



FOOD
STANDARDS
AGENCY

Putting the Consumer First

Departmental Report Spring 2005

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Food Standards Agency
Departmental Report

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State
for Health and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury
by Command of Her Majesty

June 2005

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The purpose of this report is to present to Parliament and the public a clear and informative account of the expenditure, activities and performance of the Food Standards Agency.

This report and those of 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 are available on our website at www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps

Foreword

I am pleased to present the Food Standards Agency's annual Departmental Report, which details our key activities and achievements for the year April 2004 to March 2005.

In addition to carrying out our regular public protection responsibilities, this has been a year of review, transition and renewal. Our new Strategic Plan was launched, setting ambitious targets for the next five years; a new Chair has been recruited; and the FSA Board commissioned an independent review of performance against the original objectives we set ourselves in April 2000.

We were pleased that the review, conducted by Baroness Dean of Thornton-le-Fylde, identified the areas where further work is needed, and Dame Deirdre Hutton will address these when she succeeds Sir John Krebs as Chair in July 2005.

The review also concluded that the FSA enjoys the overwhelming support of its stakeholders, having worked hard to deliver in accordance with its core values. Sir John embodied these values throughout his chairmanship, and it is a tribute to his leadership that the Agency is now recognised for its independence, openness throughout its policymaking process, and for clear and honest communication of risk and uncertainty. The effect has been to help restore consumer confidence in those responsible for food safety.

While fewer people are now falling ill from foodborne infections than five years ago, our annual Consumer Attitudes to Food Standards survey shows that food safety generally, and food poisoning in particular, remain a major concern. The FSA has a wide range of initiatives ongoing under the umbrella of its Foodborne Disease Strategy and substantial progress is being made towards our five-year target of a 20 per cent reduction in the incidence of foodborne disease by 2006. Greater uptake of risk-based food safety management practices has been a particular focus, and the Agency has developed a package of innovative and easy-to-understand schemes to help small and medium-sized businesses in the different countries of the UK with the European hygiene regulations being introduced in 2006.

BSE is no longer one of the public's top five specific food safety concerns. Only a few hundred cases of infection in cattle now occur each year (compared with 37,000 cases at the peak of the crisis) and the FSA has reviewed the proportionality of measures protecting the public from exposure to potentially infected meat.

Based on this review, the government announced its intention, in December 2004, to switch from a ban on cattle aged over thirty months entering the food chain (the OTM rule) to a more proportionate testing regime, subject to guarantees of robustness in the new system. The Agency will take on responsibility for auditing this system to ensure that consumers can continue to have confidence in the safety of beef once the changes are introduced.

Increasing consumer interest in diet and health is reflected in our annual survey, with the amount of sugar, fat and salt in food featuring as three of the five biggest specific concerns people have about food. The highest increase, of seven per cent, was for salt.

The FSA has warned consumers of the risks to health of eating too much salt through a public information campaign, fronted by Sid the Slug. Campaign evaluation found that the numbers of people checking food labels for salt content and claiming to be making a special effort to cut down on salt increased substantially - by 50 per cent and 73 per cent respectively - following the campaign in autumn 2004.

In partnership with the Department of Health, we continue to encourage the food industry to reduce the amount of salt used in processed foods and in catering. Many major manufacturers, retailers and food service providers have now agreed to make stepped reductions over the next five years, working towards the 6g dietary guideline for adults by 2010.

Both the Government's White Paper, Choosing Health, and the Agency's Strategic Plan 2005-2010, aim to make it easier for people to make healthier choices about what they eat. Providing clear, easy-to-understand information on food packaging is one way of doing this, and the FSA has been working in partnership with the food industry and others to develop a 'signposting' scheme that will help consumers to distinguish at a glance between healthier and less healthy options.

Education is a key part of encouraging healthy eating, and the FSA has been working closely with the UK education and health departments, and others, on all aspects of food in schools, from improving the nutritional standards of school dinners to developing teaching materials for the classroom. We are also working with governors on how to reinforce healthy eating messages consistently throughout the school. A particularly practical aspect of our work has been to sponsor research demonstrating the viability of stocking drinks vending machines with healthier items.

Alongside these longer-term strategies to improve food safety and diet, the FSA has, on average, responded to more than two incidents a day to protect consumers from potentially harmful foods. Many of these alerts related to foods contaminated with potentially carcinogenic red dyes. February 2005 saw the biggest ever recall of food products in the UK, involving over 550 different processed food products identified by the Agency as containing Worcestershire sauce from a batch contaminated with the industrial dye, Sudan 1.

As a result of the FSA's experience in handling these incidents we will be setting up an incidents task force to strengthen controls in the food chain. We are also leading harmonisation efforts at a European level to improve procedures for checking the integrity of imported foods and ingredients across the EC.

The Dean Review acknowledged the FSA's achievement in building public confidence in food safety, and in creating the modern culture of openness which underpins that confidence. But it also pointed out that in doing so we have raised expectations for the challenges ahead of improving food safety further, better informing consumer choice, and helping to make healthier eating easier. Clearly, we must raise our game higher still.



Julia Unwin

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Departmental Report Spring 2005

Who we are and what we do

- 1.1 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) was set up in April 2000 to protect public health and to restore public confidence in the way food safety decisions are made. The Food Standards Act 1999 defines our main purpose as:

‘to protect public health from risks which may arise in connection with the consumption of food, and otherwise to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food.’
- 1.2 We are committed to three core values that govern all that we do. They are to:
 - **put the consumer first**
 - **be open and accessible**
 - **be an independent voice**
- 1.3 Our job is to protect consumers from health risks, and otherwise to look after their interests in all matters connected with food. We have a wide remit, involving food safety across the whole food chain – ‘from farm to fork’.
- 1.4 We advise Ministers on all issues relating to food safety and standards. Our staff negotiate on behalf of the UK in Europe and other international fora, where much of the legal framework and standards for the food market are set. We provide guidance to the public on healthy eating and carry out surveys on nutrition and diet to monitor changing eating habits. We work with the Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) (an executive agency of the FSA with a Great Britain remit), local authorities and with other Government departments to ensure that regulations on food safety and standards are enforced to protect consumers. In Northern Ireland the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) performs the equivalent functions to the MHS on behalf of the FSA.
- 1.5 The FSA is a UK-wide body – a non-ministerial Government department – operating at arm’s length from Ministers and governed by a Board appointed to act in the public interest. This independence is key to our success in restoring public confidence.
- 1.6 Following a full public consultation, we launched our Strategic Plan 2005 – 10 on 7 December 2004. You can find out more about the Strategic Plan in section 4 of this report. The Strategic Plan is published in full, in both English and Welsh, on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/dec/strategicplan

- 1.7 In this report you can find out more about the FSA in Appendix 1 (About the FSA), Appendix 2 (Our Chief Executive and Board), and Appendix 3 (How we are organised). Much more detailed information can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk. The website is updated regularly. A detailed contact list by subject is available at: www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/contactus
- 1.8 During 2004/05, we launched two additional websites: www.eatwell.gov.uk/ offers advice to consumers on making healthier choices, and www.salt.gov.uk/ supports our salt campaign. The aim of the campaign is to save lives by reducing the amount of salt people eat.

How we are doing

- 2.1 A detailed report of our performance against our published Service Delivery Agreement (SDA) targets can be found at Appendix 4. The rest of this chapter sets out just some of our key achievements in the past year.
- 2.2 Our plans for the next 5 years were published for consultation at the beginning of April 2004 and finalised in December 2004 (see chapter 4). We signalled our intent to focus our work in 4 main areas: **Food Safety, Eating for Health, Choice, and How we will deliver**. The key achievements for the past year are set out under these headings.

FOOD SAFETY

Foodborne illness

- 2.3 We are continuing our work throughout the food chain – with industry, with our partners in local authorities, and through public health campaigns – to achieve our target to reduce foodborne disease by 20% by 2006. Finalised UK figures for the year 2003 showed a reduction of 15% for 2003 in comparison with the year 2000.
- 2.4 In primary production, we continued our support for an industry-led scheme to monitor *Salmonella* carriage in pigs and to require producers to take steps to reduce this. Results published in April 2004 showed a quarter of samples taken from carcasses for the monitoring part of this programme tested positive for *Salmonella* antibodies. On-farm action plans have been developed by Defra and DARD (in Northern Ireland) to target farms with the highest percentage of positive samples.
- 2.5 We continued to implement our strategy for reducing *Campylobacter* in chicken and our campaign to improve biosecurity on the broiler farm. In October 2004, we launched a programme of training events organised by the individual poultry companies and regional events organised by the FSA in order to promote the key biosecurity messages. The rolling survey of retail chicken in Wales was extended to include Northern Ireland and surveillance, using a similar approach, is being piloted in England and Scotland.

- 2.6 We published a revised booklet 'Producing Beef Cattle for Slaughter' in both English and Welsh, and in summer 2004 launched a 'Safe Sheep' initiative. The initiative was featured at the Scot Sheep, Bath and West, Royal Highland, Great Yorkshire, Royal Welsh and the National sheep event shows and the booklet was launched at the Smithfield Show. A database containing results from microbiological testing in abattoirs was launched to enable UK meat processors to make maximum use of microbiological data and to compare an individual plant's performance with a national data set. More information is available at www.redmeat.org.uk
- 2.7 Our work with local authorities, with our Executive Agency, the Meat Hygiene Service, and with DARD in Northern Ireland, on food law enforcement (described later in this report) makes a key contribution to our strategy to reduce food-borne illness. For example, the Eat Safe award scheme in Northern Ireland, launched as a pilot by FSA NI in June 2003, has been developing well this year. More than 80 restaurants are now entitled to display an Eat Safe certificate, and support for the scheme is growing. With the extension of the scheme to Scotland from January 2005, it is envisaged that awareness of the award will grow, providing consumers with a useful tool when making informed choices about catering establishments. The scope of the scheme has been expanded to incorporate several additional types of catering premises, and there are calls for further expansion. You can find more information about Eat Safe on our website at www.eatsafe.gov.uk/ The Welsh Food Hygiene Award Scheme, launched in March 2002, has made approximately 2000 awards to date. We plan to evaluate these schemes, and equivalent schemes set up by local authorities in other parts of the UK, by the end of 2006. If the results of the evaluation are positive we will use them to help us promote such schemes more widely.
- 2.8 Fifteen awards of £10,000 each were made to local authorities in England to develop and implement local hygiene promotion initiatives, with particular reference to the FSA's 4Cs (cleaning, cooking, cooling and avoiding cross-contamination) Hygiene Campaign messages. One of the projects supported won the Food and Drink Federation *foodlink* Communicating Food Safety National Award in October 2004 and two others were highly commended. Projects included the development of food hygiene

advice for new mothers, production of information in specific ethnic languages and for those with learning difficulties, and workshops to provide practical demonstrations of good hygiene practices to a wide variety of community and age groups. A similar scheme was operated in Scotland. Awards of up to £10,000 each were subject to a competitive bidding process and included initiatives aimed at schoolchildren, children in care and those with disabilities, the elderly, and new mothers.

- 2.9 A major television advertising Campaign to promote messages on good food hygiene practices and how to avoid cross-contamination in the home was launched in June 2004. The launch of this Campaign coincided with the FSA-sponsored FDF *foodlink* Food Safety Week joint initiative, which also had cross-contamination as its theme. Our Christmas turkey television advert was screened again in Scotland in December 2004.
- 2.10 The Muslim Organisations' Working Group, established to assist the work of the Food Hygiene Campaign, has provided valuable cultural insights into Campaign activities and how the Campaign's messages can be communicated most effectively and appropriately in Muslim communities, and has also influenced our thinking on communicating to consumers more generally.
- 2.11 Since its launch in November 2003, the FSA's 'Cooking Bus' mobile kitchen/classroom has visited 35 schools, staying a week at each, taught nearly 4000 children and trained over 560 teachers around the country. The venues for the bus' visits are in target areas of social deprivation and the dishes cooked are selected to reflect the age and ability of the children, as well as the ethnic background of the area. The bus' programme is designed to fit with the National Curriculum and teachers' work objectives. The bus was also used successfully for out-of-school community activities in summer holidays of 2004. You can find out more about the cooking bus on our website at www.food.gov.uk/healthiereating/bus/
- 2.12 A series of exhibitions and road shows to promote food hygiene messages has taken place around the UK, including presentation of our popular spoof cookery show *Bad Food Live!* at the BBC Good Food Show in Birmingham in November 2004. FSA NI exhibited at the Royal Ulster Agricultural Show at Balmoral in a

joint initiative with the Food Safety Promotion Board and local authorities. We attended the Visitscotland EXPO event at the Aberdeen exhibition and conference centre in April 2004 and attracted considerable interest in the forthcoming changes in food law enforcement arising from EU consolidation. At the Royal Highland Show in June 2004 the refurbished interactive kitchen was trialled. In Wales the FSA's mobile education resource toured extensively in 2004 promoting key food hygiene messages (in both English and Welsh) to a wide range of audiences at public events, notably the Royal Welsh Agriculture Show.

- 2.13 We have continued our programme to seek alternatives to the mouse bioassay for shellfish biotoxin testing. The Jellett Test Kit was introduced to run in parallel with the Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) programme as a validation trial. This will continue throughout the 2005 season. It is anticipated that a comparative trial of LC-MS against the Diarrhetic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP) mouse bioassay will begin in June 2005. Toxicological studies, to investigate atypical responses in the DSP test, have been completed and the results are being reviewed. Toxicological studies, to investigate atypical responses in the DSP test, have been completed and the results are being reviewed.

BSE testing of OTM cattle

- 2.14 The FSA Board's open meeting on 6 July 2004 considered revised estimates of the foodborne risk to public health from replacing the Over Thirty Months (OTM) rule by BSE testing of OTM cattle. These estimates took account of developments in the evidence since the Board last advised on the issue in July 2003. The Board confirmed the FSA's earlier advice to Ministers that replacing the OTM rule by testing for cattle born after July 1996 would continue to be justified on the grounds of the public health risk in relation to food and proportionality, subject to the putting in place of a robust testing system. Subsequently the Government announced on 1 December 2004 the start of a managed transition towards lifting the OTM rule. A final switch to testing would happen only once the FSA – assisted by an independent group – had advised Ministers that the testing system was robust. The FSA Board's open meeting of 9 December 2004 considered and approved the independent group's recommendations for a testing regimen and agreed that the next stage should be a full trial of the system to

assess whether or not it will be robust. The Board considered a progress report on the trials at their open meeting on 12 May 2005; they will consider a further report at their July meeting. Board papers are available on our website at www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/

Responding to food incidents to protect the public

2.15 We regularly deal with food incidents which may affect the health of consumers. We always take a risk-based and proportionate approach in collaboration with local authorities and other partner organisations, after seeking the advice of independent experts. We recognise that there is no such thing as zero risk, and aim to reduce risk to the level that would be acceptable to the ordinary consumer, whilst taking risks to vulnerable groups into account. The following are just two examples of issues we dealt with in 2004/05:

- Sudan I is a dye that should not be added to food and is banned in the UK and across the EU because it can contribute to an increased risk of cancer. When this dye was discovered in a batch of chilli powder used to manufacture a Worcester sauce, which was then used as an ingredient in a wide range of products, the FSA worked with the industry and local authorities to ensure that any affected foods were removed from sale. We also issued advice to consumers that at the levels present the risk was likely to be very small, but it was sensible to avoid eating any food known to be contaminated. There was no risk of immediate ill health. This was an enormous undertaking: hundreds of products were affected in thousands of shops. The vast majority of contaminated foods were removed very quickly and that provided some reassurance to consumers. Latest information about Sudan 1 can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/safereating/sudani/
- during 2004, there was an increase in outbreaks and sporadic cases of illness due to non-native types of *Salmonella*. A review of the evidence implicated eggs of Spanish origin, used in catering premises, as the source of many of these cases. Publicity was given to advice on the safe handling and use of eggs and a dossier of evidence was presented to the Spanish Food Authorities and the European Commission.

EATING FOR HEALTH

Salt

2.16 We are working with UK health departments and with a wide range of stakeholders to reduce the average salt intake of UK adults from the current 9.5g to 6g per day by 2010, and to reduce the salt intake of children in line with Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) age-specific recommendations, also by 2010. We have an extensive programme of work with industry aimed at reducing the levels of salt in a wide range of foodstuffs. To support this work, we launched a dedicated website www.salt.gov.uk which not only explains why too much salt is bad for your heart, but also contains a wealth of information on salt and health, how to read labels and calculate how much salt is in food, the benefits of less salt, and cooking without salt. The supporting campaign to reduce salt intake has wide support: you can read examples of endorsements from celebrity chefs, industry, and other stakeholders on the website. More details about the campaign can be found in paragraphs 2.90 to 2.92.

Eating more healthily

2.17 We also launched our new website www.eatwell.gov.uk. The site is packed with practical advice and tips on eating more healthily and understanding food labels, as well as information about shopping, cooking and storing food safely. The new site has been developed as part of the FSA's strategy to help consumers make informed choices, make it easier for people to choose a healthy diet and reduce diet-related disease. FSA advice is underpinned by the latest scientific evidence and many pages on *eatwell* are linked direct to www.food.gov.uk where more in-depth information and the latest news from the FSA can be found.

Food: the local vision

2.18 We continue to support *food: the local vision*, the joint statement by the Local Government Association (LGA), Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS), and the FSA. We share the joint aim of promoting access to safe, sustainable, and nutritious food with the aim of improving community health and wellbeing. The joint statement contains a number of brief "case

studies” describing local, or regional, food related initiatives. We want to reinforce the relevance of many local government policy initiatives and therefore the contribution of various local authority services to the food agenda. We acknowledge the key role that local authorities play in achieving the aims and priorities reflected in the joint statement. The LGA and LACORS also want to particularly promote the contribution of local authority environmental health and trading standards regulatory services to the wider food agenda, including, but not restricted to, enforcement activity.

- 2.19 Our dedicated website www.foodvision.gov.uk/ builds on the original publication by providing detailed write-ups of particular local, or regional, initiatives. Where appropriate downloads of original documentation on the particular initiative are provided. While researching the various initiatives it became clear that it would be helpful to create what we have described as “toolkits”. These draw together good practice from a number of local/regional initiatives in delivering a particular project.

Working with schools

- 2.20 We continue to work across Government to support food and nutrition activity in schools, including food provision. Central to this work we led cross-government work to develop minimum food and nutrition competencies young people need to live independent lives. The competencies can be found at www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/Consultations/completed_consultations/completeduk/gripswithgrub
- 2.21 In England, we work with the organisation representing school governors to help improve nutrition awareness in schools. The National Governors’ Council (NGC) acts as a voice for the 250,000 governors in England, putting their point of view to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and other government departments. During the autumn term 2003, the NGC distributed an information pack and questionnaire. The FSA had carried out a survey of children’s school lunchboxes which revealed high levels of saturated fats, sugars, and in particular salt. The information pack drew governors’ attention to this survey and highlighted the issue of lunchbox food. It also asked governors to consider food in the wider school context including vending machines,

school meals, and breakfast clubs, as well as teaching about food within the curriculum. The full report of the first 100 questionnaires returned, and the results of our school lunchbox survey, can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/apr/ngc

2.22 The NGC is now working with the FSA to draw up a framework illustrating governing body responsibility for policy development and monitoring in relation to food in schools, to clarify the respective management roles of governing bodies and head teachers.

2.23 We asked the Health Education Trust to carry out a feasibility study into healthier drinks vending in schools. The key to success was found to be involving students in the decisions made about the machine, its products and prices. The more successful schools used a “whole school” approach to healthier eating so the vending machines support healthier eating messages given in lessons. The FSA is planning to develop for schools a practical guide to introducing healthier drinks vending machines. This will include more detail on how to make the project successful and commercially sound. The full report of the study can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/apr/vending

2.24 In July 2004, we published a joint FSA/Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) report into food and nutrition education resources in nursery and primary schools in England. Ofsted inspectors, accompanied by nutritionists commissioned by the FSA, visited 25 nurseries and infant and primary schools to identify factors that support or prevent the effective use of food and nutrition education in helping children make good food choices. The full report can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/jul/foodinschools

2.25 Also in July, we published a report into school meals in English secondary schools by the FSA and DfES. The report shows that most schools are meeting nutritional standards but that although progress is being made to improve the choice and nutritional quality of food, many pupils do not choose a healthy balanced meal. The full report can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/jul/secondaryschoolmeals

2.26 As a result we have agreed activity to work with DfES to develop target specifications for processed foods in school meals, pilot and model changes in catering practice, and feed this work into a panel to revise secondary school meal standards; support head teachers and governors in contracting issues; and develop a short accredited catering course for school cooks.

Advice on fish consumption

2.27 SACN, in conjunction with the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT), produced their report '*Advice on fish consumption: benefits and risks*' in June 2004 following a request from the FSA to weigh the nutritional benefits against possible risks and to develop coherent dietary advice for the public on consumption of fish.

2.28 In response to the report, we were able for the first time to recommend maximum levels at which the health benefits of preventing heart disease clearly outweigh the possible risks from dioxins. Based on SACN advice the FSA recommends that men and boys, and women past child bearing age, can eat up to four portions of oily fish a week. Women of child bearing age, including pregnant and breast-feeding women, and girls, can eat up to two portions of oily fish a week. The full report can be found on the SACN website at www.sacn.gov.uk

Vitamin A

2.29 In January 2005, SACN issued a draft report reviewing advice about vitamin A. Following a public consultation, SACN will consider comments and expects to publish the final report in summer 2005. More information, including the text of the draft report, can be found on the SACN website at www.sacn.gov.uk

Fat and carbohydrate in the diet

2.30 A number of new FSA-funded research studies started including a study that aims to determine the optimal quantity and composition of both fat and carbohydrate in the diet to minimise cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk, a central issue in public health nutrition. A further study is investigating the link between diet in early life and bone mass and cognitive function at four years of age.

CHOICE

The Consumer Attitudes Survey

- 2.31 Each year we conduct an annual investigation into your attitudes to food, covering issues such as safety and hygiene, nutrition, diet and shopping. The results of these surveys will help to inform us about consumer trends around food. They will also help us to decide which areas we need to focus on if we are to meet our strategic objective to maintain consumer confidence in the regulatory system for food safety and standards.
- 2.32 The 2004 survey highlighted a number of key trends that have emerged since 2000, including:
- concern about food safety has remained stable over the five years of the survey at around 70%
 - concern about raw beef and raw eggs has been decreasing. (Beef to 44% from 61% in 2000, and raw eggs to 17% from 26%)
 - more than half had no concerns when asked to think spontaneously about wider issues relating to food. This has remained stable since 2000
 - when asked if they were concerned about any food issues shown on a list:
 - salt in food was the issue of most concern, at 57% (a 7% increase since 2003)
 - food poisoning was next at 56%, (a decrease of 4% since 2003), then
 - the amount of fat (53%) and
 - sugar (50%) in food
 - BSE is no longer in the top 5 prompted food concerns. It has decreased from 66% in 2000 to 44% in 2004
 - correct knowledge of 'at least 5 portions' of fresh fruit and vegetables a day remained stable since 2003 at just under 60% (after steadily increasing since from 43% in 2000). Half of respondents claimed to have eaten at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables the previous day which represents a 23 percentage point increase since 2003

- among those people who say they look at food labels there has been a statistically significant increase in people looking at nutritional information from 55% in 2000, to 75% in 2004. The largest increases have been with reference to levels of salt, sugar and fat
- concern about the accuracy of food labelling has increased since 2002 with – 44% now concerned compared to 34% in 2002
- awareness of the FSA continues to increase year-on-year from 58% in 2000 to 79% in 2004
- since 2003, the FSA has been the most frequently spontaneously mentioned source of information on food standards and safety
- although confidence in the role played by the FSA in protecting health has dipped slightly over the last 12 months, the current figure of 57% represents an overall net increase of 7% in consumer confidence in the five years to 2004

2.33 Full survey results are available from our website:
www.food.gov.uk/yourviews/surveys/foodsafety-nutrition-diet/

Promotion of food to children

2.34 The FSA looked carefully at the evidence on the effect of food promotion on children's diets and considered the likely effectiveness of a range of possible actions, on which it promoted a wide-ranging debate. In July 2004, the FSA Board agreed an Action Plan on Food Promotions and Children's Diets which was aimed at Government, industry, schools and others, and was designed to encourage practices that promote healthy eating for children. This plan included a commitment to publish best practice advice on signposting of foods, meals or snacks high in salt, sugar or fat and of healthier options. More information can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/pressreleases/2004/jul/boardpromojuly

Signposting

2.35 In November 2004 we released new research suggesting that people would like simple labelling signposts to help them make informed and healthier food choices. Both the FSA's Action Plan on Food Promotions and Children's Diet and the government's public health white paper *Choosing Health: making healthier choices easier*¹ identified signposting as a possible method for helping people make healthier food choices. We worked with stakeholders and developed a number of options. Five of these options were consumer tested. We are now working with the food industry, consumer groups, and public health groups to develop these – and potentially other – options, to see which concepts will work best in practice. Further research will be carried out to test how people react to these options. We plan to complete this work during summer 2005. Further information about signposting, including examples of all the signposts tested can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/nov/signpostfaq

Nutrient profiling

2.36 In November 2004, we also launched a formal consultation on our research to develop a scheme to categorise foods based on the nutrients they contain. The research was led by a team from the British Heart Foundation Health Promotion Research Group, and was overseen by an expert group comprising nutrition scientists, dieticians, food industry and consumer organisation representatives, and policymakers. The outcome of the research could help underpin some of the signposting options. It could also be used more widely: for example, it could help identify healthier options for use in school vending machines, and tackle the current imbalance in television advertising aimed at children. The research and the consultation documents are available on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/nov/signconsult

Food supplements guidance

2.37 Following publication of the report of the UK's Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals (EVM) in May 2003, we introduced advice

¹ Available at www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsLibrary/fs/en

that applies to some food supplements containing high levels of vitamins and minerals. The advice covers advisory statements to be included on labels and, in a limited number of cases, suggests reformulation. The advice was agreed by the FSA and food supplements industry representatives. The aim of the advice is to protect consumers by providing information which will alert them to the potential for adverse effects, and enable them to make informed choices. The advice was published in May 2004 and can be found on our website at

www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/labelregsguidance/supplementreformguidance

- 2.38 The EC Food Supplements Directive (2002/46/EC) lays down provisions for setting maximum permitted levels of vitamins and minerals present in food supplements. We are currently waiting for advice from the European Food Safety Authority and proposals from the European Commission regarding these levels. It is anticipated that the Commission will bring forward proposals after summer 2005.
- 2.39 The Food Standards Agency is providing some resource to the food supplements industry to fund an independent expert to assist in relation to the preparation of dossiers. This being provided to ensure that as many dossiers as possible are submitted for assessment by the European Food Safety Authority by 1 August in order to maintain consumer choice regarding the vitamins, minerals and their sources which can continue to be used in food supplements in the UK.
- 2.40 The Food Supplements Directive has been the subject of judicial review in the European Court for Justice (ECJ) through a challenge to the legality of the directive by the Health Food Manufacturers Association and National Association of Health Food Stores.
- 2.41 The hearing was held on 25 January 2005 and the Advocate General's opinion was issued on 5 April 2005. This concluded that the Food Supplements Directive 2002/46/EC is invalid on the grounds that it infringes the principle of proportionality because basic principles of Community law, such as the requirements of legal protection, of legal certainty and of sound administration have not been properly taken into account. The Advocate General's opinion is not binding on the ECJ and the UK remains

under legal obligation to implement the Directive unless and until it is declared invalid by the court. The ECJ judgement is expected before 1 August 2005. The European Commission will then decide on a course of action.

HOW WE DELIVER

Independent review of the FSA

2.42 At its meeting in September 2004, the FSA Board decided to commission an independent review of the FSA and asked Baroness Brenda Dean of Thornton-le-Fylde to undertake the review. The terms of reference of the review were: to generate an external, independent, authoritative and high-level assessment of whether the FSA has delivered its published objectives; to assess the performance of the FSA to date, and in particular the extent to which it has operated in accordance with its key values; to assess the extent to which the FSA, operates effectively as a UK-wide organisation in a policy area that is a devolved responsibility; to appraise how the FSA is viewed by its stakeholders; and to make recommendations to the FSA Board on any identified areas of weakness in the delivery of its consumer protection role, or in any other aspects of its performance. The report of the review was published in March 2005 and is available on our website. The FSA Board has accepted all 22 of the review's recommendations, and the FSA's response to the review report is also available on our website www.food.gov.uk

Food Law Enforcement

2.43 We have continued to work closely with local authorities and port health authorities to improve consistency and effectiveness in food law enforcement.

2.44 We published a consolidated and revised Code of Practice and associated Practice Guidance for enforcement officers in England in October 2004 and in Wales in February 2005. We have continued our programme of low cost training for enforcement officers across the UK with, for example, a number of courses run in 2004/05 covering areas such as HACCP, speciality cheese making and on-farm pasteurisation. Over 500 officers attended

the courses. We have also produced a video on sampling techniques which was distributed to all local authorities.

- 2.45 We will be integrating the FSA's programme of authenticity surveys more closely with food standards activities of local authorities. To this end, a new Authenticity Surveillance Sub-group has been formed with representation from 6 regional groups, as well as Public Analysts and consumer representatives, to plan the future programme.
- 2.46 The FSA is working with local authorities and public analysts to develop and roll out a National Food Surveillance System. By the end of 2004/05, the system will be used throughout Scotland and by over 30% of Public Analyst laboratories in England and their associated local authorities, with further rollout over the next few years. This scheme will also be extended to Northern Ireland in 2005, and to Wales in 2006. The system will help effective targeting of food safety programmes, provide evidence for informed action to protect public health and direct future sampling programmes and surveillance.
- 2.47 The enforcement portal on our website was launched in September 2003 to improve communication links between the FSA and local authorities. In March 2004 the portal was a finalist in the Revolution Magazine Internet awards and in June 2004 we were shortlisted for the "Modernising Government" category of the New Statesman magazine New Media Awards. In May 2004, we put all letters from the FSA to local authorities online to provide a more effective means of storing and retrieving up-to-date information and guidance. We have continued to provide information and update seminars for local authorities this year by attending local food liaison groups so all Las are covered.
- 2.48 We have launched the Engagement of Asian Communities Project to identify the concerns of Asian food businesses and consumers and promote good practice. We have also extended the student placement scheme which offers paid placements to environmental health students to help local authorities address problems of recruitment and retention.
- 2.49 We have continued to audit food law enforcement activity by local authorities. By the end of March 2005, 99 authorities (70 in

England, all 22 in Wales and 7 in Northern Ireland) had been subject to a full audit. In Scotland all 32 authorities received a partial audit once a year for three years up to the end of March 2004, which ensured that all areas of the Standard had been audited against. 105 authorities have been subject to themed audits (88 in England, 9 in Northern Ireland and 8 in Scotland). Recent themes have focused on statistical monitoring returns, inter-authority auditing and internal monitoring activities. Reports have been presented to the FSA Board and the Enforcement Liaison Group on audit trends. Information on good practice found during our audits have been published on our website, together with copies of all audit reports, and the follow-up action plans developed by the relevant local authorities.

2.50 During 2004/05, we have pursued an Action Plan, working with local authorities, to help them to provide more accurate and timely monitoring data on their food law enforcement services. Some immediate changes to the current monitoring form have been introduced, to make it easier to use. Supplementary guidance was also provided to local authorities, to help them adapt the current monitoring form to the changes made in the new Code of Practice issued in England and Scotland in October 2004, in Northern Ireland in January 2005, and in Wales in February 2005. A strategic level joint working group with local authorities produced, in January 2005, specific proposals to change the way in which we report on local authority enforcement activity; these proposals were issued for consultation in March 2005 to all local authorities. In addition, also in January 2005, we launched a major review of the details of the whole monitoring system; this is scheduled to be completed by 2006. Together, these two initiatives will meet the target for enforcement in our new Strategic Plan.

Feed Law Enforcement

2.51 In liaison with local authorities, the FSA has taken forward a number of initiatives to strengthen animal feed law enforcement. This includes the introduction of a national inspection plan, which provides local authorities with enforcement priorities and guidance. We have also organised a series of seminars to advise enforcement officers on feed controls on farms. In addition, a

video has been produced and distributed to local authorities, showing examples of good and bad on-farm feeding practices.

Imported Food

- 2.52 The Government asked the FSA to lead a project to secure a Step Change improvement in the co-ordination and delivery of local authority inspection of imported foodstuffs between April 2003 and March 2004. Working closely with colleagues in port health authorities, local authorities, Defra and Customs, we took forward a number of initiatives to improve the local authority controls in place. These included: a national training programme for all UK local authorities; enhanced imported food enforcement guidance; a central technical database on imported food controls for UK ports; and the audit of the imported food control arrangements for non-animal origin at all UK main points of entry. In addition, we established a dedicated imported food helpline and email box to handle enquiries from enforcement officers, trade and the public, supported by a specific imported food section on our website.
- 2.53 As part of the Step Change work, for 2004/05 we provided an additional £840,000 funding for enhanced sampling and surveillance of imported food by Port Health Authorities and inland local authorities. 59 awards were made, covering over 140 local authorities and ports.
- 2.54 In May 2004 the Government reviewed the FSA's work and agreed that a Step Change improvement in controls had been achieved. Subsequently, the FSA Chairman wrote to all UK local authorities acknowledging the improvements made emphasising the need for the improvements to be sustained and built on. Further information on the Step Change can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/stepchangereport.pdf

MHS and DARD

- 2.55 The MHS enforces meat hygiene and animal welfare at slaughter legislation in 1,253 licensed fresh meat premises in Great Britain. This includes abattoirs, meat cutting plants, and cold stores. The meat inspection service determines and verifies that all red meat, poultry meat (white meat) and wild game that has been processed

and health-marked has been produced in accordance with the Regulations.

- 2.56 The aim of the MHS is to safeguard public health and animal welfare through fair, consistent and effective enforcement of hygiene, inspection and welfare regulations in Great Britain. This role in Northern Ireland, in respect of some 60 licensed fresh meat premises, is carried out by the NI Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) on behalf of the FSA in Northern Ireland.
- 2.57 We set the MHS challenging performance targets on an annual basis. At its open meeting in March 2004, and subsequent to consultation with stakeholders, the FSA Board approved a new approach to MHS target setting and agreed a number of outcome-based, high-level performance targets for 2004/05. The targets continue to be explicitly linked to FSA strategic objectives as set out in the FSA Strategic Plan. They were published on the FSA website in March 2004. Similar targets are set for DARD who provide the meat hygiene inspection service in NI on behalf of the FSA.
- 2.58 To strengthen governance arrangements, the FSA Board decided in July 2004 to adopt a new model of governance for the MHS with the establishment of an MHS Board. The MHS Board held its first meeting in November 2004. The Terms of Reference of the MHS Board were set by the FSA Board and are to give strategic direction to the MHS within the overall strategy agreed by the FSA Board, to set targets for the MHS, monitor its performance, and to hold the MHS to account on behalf of the FSA Board.
- 2.59 In 2003/04, MHS audits and internal management checks uncovered a number of failures to test casualty cattle between 24 and 30 months, when the failures were first reported, the MHS took immediate action to establish the scale of the problem and to minimise the risk of further eligible animals not being tested. Although the risk to human health appeared to be minimal, and the testing was primarily an animal disease surveillance measure and not a food safety control, the FSA Board initiated an independent enquiry with the following terms of reference:

- i. to investigate:
 - (a) the reasons for the Meat Hygiene Service's (MHS) and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's (DARD) failure to ensure that animals were tested in accordance with the instructions issued;
 - (b) why these failures were not identified earlier;
- ii. to make recommendations to improve the robustness of the testing arrangements so as to minimise the likelihood of this, or a similar problem, recurring; and
- iii. to make a report to the FSA Board and DARD by the end of September 2004.

2.60 The independent enquiry noted, based on earlier SEAC advice, that the risk to human health if all 24-30 month old casualty animals were to enter the food chain untested is considered to be very low. The enquiry found that there were a number of reasons for the testing failures and that all organisations involved – FSA, Defra, MHS and their contractors – contributed to one degree or another. The enquiry concluded that the failures occurred principally because the requirements and objectives of BSE testing were not clearly agreed nor communicated effectively, and not properly monitored by contractors or the MHS. The FSA Board has considered the findings of the report of the enquiry and has commissioned an action plan to address the report's recommendations in a robust and thorough way. More details, including the full text of the independent enquiry's report, can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/oct/wallreport

Reporting against efficiency programmes

2.61 As a small department, the FSA was given the option by Treasury of not bidding in Spending Review 2004, with the guarantee that the agreed baseline funding would be maintained for the period covered by the Spending Review. In the circumstances the FSA did not bid and concentrated on delivery. With no provision for inflation, we plan to cover increases in pay and prices over the period of the Spending Review through greater efficiency.

2.62 A Continuous Improvement Steering Group was established in March 2003 to:

- support the Chief Executive by identifying and driving forward smarter ways of working across the FSA
- act as a programme board for the resulting continuous improvement initiatives

Fourteen reviews have so far been commissioned. Each completed review was formally evaluated.

2.63 Most of the reviews identified and implemented better ways of working across the organisation. For example, a review of the FSA's arrangements for supporting Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) missions built on best practice to develop internal guidance, a "map" of the key business processes, and reporting templates. A review of business processes for handling Incidents led to the development of an Incidents Response Protocol. A review of the functions of the internal library services resulted in savings of 10%.

2.64 Building on this experience, we propose to develop a new strategic efficiency plan by autumn 2005.

Reporting progress towards sustainable development

2.65 Sustainable development is about meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is about achieving economic, social and environmental objectives at the same time, and considering the longer term implications of policies and activities. The FSA is committed to contributing to the Government's strategy for sustainable development. The Board agreed the following position statement in October 2004:

"The Food Standards Agency's remit is to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food, both now and in the future. In doing so the Agency will take sustainable development into account in all of its activities and policy decisions."

2.66 Our Strategic Plan for 2005-2010 includes targets and milestones relating to estates management, the FSA as an employer and policy development to help assess our progress.

- 2.67 We have developed a mechanism called the Policy Assessment Framework (PAF) for taking sustainable development considerations into account in policy and decision making. Guidance has also been drafted to help staff to better understand the nature of sustainable development and to use the PAF effectively. This guidance was issued for public consultation in January 2005. The consultation document can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2005/jan/sustain. The PAF will be piloted on a range of issues between May and October 2005. A programme of measures to raise staff awareness will take place in 2005.
- 2.68 As an employer the FSA promotes the social aspects of sustainable development by recognising the importance of a good work/life balance. Ambitious diversity targets have also been set. The FSA has been successful in obtaining the Investors in People (IiP) accreditation, has been awarded the Disability Symbol (two ticks) by the Employment Service, and is committed to further improving its performance in managing its staff.

Environmental policy and activities

- 2.69 The FSA and MHS offices are on a number of sites around the country; each is committed to pursuing sound environmental practices. We are working towards the implementation of an Environmental Management System based on the ISO 14001 standard. We will continue to identify significant environmental impacts and develop strategies to improve our environmental performance. We are fully committed to conserving energy, water and other resources and reducing waste.

Waste

- 2.70 Our London building, Aviation House, follows an active recycling policy through our waste disposal contractors. Provisions for meeting our waste recycling targets have been incorporated into the new waste contract. The recycling programme is supported by documentation for audit purposes to ensure all legal obligations are met to observe the Data Protection Act 1990 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Our consumable items such as IT items and display systems are either recycled or reused,

minimising the need to landfill. We are able to monitor the waste management for Aviation House and identify areas where improvements can be made. The FSA Wales office in Cardiff and the FSA Northern Ireland office in Belfast have contracts in place for stationery waste to be collected for environmentally friendly recycling. All MHS Regions and HQ are minor occupiers of buildings owned by other Government Departments who take the lead on monitoring waste management and identifying areas of improvement. However, there are some areas that the MHS is able to tackle itself. For example recycling initiatives include toner cartridges, paper/cardboard, cans, and plastic meat stamps. FSA Scotland also has arrangements in place for recycling of all paper waste, including desk top recycling containers. Consumable items such as ink cartridges for printers are also recycled and re-used to reduce both waste and costs.

Energy

2.71 We are able to monitor the energy efficiency of Aviation House through the Building Management System software. We have continued to commit to conserving energy and protecting the environment by signing up to London Electricity's Green tariff for a further 12 months. The Green tariff supplies electricity generated from eligible renewable sources under the government's climate change levy renewable exemption scheme. We are introducing initiatives to fulfil our commitment to reduce energy consumption in Aviation House. The Defra site at York where the MHS headquarters are based is currently undertaking a sustainable development pilot with the carbon trust – 'Energy Efficiency Project', whereby energy efficient measures are being implemented to reduce the amount of carbon emissions (MHS are attending the workgroup/seminars for this project). The MHS as a whole are now only purchasing cars that have low CO₂ emissions as part of the new car lease scheme. In Scotland we have invested in a dual fuel capacity for some pool cars, which again assists in reducing emissions, and energy consumption is reduced through active management of the office environment at times of reduced office occupancy, i.e. weekends, early morning and evenings.

Purchasing

2.72 Our policy on procurement will help to minimise the procurement of goods and supplies which are dependent on the use of non-renewable resources or pollutant substances. We encourage the purchase of products based on recycled material and produced with due consideration to energy efficiency. In partnership with Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Buying Solutions we are benefiting from competitive utility contracts for cleaner fuels and renewable energy.

Developing our People

2.73 Our employees, and the knowledge and skills they possess, are our major asset. The development of our staff in line with our core values and Investors in People (IiP) principles is a key aim, and a means of continuing to develop the organisation and its capacity to deliver.

2.74 As a reflection of this commitment we successfully achieved IiP accreditation in April 2004, and as part of our aim of continuing to develop our staff we will further benchmark our progress against the revised IiP standards through a mid term assessment in Autumn 2005.

2.75 We currently provide tailored learning and development opportunities through our development programme which includes a Management Scheme to improve the management capability of our managers. We will develop the programme further to support the skills needed for successful delivery of our Strategic Plan 2005 – 10. This will include activities to further develop leadership skills as well as the skills to support delivery of our strategic plan through partnership working with key stakeholders.

Diversity

2.76 The FSA aims to ensure that everyone who works, or who is in contact with the FSA is treated fairly and with respect. Our human resources policies reflect this aim and we take every opportunity to ensure that they are updated to reflect any changes. For example we recently met with the Equal

Opportunities Commission in Northern Ireland to ensure our policies support the diverse workforce in that part of the United Kingdom. In order that we can benefit from the richness of a diverse workforce, diversity awareness and managing inclusion are central elements of our induction and management development training.

2.77 During the year we were pleased to be awarded the Disability “two ticks” Symbol by the Employment Service in recognition of the steps we have taken to support the recruitment and employment of people with disabilities. Furthermore, in achieving liP accreditation, our assessor commented on the FSA’s “genuine commitment to equality of opportunity and diversity”.

Number of Senior Civil Service staff by payband

2.78 The table below gives the number of Senior Civil Servants (SCS) by payband.

Number of staff in salary bands	SCS salary bands, £
2	50,000 – 54,999
5	55,000 – 59,999
7	60,000 – 64,999
4	65,000 – 69,999
5	70,000 – 74,999
3	75,000 – 79,999
2	80,000 – 84,999
2	85,000 – 89,999
1	90,000 – 94,999
1	95,000 – 99,000
2	above 100,000

2.79 In October 2004 Gill Fine was appointed to the newly established post of Director of Consumer Choice and Dietary Health following open competition.

Public appointments

(i) FSA Board members

- 2.80 All appointments to the FSA Board are conducted in line with Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) guidelines.
- 2.81 In 2004/05, five FSA Board members were appointed by the appropriate authorities (Health Ministers for the relevant countries of the UK) in accordance with the Food Standards Act. Dr Maureen Edmondson (Northern Ireland) replaced Michael Walker who resigned in May 2004, whilst Graeme Millar (Scotland) replaced Andrew Miller whose term ended on 28 February 2005. In March 2005, Chris Pomfret replaced Vernon Sankey, whose term had also ended.
- 2.82 The position of FSA Chair was also advertised during the year, following Sir John Krebs' announcement that he would be resigning from the FSA in April 2005. In accordance with the Food Standards Act, the new Chair is appointed by Health Ministers (or equivalent) for the four countries of the UK acting jointly. These Ministers appointed Sheila Forbes CBE as independent chair of the selection panel. Ministers announced on 31 March 2005 that Dame Deirdre Hutton had been appointed as the new FSA Chair. Dame Deirdre Hutton will take up her new position in late July. In the interim, the Deputy Chair Julia Unwin will act as FSA Chair.

(ii) other appointments

- 2.83 As a UK non-ministerial Government department, the FSA is currently solely responsible for seven public bodies. These include five advisory committees, one tribunal and one panel. In addition, five committees report jointly to the FSA and to one or more other government departments. Further details can be found in Appendix 6. Information on these public bodies, including annual reports, can be found on our website www.food.gov.uk

Recruitment Practice

- 2.84 We continue to follow the principles of fair and open competition as outlined by the Civil Service Commissioners. We have ensured that when advertising vacancies to the wider labour market we use all the traditional media outlets, while also expanding the usage of our own and other recruitment websites, especially when seeking specialist skills. Our increased use of assessment techniques in the recruitment process has helped us to identify the most suitable staff which will support the FSA in achieving its overall objectives.
- 2.85 We continually ensure that all our recruitment practices support the FSA's Equal Opportunities policies and we make every effort to ensure that we seek applications from under-represented groups. The FSA also continues to advertise widely in a range of publications which are aimed at such groups, for example Ethnic Britain Employers Directory, Disability View, as well as continuing our features in Hobsons Ethnic Minority and Science Guides.
- 2.86 We have continued our strong commitment to the interchange of staff with key stakeholders, as an aid to further developing mutual understanding as well as providing development opportunities for our own staff. Current outward and inward secondments include consumer organisations, enforcement bodies, the European Commission in Brussels, and the European Food Safety Authority. In spring 2005 we began a new initiative to widen the scope of secondments and exchanges. Over time we intend these to include exchanges between FSA locations (Aberdeen, Cardiff, Belfast, London, and our executive agency – the Meat Hygiene Service – whose headquarters is in York), and with external organisations including industry and other EU food agencies, as well as maintaining our links with consumer organisations and enforcement bodies. We will also pilot the placement of a small number of FSA staff at Government Offices in the English Regions.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

- 2.87 Openness and accessibility are enshrined in our core values. We are publicly committed to doing our business in as open and transparent a way as possible, and we work in accordance with our Code of Practice on Openness. The Freedom of Information

Act 2000 places a specific duty on public authorities to adopt and maintain a scheme which relates to the publication of information by the authority. We published our Publication Scheme in November 2002. We have made all staff aware of the requirements of the general access provisions which came into force on 1 January, and have put in place appropriate procedures, supported by staff training, for handling requests for information.

Health and safety reporting

2.88 We are committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of staff and others working in and visiting all our buildings. Trained in-house staff carry out workstation risk assessments. The Health & Safety policy statement is reviewed annually. Our Health and Safety Committee, which includes trade union representation, meets twice yearly at Aviation House and, as part of its role, carries out a full building inspection. Annual health and safety visits are also carried out at our Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland offices.

Publicity and advertising

2.89 We ran two public health campaigns in 2004/2005. A further phase of the Food Hygiene Campaign, launched in June 2004, focused on the dangers of cross-contamination in the domestic kitchen. Independent evaluation showed high levels of recall and understanding (over 75%) amongst our target audience of mothers with children. Printed hygiene information and a dedicated website section for caterers and environmental health officers continue to be popular.

2.90 In September 2004, in support of our strategy to reduce salt consumption (see paragraph 2.16) we launched our biggest campaign so far. It highlighted the dangers of too much salt in the diet and focused on “Sid the Slug”, an engaging campaigning character. We used television, press and poster advertising, and a campaign-specific website www.salt.gov.uk, and was supported by other activities including proactive press work, a teaching pack for schools, and a joint leaflet with the British Heart Foundation.

2.91 The main message was “too much salt is bad for your heart”, with consumers being directed to the website for more detailed

information. We built strong partner relationships for the campaign, resulting in extensive and public endorsement from a wide range of other organisations (e.g., British Heart Foundation, Stroke Association, National Federation of Women's Institutes, Blood Pressure Association, Royal College of Physicians, National Heart Forum, British Dietetic Association, National Consumer Council and Unilever) Independent evaluation showed a high spontaneous recall of the campaign character and a comprehensive take-up of campaign messages. In particular there has been:

- a 32% increase in people claiming to be making a special effort to cut down on salt
- a 31% increase in those who look at labelling to find out salt content
- a 27% increase in those who say that salt content would affect their decision to buy a product "all of the time"

2.92 In the first 3 weeks of the campaign, 610 items of coverage (television, press and radio) were generated. Independent evaluation showed that 84% of coverage was positive. Further activity focusing on salt is planned for 2005.

2.93 The FSA again took part in the BBC Good Food Show with the spoof celebrity chef show, *Bad Food Live!*. The video version continues to be popular with schools.

2.94 In February 2005, the FSA publicised its new *eatwell* healthy eating website to consumers via inserts in top women's magazines and direct mail to specific health professionals.

2.95 *Food Standards Agency News* continues to be popular among its readership and aims to be current, topical and authoritative.

Sponsorship

2.96 The FSA continues to sponsor the *Focus on Food* campaign with a cooking bus that teaches pupils and trains teachers. The current sponsorship is scheduled to run until March 2006.

2.97 The FSA is one of the sponsors of the Trading Standards Institute's (TSI's) annual Young Consumer of the Year competition. Our

sponsorship of the event is £8,225 in 2005. The competition is aimed at 14 to 17 year olds and is open to all secondary schools, involving hundreds of schools across the country, starting with a series of regional events and culminating in a final at the TSI Conference in June 2005.

Public Accounts Committee recommendations to departments

2.98 There were no Public Accounts Committee recommendations to the FSA during the period of this report.



3

Departmental Report Spring 2005

Better regulation

Consultation

- 3.1 The total number of formal consultations started during 2004 was 127. Of these, 119 (94%) lasted for 12 weeks or more. Of the eight consultations that lasted for less than 12 weeks:
- five were driven by EU deadlines;
 - one was tied to the FSA annual financial cycle;
 - one had a deadline dictated by judicial review proceedings; and
 - one was carried out by the FSA in Scotland, following the judicial review mentioned above.

Every limited consultation was cleared at Director or Assistant Director level before being issued.

- 3.2 One example of how good quality consultation influenced what we did was the consultation on our draft Strategic Plan. The formal consultation was held for 12 weeks from April to June 2004, and was preceded by informal discussion with key stakeholder groups. Over 200 responses to the consultation were received from a wide range of stakeholder organisations and individuals. The FSA Board discussed how to finalise the Strategic Plan at its open meeting on 14 October 2004. The paper for the open Board meeting contained a proposed text for the Strategic Plan with changes tracked to show how the draft plan had been changed in the light of consultees' comments and an analysis of each of the substantive points raised during the consultation, indicating whether the point had been accepted or rejected, and why. The final plan gives greater prominence to the need to work in partnership – particularly with local authorities. It includes an additional aim of investigating the health implications of low micronutrient intakes in some population groups. We also developed targets and milestones for our work on sustainable development, based on consideration of the consultation responses.
- 3.3 We also received positive comments from stakeholders for the ways in which we have kept them informed about progress on two proposals from the EU on food labelling: the proposal to harmonise European Community rules on the use of nutrition and health claims on food, and the proposed regulation on the addition of vitamins and minerals and of certain other substances to foods. Two features of the consultation have been particularly appreciated:

- update bulletins, which are e-mailed to everyone who has registered to receive them, after virtually every Council working group meeting. This has helped keep stakeholders informed of the changes brought about by negotiation, and the use of update bulletins has now been adopted more widely across the FSA; and
- sector-specific stakeholder meetings, which took place in two tranches: on publication of the European Commission's proposals and about a year afterwards, to take stock on progress. The sector-specific nature of the meetings allowed more time and depth of discussion on issues of particular concern and, where the same issues came up again, a clearer indication of their importance.

Regulatory Reform Action Plan

3.4 We have six entries in the Regulatory Reform Action Plan. Action is complete on five:

- 1 the establishment of the European Food Safety Authority and streamlining rapid alert and emergency arrangements;
- 2 & 3 implementing two EC Directives imposing tighter restrictions on pesticide residues in infant formulas and baby foods which will provide better health protection for infants and young children. The regulations came into force in March 2005;
- 4 the adoption of food hygiene legislation which consolidates and simplifies EU legislation. The legislation came into force on 20 May 2004 and will apply on 1 January 2006;
- 5 the adoption in April 2004 of the regulation that introduces a more comprehensive, consistent and integrated 'farm to table' approach for checking compliance with and enforcing of feed and food legislation). The majority of provisions will apply from 1 January 2006. The FSA and agriculture departments are now considering what action will be needed to apply the regulation in the UK.

3.5 The sixth and current entry is for the *Safer Food, Better Business* initiative. Progress is on target:

- 6 new EU legislation will require food businesses to put food safety management procedures in place. We have taken advantage of devolution to develop a range of approaches in collaboration with the catering industry and to pilot different approaches in different parts of the UK. These different approaches reflect the diversity of business types and will be available across the UK for any business to use. The innovative *Safer Food, Better Business* food safety management system has been developed in England and is aimed at small catering businesses that face the greatest challenges, meeting their need for guidance they can relate to and light record keeping. It is backed by appropriate support mechanisms, using a range of seconded experts including small caterers themselves. The development and piloting of this support and guidance material has involved collaboration with over 60 local authorities and approximately 1300 businesses. The FSA in Northern Ireland has refined an existing and well-regarded pack for caterers called *Safe Catering*, whilst the FSA in Scotland has worked with local authority and industry representatives to produce a pack called *CookSafe*.

Regulatory Reform Orders

3.6 We have not yet used a regulatory reform order; because around 85% of all UK food safety and standards legislation originates in the EU, FSA's opportunities for making regulatory reform orders are constrained.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

3.7 We have achieved 100% compliance with the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) process as measured by the Cabinet Office Regulatory Impact Unit (CORIU) and the Improving Regulation in Scotland Unit. This is based on the number of partial RIAs at the time of public consultation, and full RIAs when regulations are laid.

3.8 During 2004 there were two proposals for which RIAs were not required² because the amendments made by the proposals were cost neutral:

- The Miscellaneous Food Additives (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2004 implemented the provisions of Commission Directives 2003/95/EC and 2004/45/EC in England relating to purity criteria for food additives other than colours and sweeteners;
- The Food Labelling (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2004 implemented the provisions of Commission Directive 2003/120/EC which introduced an energy conversion factor for the reduced energy fats 'salatrim's'.

3.9 The Pre-Budget Report on 2 December 2004 introduced a new requirement for RIAs to specify how and when new regulations would be monitored and reviewed to ensure they are having the intended effect. During the remainder of 2004 we produced three final RIAs on regulations:

Regulations	Commitment made to review
The Sweeteners in Food (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2004	Directive 94/35/EC, which these Regulations implemented, requires Member States to monitor and review the consumption of sweeteners. The UK will carry out surveys to fulfil these obligations and submit the findings to the European Commission.
The General Food Regulations 2004	A review of the legislation will be conducted within 2 years.
The Plastic Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2004	The FSA routinely monitors foodstuffs on sale to the public to ensure compliance with regulations and the results of this work are published and openly available. Where safety margins are eroded the FSA will work with industry to restore them; where safety levels are breached the FSA will inform the enforcement authorities so that they may take appropriate action.

² In both instances, however, a Regulatory Appraisal was prepared in support of the parallel Wales Regulations made by the National Assembly for Wales.

3.10 Measures to improve the quality of RIAs have included:

- a seminar in October 2004 with colleagues from CORIU and European Secretariat;
- training on better drafting of RIAs held in March 2005. Devised in collaboration with CORIU, the training, held over two successive mornings, covered drafting of RIAs and the use of RIAs in the EU regulatory process and in consultation. FSA policy officials who attended the training found it very useful and more is planned for the future;
- proposed introduction of an RIA sign-off form for Economics Branch's and DRIU's formal quality assurance of RIAs. Two policy divisions agreed in March to pilot the form on forthcoming RIAs.

Alternatives to classic regulation

3.11 Our opportunities to use alternatives to classic regulation are constrained by the number of directly-applicable food Regulations that come from the EU. However, wherever possible we do consider alternatives to regulation, for example our best practice advice on signposting of foods, meals or snacks high in salt, sugar or fat and of healthier options.

Examples of effective RIA use (e.g. containing sunset clauses, RIA used to inform EU negotiations or avoid gold plating)

3.12 An example of our effective use of an RIA to inform EU negotiations was in relation to the EC Feed Hygiene Regulation (183/2005) which provides new controls on the traceability and safety of animal feed.

3.13 One of the provisions in the European Commission's original proposal was a requirement for feed businesses (generally businesses that make, sell, store, transport or use feed) to have financial guarantees such as insurance. This was to cover the cost of withdrawal of feed from the market in the case of a feed safety incident. The guarantees were also to cover the cost of the withdrawal of livestock fed such feed and related livestock products.

- 3.14 The European Commission did not carry out an impact assessment of this financial guarantees provision when the proposal was made in April 2003. Subsequently, the European insurance industry said that it could not provide cover for such guarantees. Claims which could cover extensive areas of the feed and food chain could have run into many millions of pounds. Even if insurance was available premiums could have been so high that businesses, including small businesses, would not have been able to afford the cost, thus being forced either to cease operating or trade illegally. The UK RIA indicated that the estimated cost to industry of guarantees could be in the order of some £70m for the first ten years of operation of such a provision.
- 3.15 The UK argued against the provision in meetings of the relevant Council Working Group, and was supported by a number of other Member States. The UK also lobbied MEPs and an amended version of the financial guarantees provision was agreed by the European Parliament (EP) and the Council. This agreed text states that before financial guarantees can be introduced the Commission must carry out a feasibility study. In the light of that study any provision on financial guarantees would be subject to a separate Council/EP Proposal.

Review of regulatory approach

- 3.16 At its meeting on 9 February, the FSA Board endorsed a policy statement on regulatory decision-making in the FSA. The statement is currently the subject of a 12-week consultation to seek the views of stakeholders on how the FSA might improve its approach to regulatory decision-making. The Board will consider the policy statement further, in the light of the consultation responses, at its open meeting in September 2005.

Transparency of implementation plans for European legislation

- 3.17 We consult on all changes to food law and so our implementation plans for European legislation are completely transparent.

Other regulatory initiatives

- 3.18 The Hampton Review³ prompted us to think further about how we might share and promote good practice in the planning and/or delivery of inspection and enforcement by local authorities. We initiated a small collaborative study, in which we worked with a number of other departments and regulators⁴ to identify examples of good practice and the lessons we might learn from these. Phase 1 involved a telephone survey to 26 local authorities asking for examples of where they had decided either that an integrated approach would or would not be appropriate, and the reasons. For Phase 2 we and colleagues from partner organisations visited four of the organisations who had provided examples in the telephone survey to get more details. The findings from the study have been collated for publication in early summer 2005.
- 3.19 The FSA is also represented on the Steering Group of the Department of Trade and Industry's cross-agency Retail Enforcement Pilot, looking at new ways of working to reduce the burden of complying with regulation for the retail sector.
- 3.20 We took part in the pilot of the Small Business Service's (SBS's) 'See at a Glance' guidance⁵, which are now known as 'Regulation updates'. FSA policy officials working on food labelling, sweeteners, smoke flavourings, feeding stuffs, contaminants and poultry meat etc hygiene and inspection agreed to check and approve the guidance drafted by the contracted publishing house.
- 3.21 Some of the piloted guidance became available from January 2005 on the *businesslink* website. This included the FSA-approved guidance on sweeteners, smoke flavourings, poultry meat etc hygiene and inspection and food labelling. SBS said that the

³ In Budget 2004 the Chancellor asked Philip Hampton to lead a review into regulatory inspection and enforcement with a view to reducing the administrative cost of regulation to the minimum consistent with maintaining the UK's excellent regulatory outcomes. The interim report, *Reducing administrative burdens: effective inspection and enforcement*, was published in December 2004. A final report with recommendations to Government was published in March 2005.

⁴ Environment Agency, the Health and Safety Executive, the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Hampton Review team, the Audit Commission, the Trading Standards Institute, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Department of Trade and Industry.

⁵ In 2004, the DTI Small Business Service Action Plan included a Government commitment, signed off by the Prime Minister, to "introduce 'See at a Glance' guidance on all new regulations so that entrepreneurs will not waste time trying to establish if a regulation applies to them and enforcers will have a quick guide to the intention of the regulation".

project had been a good example of joined-up government and better regulation and that the FSA's involvement had been particularly valuable and constructive.

- 3.22 'Regulation updates' were formally launched on 3 March 2005⁶. There is an e-mail facility where businesses and other organisations can sign up to receive alerts when something new that affects them is released.

BRTF analysis of FSA's reporting on better regulation performance

- 3.23 We are pleased that the Better Regulation Task Force considers that the FSA's reporting on better regulation in its 2003-04 departmental report was good. We have aimed to improve the numerical clarity of this section in this year's report, in line with the Task Force's observation.

⁶ www.businesslink.gov.uk/regulationupdates

The next five years – our Strategic Plan

- 4.1 A draft strategic plan for 2005-10 was issued for consultation on 2 April 2004. Over 200 replies were analysed and presented to the FSA Board at its open meeting in October 2004. Full details can be found on our website at www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/boardmeetings/
- 4.2 The revised plan was published on the website in December 2004 and launched formally on 7 March 2005. Work on some key SDA 2002 targets carries through into the work set out in the new strategic plan. The plan sets out proposals in the areas of: **Food Safety, Eating for Health, Choice, and How We Will Deliver.**
- 4.3 Our key aims for the next 5 years are to:

Food Safety:

- continue to reduce foodborne illness
- reduce further the risks to consumers from chemical contamination⁷ of food

Eating for Health:

- make it easier for all consumers to choose a healthy diet, and thereby improve quality of life by reducing diet-related disease

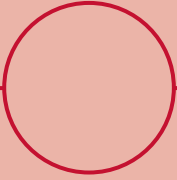
Choice:

- enable consumers to make informed choices

We aim to continue to be the UK's most trusted provider of independent advice on food safety and standards, and to earn that trust by what we do and how we do it.

⁷ Including radiological contamination.

- 4.4 Our first priority will continue to be food safety. However, diet-related diseases cause far more illness and premature deaths. We will play our part by promoting Eating for Health, working closely with health departments across the UK. Choice will continue to play a vital role in helping people eat safely and healthily. The principles underlying the way we will implement the plan are covered by **How We Will Deliver**. In particular, we have stressed how we will take sustainable development into account in all our activities and policy decisions. We have also highlighted the importance we attach to working in partnership with all our stakeholders to meet the targets we have set.
- 4.5 The full text of our Strategic Plan 2005 – 2010 is available on our website at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/dec/strategicplan



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Appendix 1: About the FSA

- 1 The FSA is a UK-wide body – a non-ministerial Government department – operating at arm's length from Ministers and governed by a Board appointed to act in the public interest. This independence is key to our success in restoring public confidence. Our current organisation chart is at Appendix 3. You can find out more about what we do on our website at www.food.gov.uk. The website is updated regularly. A detailed contact list by subject is available at: www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/contactus
- 2 We advise Ministers on all issues relating to food safety and standards. Our staff negotiate on behalf of the UK in Europe and other international fora, where much of the legal framework and standards for the food market are set. We provide guidance to the public on healthy eating and carry out surveys on nutrition and diet to monitor changing eating habits.

The FSA Board

- 3 The Board is responsible for our overall strategic direction and for ensuring that our legal obligations are fulfilled. The Board consists of a Chair, Deputy Chair and up to 12 other members. The Chair Sir John Krebs and the Deputy Chair Julia Unwin were appointed jointly by the Secretary of State for Health, Scottish Ministers, the National Assembly for Wales and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) in Northern Ireland ('the appropriate authorities'). The new Chair, Dame Deirdre Hutton, was also appointed by these Ministers. Of other current Board members, eight were appointed by the Secretary of State for Health, two by Scottish Ministers, and one each by the National Assembly for Wales and Department of Health, Social Services, Health and Public Safety in Northern Ireland. Members of the Board each demonstrate substantial achievement in their chosen field. More information about our Board can be found at Appendix 2 and on our website at www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/

Day-to-day operations

- 4 The Chief Executive manages the day-to-day operations of the FSA. He was appointed by the FSA with the approval of the appropriate authorities, the Prime Minister, and the Head of the

Civil Service under normal Civil Service Commission rules. The Treasury has appointed the Chief Executive as Principal Accounting Officer of the FSA, with responsibility for the day-to-day running of the FSA itself. In particular, he has overall responsibility for preparing the FSA's accounts and for transmitting them to the Comptroller and Auditor General. Our staff are civil servants, accountable through the Chief Executive to the Board.

Accountability

- 5 The FSA is accountable to the Westminster Parliament through the Secretary of State for Health, and to the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland administration through their Health Ministers or equivalents.
- 6 Food safety and standards are devolved matters: the FSA has offices in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, each headed by a Director.
- 7 In Scotland, the FSA provides advice on proposed legislation to the Minister for Health and Community Care in the Scottish Executive. This ensures consistency of approach while allowing the specific Scottish circumstances to be fully taken into account in the implementation of food safety and standards policy in Scotland. The statutory Scottish Food Advisory Committee (SFAC) provides the FSA with independent information and advice on all food safety and standards issues in Scotland. The FSA in Scotland is funded by the Scottish Parliament and is headed by a Director accountable to the Chief Executive of the FSA.
- 8 The FSA is accountable for its activities in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales through the Assembly Minister for Health and Social Services, whom the FSA also advises on food safety and standards policy and legislation. The statutory Welsh Food Advisory Committee provides the FSA with independent information and advice on all food safety and standards issues in Wales. The FSA in Wales is funded by the National Assembly for Wales and is headed by a Director accountable to the Chief Executive of the FSA.
- 9 The FSA in Northern Ireland is responsible for providing advice and draft legislation on issues across the food chain to the

Northern Ireland Minister with responsibility for the DHSSPS. The statutory Northern Ireland Food Advisory Committee provides the FSA with advice or information about matters connected with the FSA's functions in Northern Ireland. The FSA in Northern Ireland is funded from within the Northern Ireland estimates and is headed by a Director accountable to the Chief Executive of the FSA.

- 10 The FSA in Northern Ireland liaises closely with the FSPB (which operates on an All-Ireland basis) and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (which operates in the Republic of Ireland only) on food or food related issues.

The Meat Hygiene Service

- 11 The Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) is an executive agency of the FSA operating within Great Britain. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) provides a similar service in Northern Ireland. Its main functions are to ensure that the highest standards required by the law for the hygienic production of meat and for the welfare of animals at slaughter are maintained, and to provide a meat inspection service to all licensed meat plants. The MHS also enforces the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) controls in licensed premises. The MHS has its own Agency Accounting Officer (the MHS Chief Executive) and publishes its own Annual Report and Accounts.

Our role as a government department

- 12 The FSA works consistently with the three aims of modernising government: ensuring that policy making is more joined up and strategic; making sure that consumers are the focus of our work; and delivering public services that are high quality and efficient. We are committed to delivering policy outcomes that matter: we aim to develop our policy making process to ensure we take account of and promote best practice. We have a full range of initiatives on listening to consumers: see the 'Your Views' page of our website at www.food.gov.uk/yourviews/
- 13 On our website we publish targets for our service standards, which are in accordance with the Six Standards for Central Government for: answering correspondence, seeing callers,

answering telephone calls, publishing contact points, publishing our complaints procedure and consulting users.

- 14 We are committed to doing everything reasonably possible to make our services available to everyone, including people with disabilities, ethnic groups, disadvantaged groups and those with particular health needs, and in particular to promoting racial equality. We will continue to consult users and potential users regularly about the services we provide and we will report our findings.
- 15 We are committed to promoting racial equality. The Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, gives public authorities a general duty to promote race equality. Under this duty, when they carry out their functions, public authorities must aim to: eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; promote equality of opportunity; and promote good relations between people of different racial groups. While our core values of putting the consumer first and openness are intrinsically linked to these principles, in accordance with the specific duty placed on public authorities we published our Race Equality Scheme on 31 May 2002 on our website at www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/68192

Appendix 2: Our Chief Executive and Board

Dr Jon Bell –
Chief Executive of the
Food Standards Agency



The following were members of the Food Standards Agency Board during 2004/05.

Sir John Krebs FRS –
Chairman – Resigned
April 2005



Julia Unwin OBE –
Deputy Chair



Michael Gibson –
Board Member



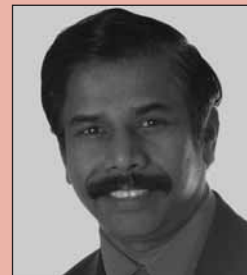
Ann Hemingway CBE –
Board Member



Dr Maureen Edmondson – Board
Member Joined in September 2004



Dr Sati Ariyanayagam –
Board Member



Richard Ayre –
Board Member



Chrissie Dunn –
Board Member



Baroness Howarth of Breckland
OBE – Board Member



Iain MacDonald –
Board Member



Graeme Millar – Board Member
– Joined in March 2005



Chris Pomfret – Board Member
– Joined in February 2005



Sandra Walbran –
Board Member



Michael Walker –
Resigned in May 2004



Nelisha Wickremasinghe –
Board Member



Vernon Sankey –
Term ended in February 2005



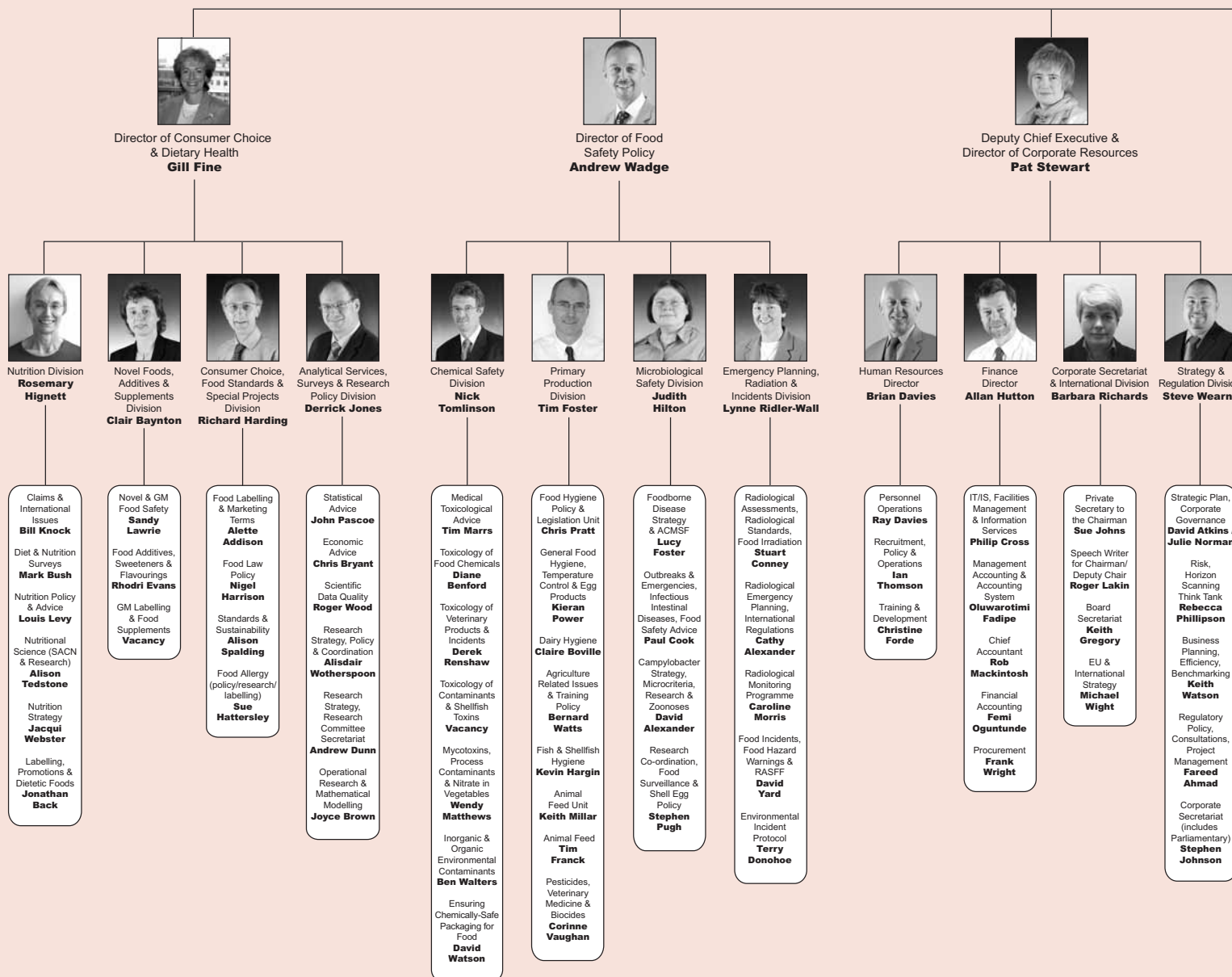
Professor Andrew Miller –
Term ended in February 2005



Appendix 3

how we are organised

Food Standards Agency - Organisation Chart





Private Office
Nick Raisen

Chief Executive & Chief Scientific Advisor
Dr Jon Bell



Chief Executive Meat Hygiene Service
Chris Lawson



Director of Enforcement
David Statham



Director of Legal Services
David Dunleavy



Director of Communications
Neil Martinson



Director of FSA Scotland
George Paterson



Director of FSA Wales
Joy Whinney



Director of FSA Northern Ireland
Morris McAllister



TSE Division
Alan Harvey



Veterinary Director & Head of Meat Hygiene and Veterinary Division
Alick Simmons



Enforcement Division
Julie Monk



Food Hygiene Implementation Division
Tom Murray



Imported Food Division
Sarah Appleby

Veterinary Advisor
Adrienne Conroy
TSE Research & SRM Import Breaches (EU)
Steve Dixon
OTM Rule Review & BSE Testing
David Carruthers
SRM Controls
Paul Holley

Deputy Veterinary Director
Peter Hewson
Senior Veterinary Adviser
Kenneth Clarke
MHS Policy/Meat Plant Licensing
David Hart
MHS Policy
John Bush
Meat Plant Licensing/Licensing Policy
Sylvie Sadowski
White Meat & Meat Products
Adrian Daily
Red Meat & Strategy
Joanna Fullick
Veterinary Public Health Research
Vacancy

Hygiene Technical Support, Food Authenticity, Meat Fraud & Diversity
Colin Houston
HACCP & Low Cost Training
Brian Curtis
Hygiene Technical Support
Rob Griffin
Audit
Julian Blackburn
Monitoring
Geoff Deville
Food Authenticity
Mark Woofie
Meat Fraud & Diversity
Shaheen Zar
Policy Co-ordination
Clive Langabeer

Food Safety Management (HACCP) Implementation Programme
Stephen Airey
Food Hygiene Regulations Applications Project
Catherine Bowles
Official Controls Regulation Application Project
Catriona Stewart

Food Standards Enforcement
John Barnes

Deputy Director
Alex Rae
Food Labelling, General Food Law
Christine Cogger
Meat Hygiene, TSE Controls
Marcus Porter
Emergencies, Imports, EC Food Package
John Guthrie
Animal Feedingsstuffs, Contaminants, Contact Materials
Robert Madge
Enforcement, Advice to MHS, Hygiene Charges
Barry Proudfoot
Additives, Water, Fish/Shellfish, Irradiation, Specific Foods, GM/Novel Foods, Information Disclosure, Contract / Commercial Liaison
Alison Nunn

Deputy Director & Media Relations
Karen Talbot
Media Relations Manager
Gabrielle Owtram
News Manager
Justin Everard
Marketing
James Brandon
Editorial & Website
David Payne
Public Affairs
Julie Sheppard
Consumer Branch
Jaswinder Bangar

Science & Enforcement
Lydia Wilkie
Policy & Regulation
Jim Thomson
Science (Research, Surveys & Advice)
Anna Whyte
Food Standards, Diet & Nutrition
Samantha McKeown
Contaminants, Hygiene, Additives & Shellfish
Sandy McDougall
Local Authority Food Law Enforcement
Peter Midgley
Corporate Services
Martin Reid
Animal Food Chain & Novel Foods
Elsbeth MacDonald
Strategy & Co-ordination
Marie Kelly
Medical Advisor
Jane Knight

Nutrition Policy Food Safety Policy & Corporate Issues
Phil Morgan
LA Enforcement, Food Hazards, FEPA, ChemoDyl Monitoring Food Chain Emergencies Emergency Planning Fish & Shellfish
Jane Davies
Agricultural Issues - Meat
Diary Policy, Slaughterhouses, BSE MHS
Liaison
Animal Feedstuffs
Mike Pender

Deputy Director, Professional Services, Food Safety Standards Enforcement & Meat Hygiene
Gerry McCurdy
Policy, Legislation & Corporate Services
Greg Irwin

Veterinary Advisors

Milorad Radakovic
Vacancy
Alistair Booth
Jose Camara-Diaz
Dennis Cryer
Ana Gonzalez
Laureano Garcia-Munoz
John Hukku
Charles Maclean

Legal Investigators

Gareth Williams
Dave Hickman
Alan Stead
Andy Perry
John Roberts
Keith Bassett
Adrian Morgan
Robert Astley
Marita Benito

Appendix 4: Performance against Spending Review 2002 Service Delivery Agreement targets

Aim 1: Increased consumer confidence in the national regulatory system for food safety and standards and in the credibility of the FSA.

The most effective way in which the Food Standards Agency can improve consumer confidence is to deliver real improvements in food safety and standards. Achieving the outcomes set out in Aims 2 and 3 will, therefore, make a significant contribution to meeting Aim 1. However, the way we deliver these improvements is also critical to our success – openness, accessibility and honesty are embedded in the way the Agency works, as is our consultative approach to policy-making.

Key result	Performance measurement	Delivery (main operational targets)	Progress to 31 March 2005
Maintain the levels of confidence achieved by the Agency during the Spending Review (SR) 2000 period, compared to baseline levels set in 2000.	Annual consumer attitudes survey compares year-on-year trends to baseline established in 2000.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish timely public advice on food safety which is based on sound science. Double traffic to the website by consumers and stakeholders over the period of the Spending Review. Establish public helplines in response to major food emergencies within 24 hours. On a quarterly basis through independent measurement, achieve at least 55% positive coverage about the FSA in the media. Hold at least seven open Board meetings each year. In addition, all of the FSA's scientific advisory committees will hold at least one open meeting each year. 	<p>Met – ongoing. We publish all public advice on our website at www.food.gov.uk</p> <p>We have already met and exceeded this target. Page impressions and visits to the website already doubled by 31 March 2004.</p> <p>We have already met this target. Procedures are in place and have been tested but have not been used to date. Help has been tested: in an incident in October 2003 the helpline was activated within 24 hours of briefing.</p> <p>We are meeting this target on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>All open Board meeting agendas, papers and decisions are published on our website at www.food.gov.uk</p>

Aim 2: Better food safety and standards

Key result	Performance measurement	Delivery (main operational targets)	Progress to 31 March 2005
Reduce foodborne illness by 20% by the end of the SR period.	Published annual levels of foodborne illness based on laboratory reports of the five main foodborne bacteria, excluding cases acquired abroad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our published foodborne illness strategy and supporting action plan set out in detail how we will meet our overall target. We will publish six-monthly progress reports against the plan. 	<p>On course – Progress made to implement the foodborne disease strategy and meet the FSA's target to reduce foodborne illness was reported to the Foodborne Disease Strategy Consultative Group (September 2004 and March 2005) and the Board (September 2004).</p> <p>In the September Board report, annual provisional figures for 2003 showed levels decreased by just under 18% compared with the baseline figure. The figures have now been finalised, showing that the decrease is just over 15%. Provisional figures for 2004 indicate that there is likely to have been a further reduction, albeit one that is still short of the 20% target.</p>
		<p>The strategy focuses on three main areas: controlling pathogens, improving food handling and preparation, and reduction of <i>Campylobacter</i> infection. During the SR2002 period, specific actions will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> implementing successfully the Commission Decision 2001/471/EC relating to HACCP requirements for all red meat and poultry plants by mid-2003. undertaking research to produce data to support performance criteria for microbiological testing in poultry plants by January 2004. 	<p>On Course – Training of industry and enforcement bodies undertaken and HACCP based procedures in place in the majority of UK meat plants. Audit undertaken and issues with compliance identified which will be actioned in 2005.</p> <p>On Course – Research demonstrated that performance criteria for indicator groups of bacteria was of limited practical use for improving hygiene standards and monitoring for pathogens was of more use. Findings reflected in draft EU microbiological criteria proposals.</p>

continued

Key result	Performance measurement	Delivery (main operational targets)	Progress to 31 March 2005
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="683 629 995 768">• in 2003/04, commencing an education/awareness campaign aimed at the sectors of the population most vulnerable to foodborne illness. <li data-bbox="683 1234 975 1373">• Develop (2002/03) and then implement a strategy for reducing levels of Campylobacter in chicken by 2005/06. 	<p data-bbox="1061 629 1422 831">On Course – Funded 5 local initiatives in relation to vulnerable groups as part of the fifteen £10,000 grants to local authorities and food liaison groups for local food hygiene initiatives, as part of the national Food Hygiene Campaign.</p> <p data-bbox="1061 837 1401 949">To promote hygiene messages to vulnerable groups, the FSA attended conferences arranged by various groups of healthcare professionals.</p> <p data-bbox="1061 956 1417 1099">The FSA 'cooking bus' delivers healthy eating and food safety messages to schoolchildren around the country focusing on schools in the more socially disadvantaged areas.</p> <p data-bbox="1061 1106 1417 1218">Commenced research on getting food safety messages into homes and into schools and a review of cross contamination in the kitchen.</p> <p data-bbox="1061 1225 1422 1576">On Course – The campaign to improve biosecurity on the broiler farm continued throughout 2004/05. Phase 2 was launched in October 2004. This comprises a programme of training events organised by the individual poultry companies and regional events organised by the FSA. Activity will continue into Spring 2005. We are also producing a biosecurity guidance document which will be available in Spring 2005.</p> <p data-bbox="1061 1583 1417 1749">We have commissioned a programme of research in support of the strategy and, at the request of stakeholders, organised a seminar to present the findings of recent Campylobacter research.</p>

Key result	Performance measurement	Delivery (main operational targets)	Progress to 31 March 2005
Promote HACCP principles throughout the food chain.	<p>The FSA will monitor the uptake of food safety management based on hazard analysis and the HACCP principles by food businesses.</p> <p>Results will be published.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30% of food businesses to have implemented food safety management based on the HACCP principles by the end of 2003/04. 	<p>Met – A wide range of data including from local authorities, LACORS and the HPA has shown that over 30% of food businesses in the UK now have a food safety management system based on HACCP principles.</p> <p>Results were published in March 2004 Board paper.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively encourage the uptake of food safety management based on HACCP principles throughout the SR period by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – influencing training provision – co-ordinating guidance – working with LA enforcers – piloting support mechanisms – developing proportionate models of food safety management based on the principles of HACCP for small businesses. 	<p>On Course – We worked successfully with the Sector Skills Council for Hospitality, Leisure, Travel & Tourism (People 1st) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to influence the National Occupational Standards (NOS) upon which courses coming on stream in 2006 will be based.</p> <p>Simple, practical guidance developed and tested providing a menu of proven, costed delivery mechanisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ support mechanisms developed and tested ▪ engaged with local authorities and industry bodies ▪ options for national implementation currently being developed.

continued

Key result	Performance measurement	Delivery (main operational targets)	Progress to 31 March 2005
<p>Deliver all MHS performance targets in relation to public health protection.</p>	<p>Performance information, including assessment methodology, is published in the MHS Annual Report and Accounts, which is laid before Parliament.</p> <p>Targets and performance reports will also be published on our website.</p>	<p>To set the MHS challenging performance targets on an annual basis, in consultation with key stakeholders.</p>	<p>On course – In line with established practice, the MHS targets for 2003/04 were agreed by the FSA Board at its open meeting in March 2003 after full public consultation. Progress against targets was reported to the FSA Board during the year and assessed on its completion. The FSA Board concluded in July 2004 that the MHS had met 8 of its 11 high-level performance targets for the financial year ended 31 March 2004. There had been a failure to fully achieve i) the training and development target; ii) implementation of the MHS Diversity Action Plan; and iii) the implementation of the complex project to provide IT access for plant-based MHS staff. The assessment results were published on the FSA website and in the MHS Annual Report and Accounts 2003/04.</p> <p>At its open meeting in March 2004, the FSA Board approved a new approach to MHS target setting and agreed a number of outcome-based, high-level performance targets for 2004/05. The targets continue to be explicitly linked to FSA strategic objectives as set out in the FSA Strategic Plan. They were published on the FSA website in March 2004.</p> <p>Following a review, the FSA Board delegated responsibility for assessing MHS performance to a MHS Board that was established in November 2004. The MHS Board received and discussed reports on MHS performance in 2004/05 at its meeting in November 2004 and January 2005, and will consider performance for the whole 2004/05 financial year prior to publication in the MHS Annual Report and on the FSA website.</p>

continued

Key result	Performance measurement	Delivery (main operational targets)	Progress to 31 March 2005
			<p>The MHS Board will be asked to agree high-level targets and performance indicators for 2005/06 at its March 2005 meeting.</p> <p>The new targets will be published on the FSA website.</p>

Aim 3: Improved consumer choice and diet

Key result	Performance measurement	Delivery (main operational targets)	Progress to 31 March 2005
<p>Measurably improve consumer knowledge of and access to a healthy balanced diet compared to baseline set during SR 2000.</p> <p>With the DH, effect targeted movement towards a healthy balanced diet.</p>	<p>Tracker questions in the annual consumer attitudes survey and specially-commissioned evaluation studies will show trends in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awareness and knowledge of healthy eating messages • measurable changes towards a healthy balanced diet • an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption • reduced intake of salt in diet <p>paying particular attention to the position of low-income groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate operation of statutory guidelines for school meals and agree action plan to address shortcomings by 2003/04. 	<p>Met – Secondary school meals survey was published in July 2004.</p> <p>Met – Action to revise secondary school meals standards and provide advice to head teachers and governors agreed with DfES as part of the healthy Living Blueprint in September 2004.</p> <p>Met – ongoing; on course.</p> <p>Action to support caterer training agreed with DfES as part of the healthy Living Blueprint in September 2004. Action plans to deliver the support to caterer training is being taken forward with People First (the sector skills council for hospitality and leisure).</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree series of initiatives with retailers and manufacturers with the aim of reducing average salt intake by 10% (1 gram per day) by 2005/06. 	<p>On course – Nutrition Division continues its programme of meetings on salt reduction work with all sectors of the food industry and has secured over 40 plans from key players. It has been calculated that all commitments received to date should result in a 0.6g per day reduction in salt intakes by 2005/06. The public education campaign was launched in September. Initial evaluation suggests that awareness of salt as a health issue has increased. The objectives for the next year are to secure plans from those key organisations that have not already submitted plans; to focus on meat and cereal products; to establish cross industry projects on pizzas, sandwiches and ready meals; and to increase the emphasis on catering and public procurement. The second stage of the public education campaign will focus on providing consumers with the information needed to make lower salt choices.</p>

continued

Key result	Performance measurement	Delivery (main operational targets)	Progress to 31 March 2005
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Low Income Diet and Nutrition Survey, and report findings by 2005/6. 	<p>On course. Survey fieldwork begun in November 2003, and due to be completed in January 2005.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with DH to promote the 'five a day' initiative to achieve the target level for average consumption of five pieces of fruit and vegetables per day. 	<p>On course. Ongoing work including website material and media columns carrying the five-a-day message. Advice to the DH as needed, including on the development of a scheme for the use of a 'five a day' logo.</p>

Appendix 5: Common core tables

Introduction to the format of the tables

The format of the common core tables is the same as last year.

The aim of the tables is to provide a detailed analysis of departmental expenditure plans in resource terms, showing resource consumption and capital investment.

The scope of the resource tables is restricted to 2001/02 to 2006/07.

Total public spending for the Food Standards Agency – Table 1

This table shows the Departments total public spending splitting the total Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) into resource and capital DEL.

TABLE 1: TOTAL PUBLIC SPENDING FOR THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY

	2001/02 Outturn £'000	2002/03 Outturn £'000	2003/04 Outturn £'000	2004/05 Estimated Outturn £'000	2005/06 Plans £'000	2006/07 Plans £'000
<i>Consumption of Resources</i>						
Request for Resources:						
1) Protecting and promoting public health in relation to food						
a) administration, inspections, surveillance, managing research and development, education, publicity and publications	88,665	94,982	99,165	105,031	111,777	111,777
b) slaughterhouse inspections and controls	18,135	25,054	24,442	30,000	31,700	31,700
Total Resource Budget	106,800	120,036	123,607	135,031	143,477	143,477
<i>of which:</i> Resource DEL ^(1,2)	106,800	120,036	123,607	135,031	143,477	143,477
<i>of which:</i> Depreciation	1,510	1,775	1,792	2,004	2,004	2,004
Cost of Capital charges	150	(183)	(96)	762	762	762
New provision and adjustments to previous provisions	42	42	396	42	42	42
Other non-cash items			70			
Capital Spending						
a) administration, inspections, surveillance, managing research and development, education, publicity and publications	1,158	625	1,195	322	322	322
b) slaughterhouse inspections and controls	359	282	1,897	325	325	325
Total capital budget	1,517	907	3,092	647	647	647
<i>of which:</i> Capital DEL ⁽¹⁾	1,517	907	3,092	647	647	647
Total public spending⁽³⁾	106,807	119,168	124,907	133,674	142,120	142,120

(1) Departmental Expenditure Limits, set as part of the 2004 Spending Review

(2) of which, resource 'near-cash' DEL

(3) Total public spending calculated as the total of the resource budget plus the capital budget, less depreciation

Departmental Resource Budget – Table 2

This table shows the breakdown of resource spend between MHS and FSA HQ, and what the money is spent on.

TABLE 2: RESOURCE BUDGET FOR THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY

	2001/02 Outturn	2002/03 Outturn	2003/04 Outturn	2004/05 Estimated Outturn	2005/06 Plans	2006/07 Plans
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<i>Consumption of resources by activity:</i>						
a) administration, inspections, surveillance, managing research and development, education, publicity and publications	88,665	94,982	99,165	105,031	111,777	111,777
b) slaughterhouse inspections and controls	18,135	25,054	24,442	30,000	31,700	31,700
Total Resource Budget	106,800	120,036	123,607	135,031	143,477	143,477
<i>of which:</i>						
Resource DEL ^(1,2)	106,800	120,036	123,607	135,031	143,477	143,477
(1) Departmental Expenditure Limit, set as part of the 2004 Spending Review						
(2) of which, resource 'near cash' DEL	106,615	119,309	124,537	132,870	141,316	141,316

Departmental Capital Budget – Table 3

This table gives a breakdown of investment or capital spending plans by the MHS and FSA HQ.

TABLE 3: CAPITAL BUDGET FOR THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY

	2001/02 Outturn	2002/03 Outturn	2003/04 Outturn	2004/05 Estimated Outturn	2005/06 Plans	2006/07 Plans
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<i>Capital Spending</i>						
a) administration, inspections, surveillance, managing research and development, education, publicity and publications	1,158	625	1,195	322	322	322
b) slaughterhouse inspections and controls	359	282	1,897	325	325	325
Total Capital Budget	1,517	907	3,092	647	647	647
<i>of which:</i>						
Capital DEL ⁽¹⁾	1,517	907	3,092	647	647	647

(1) Departmental Expenditure Limits, set as part of the 2004 Spending Review

Capital Employed – Table 4

Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB) gives a much clearer picture of the capital assets used by a department. This is used as the basis for calculating the cost of capital charges paid by departments to reflect the economic costs of holding the assets. This table sets out total capital employed by the department within the accounting boundary, and by its sponsored bodies outside the boundary.

TABLE 4: ANALYSIS OF CAPITAL EMPLOYED

	2001/02 Outturn	2002/03 Outturn	2003/04 Outturn	2004/05 Estimated Outturn	2005/06 Plans	2006/07 Plans
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund	(3,173)	(9,737)	(8,748)	(8,748)	(8,748)	(8,748)
Revaluation Reserve	62	569	545	545	545	545
Total Capital Employed	(3,111)	(9,168)	(8,203)	(8,203)	(8,203)	(8,203)

Analysis of Administration Costs – Table 5

This table shows analysis of administration costs.

TABLE 5: FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY ADMINISTRATION COSTS

	2001/02 Outturn £'000	2002/03 Outturn £'000	2003/04 Outturn £'000	2004/05 Estimated Outturn £'000	2005/06 Plans £'000	2006/07 Plans £'000
Gross Admin Costs:						
Pay bill:	18,666	21,422	22,898	28,297	31,360	28,576
Other administration costs	24,184	21,998	26,926	41,085	46,272	46,272
Total Gross Admin Costs	42,850	43,420	49,824	69,382	77,632	74,848
Related administration cost receipts	(11,595)	(10,357)	(11,524)	(22,688)	(22,848)	(22,848)
Total net administration costs	31,255	33,063	38,300	46,694	54,784	52,000
<i>of which:</i>						
Departmental expenditure limit (DEL)	31,255	33,063	38,300	46,694	54,784	52,000
Non-cash AME	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total net administration costs by activity:						
a) administration, inspections, surveillance, managing research and development, education, publicity and publications	31,255	33,063	38,300	46,694	54,784	52,000
Total Administration Costs	31,255	33,063	38,300	46,694	54,784	52,000

Staff Numbers – Table 6

This table shows analyses of staff numbers, including the Meat Hygiene Service, in terms of Civil Service Full Time Equivalents (FTEs).

TABLE 6: STAFF NUMBERS

	2001/02 Actual	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Estimated	2005/06 Plans	2006/07 Plans
CS FTEs	2,055	2,175	2,207	2,175	2,175	2,175
Overtime	144	234	178	166	166	166
Casuals	40	51	32	32	32	32
Total	2,239	2,460	2,417	2,373	2,373	2,373

Appendix 6: Expert and Strategic Advisory Committees

Advisory committees and tribunals which report solely to the FSA

- Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)
- The Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)
- Meat Hygiene Advisory Committee (MHAC)
- Meat Hygiene Appeals Tribunal for England and Wales (MHAT)
- Beef Assurance Scheme Membership Panel (BAS)
- Consumer Committee
- Advisory Committee on Research (ACR)
- Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT)

Advisory Committees which report jointly to the FSA and one or more other government departments

- Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)
- Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee (SEAC)
- Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF)
- Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COC)
- Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COM)

The FSA's public bodies are listed in the Cabinet Office's annual publication: *Public Bodies 2003*. This can be found on the Internet at: www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/agencies-publicbodies/publicbodies/pb2003.pdf

Appendix 7: Glossary of terms

ACMSF	Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food
BRTF	Better Regulation Task Force
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CCEA	Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
CORIU	Cabinet Office Regulatory Impact Unit
COT	Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment
CVD	Cardio-vascular disease
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DH	Department of Health
DHSSPS	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
DRIU	Departmental Regulatory Impact Unit
EC	European Commission
ECJ	European Court of Justice
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
EVM	Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals
FSA	Food Standards Agency
FSPB	Food Safety Promotion Board
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office
GM	Genetically Modified
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point – a documented food safety management system widely regarded as the most effective way of managing and controlling hazards inherent in the food handling and production process. It is a structured approach based on seven principles, which may be applied flexibly in food businesses of all sizes to ensure that proportionate risk-based controls are in place and safe food is produced.

HPA	Health Protection Agency
liP	Investors in People
LA	Local authority
LACORS	the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services
LC-MS	Liquid chromatography – mass spectrometry
LGA	Local Government Association
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MHS	Meat Hygiene Service
NI	Northern Ireland
OCPA	Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
OGC	Office of Government Commerce
OTM	Over Thirty Months
PAF	Policy assessment framework
PSP	Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning
RIA	Regulatory impact assessment
SACN	Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition
SDA	Service Delivery Agreement
SEAC	Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee
SFAC	Scottish Food Advisory Committee
SR	Spending Review
SRM	Specified Risk Material
TSI	Trading Standards Institute

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