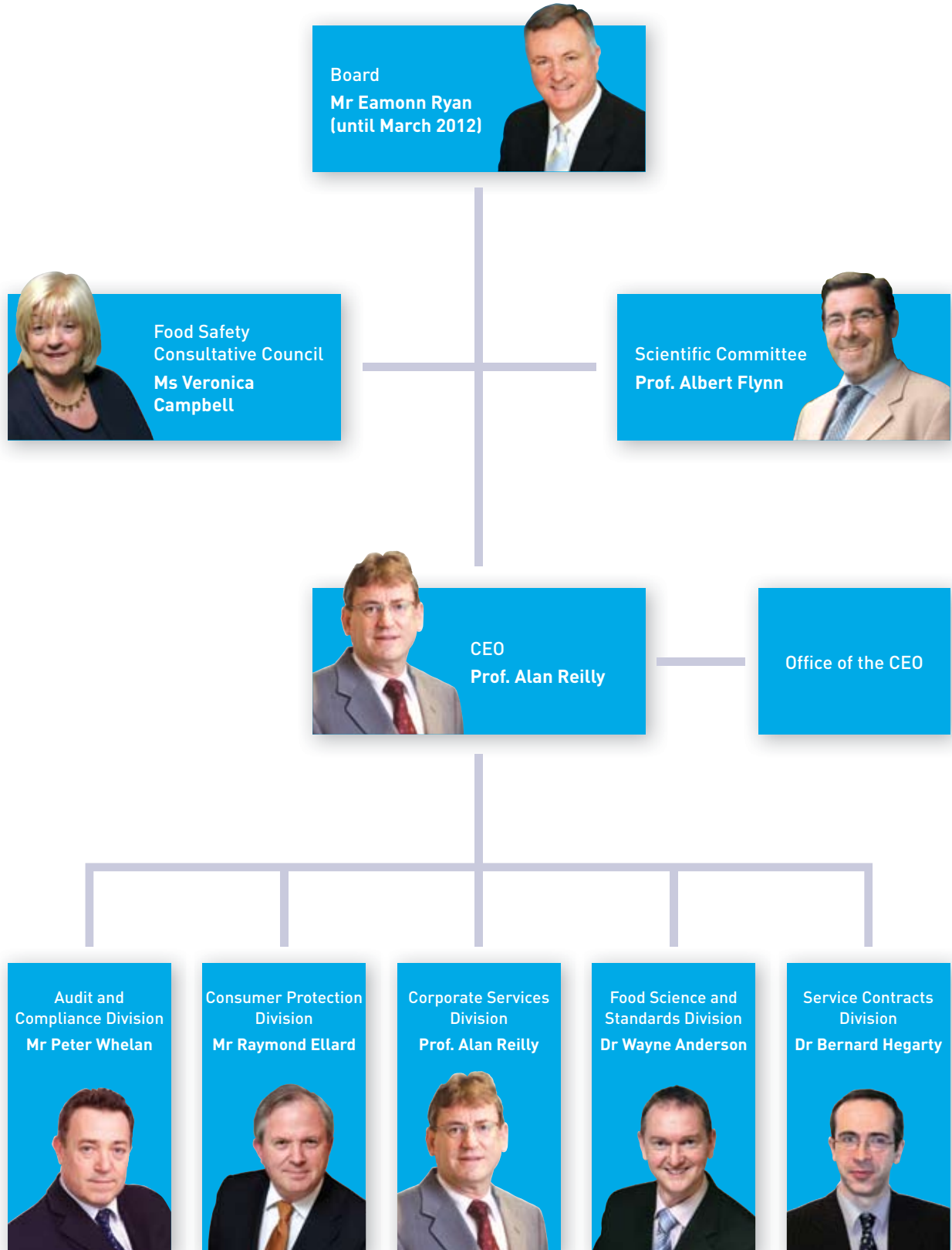


Organisations with which the Authority had a Memorandum of Understanding in 2012



MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

At 31st December 2012



BOARD MEMBERS 2012



1. MR EAMONN RYAN (CHAIR)*

Prior to his appointment as Chairman of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland in March 2007, Mr Eamonn Ryan was Executive Director of IDA Ireland. In a career spanning three decades of Ireland's economic transformation, he played a pivotal role in shaping and implementing strategy for the phenomenal growth of the Irish economy. Mr Ryan has a long and distinguished career in Ireland's public sector and has a wide knowledge and experience of business in the domestic and international arena. He was Executive Director International of IDA Ireland's global operations based in New York, where under his leadership and management, the agency attracted substantial levels of the most technologically-advanced foreign direct investment from the USA, Europe and Asia Pacific. Mr Ryan is a graduate of University College, Dublin, with further academic pursuits in Columbia University and Carnegie Mellon. Mr Ryan attended one Board meeting of the Authority in 2012.

2. MS MIRIAM CASHELL

Ms Miriam Cashell is a graduate of environmental health, holds a post graduate diploma in food safety from the Dublin Institute of Technology and is a certified lead auditor. She is a Principal Environmental Health Officer with the Health Service Executive, based in Cork city, where she leads and manages a team accredited to NSAI 9001:2008. Her motivation is directed at delivering a client focused high standard of best practice in food safety issues. Ms Cashell has over 30 years experience of working in the Environmental Health Service both in Ireland and previously in England as a chartered environmental health officer. She is a member of the Cork Zoonosis Committee. Her career has always encompassed the core principles of educating and promoting food safety

practices within the food industry. She has a particular interest in training programmes for food workers in the areas of food safety and quality assurance. She has served on interdisciplinary groups developing protocols on food borne illness. She has been involved in many national groups in developing and ensuring that best professional practice is available both in guidance and legislation. Ms Cashell attended three Board meetings of the Authority in 2012.

3. PROFESSOR JOHN DANIEL COLLINS

Professor John Daniel Collins MVB MVM MS (Calif.) PhD MRCVS was Professor Emeritus of Farm Animal Clinical Studies at University College, Dublin (NUI-UCD). He was an Honorary Member of the European College of Veterinary Public Health and an Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Food Science and Technology of Ireland. Formerly he was the Chair of UCD's Centre for Food Safety and Director of UCD's Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis. Professor Collins was a member of the European Food Safety Authority's Scientific Committee and Chair of its Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards to April 2011. He was a Member of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's Scientific Committee. Professor Collins attended one Board meeting of the Authority in 2012. Sadly, he passed away in April 2012, following a short illness.

4. MR EAMON CORCORAN**

Prior to his appointment to the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Eamon Corcoran spent 32 years as a civil servant, initially in the former Department of Labour and subsequently as an Industrial Relations Officer in the Conciliation Service of the Labour Court. He joined the Department of Health and Children in 1990 and served in a number of areas - including the Public Health Division (which included the food safety brief). Mr Corcoran was head of the Food Unit in the Department from September 2002 until March 2008. During the same period, he also headed the Tobacco Control Unit and was involved in the successful introduction of 'smoke-free at work' (the workplace smoking ban) in March 2004. He was previously a board member of the National Cancer Registry and of the Institute of Public Health. Mr Corcoran attended three Board meetings of the Authority in 2012.

5. PROFESSOR CHARLES DALY***

Professor Charles Daly is Emeritus Professor of Food Science and Technology at University College, Cork. He has B.Sc. and M.Sc. (Dairying) degrees from the University College, Cork and a Ph.D. in Food Microbiology from Oregon State University, USA. His main research interests are in food fermentations and food safety. He has an active record of participation in national and EU Framework Research Programmes, and has served as coordinator of major transnational EU food biotechnology projects. Professor Daly has received international awards from the American Dairy Science Association; the Danone Foundation; the Dutch Dairy Nutrition Foundation and the International Union of Food Science Associations. Prof. Daly did not attend any meetings of the Authority in 2012.



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6. PROFESSOR ALBERT FLYNN

Professor Albert Flynn, B.Sc., Ph.D. (NUI, Galway), is Professor in Nutrition in the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences, University College, Cork. His areas of particular interest include: food safety risk assessment; gene-nutrient interaction in bone metabolism; food fortification and; risk benefit assessment of nutrients.

Professor Flynn is Chair of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's Scientific Committee. He is also a member of the European Food Safety Authority's Scientific Committee and is Chair of its Panel for Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies. Prof. Flynn attended four Board meetings of the Authority in 2012.

7. MS EIMEAR KILLIAN****

Ms Eimear Killian, Deputy General Manager of Glenlo Abbey Hotel, Galway, has served on the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland since April 2009. Ms Killian is a graduate of the Dublin Institute of Technology, Cathal Brugha Street, with a Diploma in Hotel Management (1996). She also holds a Certificate in Food Hygiene Management and delivers training in food hygiene. She has a wealth of management experience in many established hotels throughout Ireland to include Ferrycarrig Hotel, Wexford; Bellbridge House Hotel, Co. Clare; Jury's Hotel, Dublin; Shannon Oaks Hotel, Galway and Peacockes Hotel, Connemara. Ms Killian is an active member of Irish Hotels Federation and Skal International, where she is currently Vice-Chairman of the Galway Branch. She has also sat on the Board of Connemara Tourism. She is currently the coordinator of the Fáilte Ireland Optimus 'Mark of Best Practice' Programme and team leader of the Green Hospitality Awards at Glenlo Abbey. Ms Killian attended one Board meeting of the Authority in 2012.

8. MS ANNE NOLAN*****

Ms Anne Nolan, B.Sc. (Pharm), MBA, MPSI is Chief Executive of the Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association (IPHA). She qualified as a pharmacist in 1982 and became a member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland in 1983. She obtained a masters degree in Business Administration from University College, Dublin (UCD) in October 1993 and in recent years, has completed a number of the modules in the Director Development Programme at the Centre for Corporate Governance, UCD. From 1982 to 1987 she worked in retail pharmacy and pharmaceutical wholesaling and from 1987 to 1994 she was Healthcare Group Director and Company Secretary with the Federation of Irish Chemical Industries. She was a member of the Irish Medicines Board from 1996 to 2005. In addition to her board commitments in the healthcare sector, she is currently Chairman of the Irish Aviation Authority and is a member of the Irish board of the Smurfit Business School. Ms. Nolan is also a part-time lecturer in the School of Pharmacy at Trinity College, Dublin. Ms Nolan attended two Board meetings of the Authority in 2012.

9. MR PAT O'MAHONY

Mr Pat O'Mahony, M.V.B., M.V.M., A.M.D., M.B.A., M.R.C.V.S., is Chief Executive of the Irish Medicines Board, a position he took up in December 2002. Having spent a number of years in private veterinary practice and as technical manager in the pharmaceutical industry in Ireland and the UK, he worked in public health and was Director of Consumer Protection at the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. Mr. O'Mahony was awarded an MBA degree from the Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business, University College, Dublin in 2001. He is a member of the Management Board of the European Medicines Agency and served as Chairman from 2007 to 2011. He is also a member of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the Irish National Accreditation Board and a member of the National Patient Safety Advisory Group. Mr O'Mahony attended three Board meetings of the Authority in 2012.

* Term of office ended in March 2012

** Term of office ended in November 2012

*** Term of office ended in February 2012

**** Term of office ended in April 2012

***** Term of office ended in July 2012

The Board met four times in 2012.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEMBERS

At 31st December 2012

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Prof. Albert Flynn (Chair)

University College, Cork

Ms Paula Barry Walsh

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Colette Bonner

Department of Health

Prof. John Daniel Collins

Professor Emeritus, University College, Dublin

Prof. Martin Cormican

University College Hospital, Galway

Dr Geraldine Duffy

Teagasc

Prof. Peter Jones

University College, Cork

Prof. Brian McKenna

Formerly University College, Dublin

Dr Paul McKeown

Health Protection Surveillance Centre

Dr Michael O'Keeffe

Residues Expert

Dr Dan O'Sullivan

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Margaret O'Sullivan

Health Service Executive

Mr Ray Parle

Health Service Executive

Dr Iona Pratt

Consultant Toxicologist

Dr Ita Saul

Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin

BIOLOGICAL SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

Prof. Martin Cormican (Chair)

University College Hospital, Galway

Ms Paula Barry Walsh

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Prof. John Daniel Collins

Professor Emeritus, University College, Dublin

Dr William Doré

Marine Institute

Dr Theo de Waal

University College, Dublin

Dr Geraldine Duffy

Teagasc

Ms Catherine Foye

Health Service Executive

Dr John Griffin

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Montserrat Gutierrez

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Kieran Jordan

Teagasc

Prof. Simon More

University College, Dublin

Dr Paul McKeown

Health Protection Surveillance Centre

Mr Micheál O'Mahony

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

Dr Helen O'Shea

Cork Institute of Technology

Dr Margaret O'Sullivan

Health Service Executive

Mr Ray Parle

Health Service Executive

Dr Paul Whyte

University College, Dublin

Mr Vincent Young

Health Service Executive

CHEMICAL SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr Michael O’Keeffe (Chair)

Residues Expert

Dr Thomasina Barron

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Pdraig Burke

Health Service Executive

Dr Claire Chambers

Consultant Toxicologist

Dr Mary Canty

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Colman Concannon

Environmental Protection Agency

Ms Catherine Cosgrove

Health Service Executive

Dr Martin Danaher

Teagasc

Dr John Keegan

Health Service Executive

Dr Peadar Lawlor

Teagasc

Dr Dave McGrath

Heavy Metals Expert

Dr John Moriarty

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Evin McGovern

Marine Institute

Dr Dan O’Sullivan

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Iona Pratt

Consultant Toxicologist

Mr Joe Silke

Marine Institute

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION SUB-COMMITTEE

Ms Ita Saul (Chair)

Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital, Crumlin

Dr Teresa Bennett

Health Service Executive

Dr Clare Corish

Dublin Institute of Technology

Dr Eileen Gibney

University College, Dublin

Dr Hilda Griffin

Health Service Executive

Dr Tom Hill

University of Newcastle

Dr Mairead Kiely

University College, Cork

Prof. Barbara Livingstone

University of Ulster

Prof. Fionnuala McAuliffe

University College Dublin

Dr Sinead McCarthy

Teagasc

Prof. Malachi McKenna

St Vincent’s Hospital

Prof. Helene McNulty

University of Ulster

Dr Anne Nugent

University College, Dublin

Dr Claire O’Brien

Nutrition Science Research Consultant

Dr Margaret O’Neill

Health Service Executive

Prof. John Scott

Trinity College, Dublin

Dr Kate Younger

Dublin Institute of Technology

FOOD SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

At 31st December 2012

CHAIR

Ms Veronica Campbell
Campbell Bewley Group Ltd

MEMBERS

Mr Ray Bowe
Musgraves

Dr Susanne Boyd
Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland

Ms Sinead Finnegan
Beverage Council of Ireland

Ms Maree Gallagher
Solicitor

Mr Cormac Healy
Meat Industry Ireland

Mr Dermott Jewell
Consumers' Association of Ireland

Ms Margaret Leahy
Organic Farmer

Ms Paula Mee
Nutritionist

Mr Tim O'Brien
Restaurateur

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

Mr Martin Roper
Excellence Ireland Quality Association

INDUSTRY FORA MEMBERS

At 31st December 2012

ARTISAN FOOD PRODUCERS' FORUM

Dr Wayne Anderson (Chair)
Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Darina Allen
Ballymaloe Cookery School

Ms Myrtle Allen
Ballymaloe House

Ms Sally Barnes
Woodcock Smokery

Mr John Brennan
Leitrim Organic Centre

Ms Mary Burns
Ardrahan Cheese

Ms Jeffa Gill
Durrus Cheese

Mr Michael Gleeson
Beekeeper

Mr Michael Healy
Game expert

Mr Frank Hederman
Belvelly Smokehouse

Mr Sean Kent
Poultry Expert

Mr Dave Lang
Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland

Mr Donal Lehane
Food-NPD Teo

Mr Declan Ryan
Arbutus Bread

Mr Raymond O'Rourke
Solicitor

Ms Caroline Robinson
Irish Country Markets

FOOD SERVICE FORUM

Dr Lisa O'Connor (Chair)
Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Sinead Brennan
Subway Ireland

Ms Louise Collins
Eddie Rocket's (IRL) Limited

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

Mr Adrian Cummins
Restaurants Association of Ireland

Ms Martina Donohoe
Aramark

Ms Irene Gunning
Early Childhood Ireland

Ms Ruth Hegarty
Euro-Toques Ireland

Ms Stephanie Howard
Irish Hotels Federation

Ms Nicola McDonald
McDonalds Restaurants of Ireland

Ms Eileen Morgan
McDonalds Restaurants of Ireland

**Ms Helena O'Brien/
Ms Mary Dowling**
Catering Management Association

Mr Conor O'Kane
Maldron Hotel/Irish Hotel Federation

Mr Nigel Staveley
Compass Group

Mr Donncha Walsh
Irish Prison Service

MOLLUSCAN SHELLFISH SAFETY COMMITTEE

Mr David Lyons (Chair)
Food Safety Authority of Ireland

**Ms Vicky Lyons
Dr Terence O'Carroll**
Bord Iascaigh Mhara

Mr Paul Hickey
Health Service Executive

**Mr Richie Flynn
Mr Finian O'Sullivan
Mr Pat Mulloy**
Irish Shellfish Association

**Mr Dave Clarke
Dr Bill Doré**

**Mr Conor Duffy
Mr John Evans
Dr Sinead Keaveney
Mr Joe Silke**
Marine Institute

**Mr Brian Nolan
Mr Daniel O'Callaghan
Dr Micheál O'Mahony
Ms Aileen O'Sullivan**
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

RETAIL FORUM

Dr Lisa O'Connor (Chair)
Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Mr Ray Bowe
Musgrave Group

Ms Sonya Boyce
IBEC

Ms Selena Burke
ADM Londis Plc.

Ms Cathy Cawley
RGDATA

Mr Stuart Challenor
Tesco Ireland

Ms Elaine Clohosey
BWG Foods

Ms Suzanne Cullen
Superquinn/Musgraves

Ms Mary Daly/Una Crilly
Dunnes Stores

Mr Allan Davies
Tesco Ireland

Mr Peter Jackson
Barry's of Mallow

Ms Lynda Kenny
Musgrave Group

Ms Denise Lord
Gala Retail Services Limited

Mr Rob McEvoy
Topaz

Ms Sandra Murphy
Lidl Ireland

Mr Peter Wight
Marks and Spencer

BOARD MEMBERS'/CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT OF INTERESTS

From 1st January to 31st December 2012

Board Member	Commercial Interests		Non-Commercial Interests	
	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests
Ms Miriam Cashell	None	-	None	-
Mr Eamon Corcoran	None	-	None	-
Prof Charles Daly	Clongeel Bia Ltd.	Co Owner / Director	None	-
	Alimentary Health Ltd.	Shareholder / Director		
	Eolas International Research	Non-Executive Director		
Prof Albert Flynn	Kraft Foods North America, Inc. Kraft Foods International, Inc.	Scientific Advice	Danone Kellogg's (Irl/UK)	Support for Departmental Research
			European Food Safety Authority	Member, Scientific Committee Chairman, Scientific Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies
Ms Eimear Killian	None	-	None	-
Ms Anne Nolan	None	-	None	-
Mr Pat O'Mahony	None	-	None	-
Mr Eamonn Ryan (Chair)	None	-	None	-
Chief Executive Prof. Alan Reilly	None	-	None	-

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEMBERS' STATEMENT OF INTERESTS

From 1st January to 31st December 2012

Scientific Committee Member	Commercial Interests		Non-Commercial Interests	
	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests
Ms Paula Barry-Walsh	None	-	None	-
Dr Colette Bonner	None	-	None	-
Prof Martin Cormican	National Salmonella Shigella, Listeria Reference Laboratory	Director	EPA Green Party	Research Funding Member
Dr Geraldine Duffy	None	-	None	-
Prof Albert Flynn	Kraft Foods North America, Inc. Kraft Foods International, Inc.	Scientific Advice	Danone Kellogg's (Irl/UK) European Food Safety Authority	Support for Departmental Research Member, Scientific Committee Chairman, Scientific Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies
Prof Peter Jones	None	-	None	-
Prof Brian McKenna	None	-	None	-
Dr Paul McKeown	None	-	None	-
Dr Michael O'Keefe	None	-	European Food Safety Authority	Member, Working Group of the Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain
Dr Dan O'Sullivan	None	-	None	-
Dr Margaret B. O'Sullivan	None	-	None	-
Mr Redmond Parle	None	-	None	-
Dr Iona Pratt	None	-	European Food Safety Authority	Member, Scientific Panel
Ms Ita Saul	None	-	None	-

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FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL

for Presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas

FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

I have audited the financial statements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2012 under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The financial statements, which have been prepared under the accounting policies set out therein, comprise the statement of accounting policies, the income and expenditure account, the balance sheet, the cash flow statement and the related notes. The financial statements have been prepared in the form prescribed under Section 26 of the Act, and in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in Ireland as modified by the directions of the Minister for Health in relation to accounting for superannuation costs.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND OF THE BOARD OF THE AUTHORITY

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

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL

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

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

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

SCOPE OF AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

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

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

OPINION ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

Except for the non-recognition of the Authority's superannuation costs and liabilities in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 17, in my opinion, the financial statements, which have been properly prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in Ireland, give a true and fair view of the state of the Authority's affairs at 31 December 2012 and of its income and expenditure for 2012.

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

MATTERS ON WHICH I REPORT BY EXCEPTION

I report by exception if

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

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



Patricia Sheehan

For and on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General
30 June 2013

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AUTHORITY

The Authority presents its report for the year ended 31 December 2012.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD MEMBERS

Section 26(5) of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, requires the Authority to prepare financial statements in such form and manner as may be specified by the Minister for Health. In preparing those financial statements, the Board is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Authority will continue in operation
- Disclose and explain any material departures from applicable accounting standards

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

HEALTH AND SAFETY

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



Prof Michael Gibney
Chairman
(25th June 2013)



Mr Raymond O'Rourke
Board Member

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SYSTEM OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL

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

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

KEY CONTROL PROCEDURES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONTROLS

I confirm that for the year ended 31st December 2012 the Board carried out a review of internal financial controls.



Prof Michael Gibney

Chairman
(25th June 2013)

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

A. BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

The financial statements are prepared under the accruals method of accounting, except as stated below, and under the historical cost convention in the form approved by the Minister for Health with the concurrence of the Minister of Public Expenditure and Reform in accordance with Section 26(5) of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998.

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

B. STATE GRANTS

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

C. TAXATION

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

D. ASSETS AND DEPRECIATION

(1) Tangible Fixed Assets

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

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

(2) Intangible Fixed Assets

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

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

E. SUPERANNUATION

A superannuation scheme has been approved by the Minister in accordance with Section 39 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998. The scheme provides for a contributory defined benefit pension scheme for all employees. Deductions from salaries are retained and are treated as income by the Authority. The Department of Health's annual grant-in-aid to the Authority is net of the deductions retained. By direction of the Minister for Health, no provision has been made in the Financial Statements for future pension liabilities. Payments under the scheme are charged to income and expenditure account when paid.

F. CAPITAL ACCOUNT

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

G. OPERATING LEASES

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

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

for the Year Ended 31 December 2012

	Notes	2012	2011
		€	€
Grant Income	1	16,060,000	16,556,000
Sundry Income	2	530,590	517,627
		16,590,590	17,073,627
Transfer (to)/from Capital Account	9	91,393	(49,658)
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets		536	(4,288)
Total Income		16,682,519	17,019,681
Salaries, Pensions and related expenses	3	5,385,828	5,376,203
Other Operating Costs	4	4,124,075	3,951,789
Local Authority Veterinary Service	5	7,048,835	7,725,785
Total Expenditure		16,558,738	17,053,777
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		123,781	(34,096)
Balance at 1 January		198,404	232,500
Balance at 31 December		322,185	198,404

The Statement of Accounting Policies on page 53, and notes 1 to 15 form part of these Financial Statements. The Authority has no recognised gains or losses other than those dealt with in the Income and Expenditure Account.



Prof Michael Gibney
Chairman



Mr Raymond O'Rourke
Board Member



Prof Alan Reilly
Chief Executive

BALANCE SHEET

as at 31 December 2012

	Notes	2012	2011
		€	€
Intangible Assets	10	125,934	103,521
Tangible Assets	6	216,076	329,881
Current Assets			
Debtors and Prepayments	7	495,622	339,867
Cash at Bank and on Hand		3,884	26,080
		499,506	365,947
Current Liabilities			
Creditors - Amounts falling due within one year			
Creditors and Accruals	8	177,320	167,541
Bank Overdraft		0	0
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		322,185	198,406
Total Net Assets/(Liabilities)		664,196	631,808
Financed by			
Income and Expenditure Account		322,185	198,404
Capital Account	9	342,011	433,404
		664,196	631,808

The Statement of Accounting Policies on page 53, and notes 1 to 15 form part of these Financial Statements.



Prof Michael Gibney

Chairman



Mr Raymond O'Rourke

Board Member



Prof Alan Reilly

Chief Executive

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

for the Year Ended 31 December 2012

	Notes	2012	2011
		€	€
Reconciliation of Surplus for Year to Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities			
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		123,781	(34,096)
Transfer to/(from) Capital Account		(91,393)	49,658
Depreciation charge			
- Intangible Fixed Assets	10	137,713	87,527
- Tangible Fixed Assets	6	141,738	162,840
Decrease/(Increase) in Debtors		(155,755)	(17,831)
(Decrease)/Increase in Creditors		9,779	44,526
Loss on disposal of fixed assets		17	4,288
Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities		165,880	296,912
Cash Flow Statement			
Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities		165,880	296,912
Return on Investments and Servicing of Finance			
Capital Expenditure			
Payments to Acquire Intangible Fixed Assets	10	(160,126)	(49,019)
Payments to Acquire Tangible Fixed Assets	6	(27,950)	(255,294)
Increase/(Decrease) in Cash		(22,196)	(7,401)
Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net funds			
(Deficit)/Net funds at start of year		26,080	33,481
Net cash inflow/(outflow)		(22,196)	(7,401)
Net funds/(Deficit) at end of year		3,884	26,080

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the Year Ended 31 December 2012

1. Grant Income	2012	2011
	€	€
Department of Health Grant	16,060,000	16,556,000
	16,060,000	16,556,000

2. Sundry Income	2012	2011
	€	€
Superannuation Deductions	333,208	323,826
Sale of Publications	95,408	84,695
Sundry Income	101,974	109,106
	530,590	517,627

3. Salaries, Pensions and Related expenses	2012	2011
	€	€
Staff costs comprise		
Salaries and pensions	4,970,072	4,978,629
Social Welfare Costs		
- Employers' Contribution	415,756	397,574
	5,385,828	5,376,203

The average number of staff employed during the year

80 82

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

A Pension Levy deduction of €314,510 was made from staff salaries and paid over to the Department of Health.

4. Other Operating Costs	2012	2011
	€	€
Recruitment Costs	80	270
Board Members Fees and expenses	22,798	70,320
Travel Expenses	160,190	148,978
Insurance	35,764	40,438
Stationery, publications and postage	587,130	499,867
Telephone and Internet	78,555	200,532
Research costs	305,754	294,915
Cleaning and Catering	109,482	118,552
Repairs and maintenance	54,061	60,553
Rent and rates	1,100,435	1,089,911
Legal and consulting fees	755,944	393,091
Conferences	3,911	13,704
Communications activities (4(a))	173,778	283,631
Audit Fee	14,100	14,100
Depreciation Tangible Assets	142,292	162,840
Depreciation Intangible Assets	137,713	87,527
* Other operating costs	442,088	472,560
	4,124,075	3,951,789

* Other operating costs includes €796 entertainment expenditure (2011 : €1,376)

4(a). Communications activities	2012	2011
	€	€
Public Relations	91,808	93,978
Industry Events	59,749	84,310
Industry Liaison	22,221	105,343
	173,778	283,631

5. Local Authority Veterinary Service

The Government decided, in December 2002, that the Local Government Veterinary Service should continue to be discharged by the Local Authorities and that funding for the service would be channelled through the Department of Health and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

Previously the Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine had funded the service.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the Year Ended 31 December 2012

6. Tangible Fixed Assets	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Office Furniture	Leasehold Improve.	Scientific Equipment	Total
	€	€	€	€	€	€
Cost						
At 1 January 2012	723,698	144,265	376,179	130,119	208,788	1,583,049
Additions	23,181	1,090	2,633	1,046	0	27,950
Disposals	(19,844)	(742)	(00)	(00)	(00)	(20,586)
At 31 December 2012	727,035	144,613	378,812	131,165	208,788	1,590,413
Accumulated Depreciation						
At 1 January 2012	600,118	126,006	341,661	61,363	124,020	1,253,168
Charge for the year	77,317	8,207	10,562	14,921	31,285	142,292
Depreciation on Disposals	(19,826)	(742)	(554)	(00)	(00)	(21,122)
At 31 December 2012	657,609	133,471	351,669	76,284	155,305	1,374,338
Net Book Value						
At 31 December 2012	69,426	11,142	27,142	54,881	53,483	216,076
At 31 December 2011	123,580	18,259	34,518	68,756	84,768	329,881

7. Debtors & Prepayments	2012	2011
Amounts falling due within one year	€	€
Sundry Income	2,044	6,774
Prepayments	493,578	333,093
	495,622	339,867

The prepayments figure above includes an amount of €56,272 in respect of computer equipment purchased in December, but which was not brought into use until 2013.

8. Creditors and Accruals	2012	2011
Amounts falling due within one year	€	€
Trade Creditors	95,495	97,913
Accruals	46,645	42,054
Payroll Accruals	(54,069)	(785)
Pension Levy	(12)	0
Tax Creditor PAYE/PRSI	(489)	55
Tax Creditor - VAT	67,881	27,280
Tax Creditor - PSWT	21,869	1,024
	177,320	167,541

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the Year Ended 31 December 2012

9. Capital Account	2012	2012	2011	2011
	€	€	€	€
At 1 January		433,404		383,746
Transfer from/(to) Income and Expenditure Account				
Funds allocated to acquire Fixed Assets	27,950		255,294	
Funds allocated to acquire Intangible Assets	160,126		49,019	
Amount released on Disposal	536		(4,288)	
Amount amortised in line with asset depreciation	(280,004)	(91,393)	(250,367)	49,658
Balance at 31 December		342,011		433,404

10. Intangible Fixed Assets	2012	2011
	€	€
1 January, Opening Net Book Value	103,521	142,029
Additions at Cost	160,126	49,019
Less Depreciation Charge for the year	(137,713)	(87,527)
31 December, Closing Net Book Value	125,934	103,521

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

11. Operating Leases

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

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

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

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

The annual cost of the leases excluding service charges is €583,000 (2011 €583,000)

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

	2012	2011
	€	€
Expiring within 1 year	0	0
Expiring during the years 2 to 5	0	0
Expiring thereafter	211,000	211,000

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the Year Ended 31 December 2012

12. Board Remuneration	2012	2011
	€	€
Eamonn Ryan - Chairman	4,275	17,100
Charles Daly - Board Member	1,283	7,695
Eamon Corcoran - Board Member	7,054	7,695
Daniel Collins - Board Member	1,283	7,695
Tom Collins - Board Member	0	6,413
Albert Flynn - Board Member	0	6,413
Anne Nolan - Board Member	4,489	7,695
Eimear Killian - Board Member	2,565	7,695
	20,949	68,401

Expenses paid to the Chairman and Board members in 2012 amount to €1,850 (2011 €1,919)

13. CEO Remuneration	2012	2011
	€	€
Chief Executives Remuneration	153,855	153,855
Delegates Allowance	0	0
	153,855	153,855

The CEO did not receive any Performance Related Award in 2012, in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (No 2) Act, 2009.

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

14. Board Members' Interests

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

15. Approval of Financial Statements

The Financial Statements were approved by the Board on 23rd May, 2013.



Food Safety Authority of Ireland

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