



Our Mission

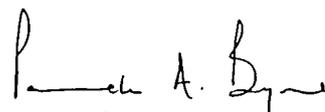
Our mission is to protect consumers' health and consumers' interests by ensuring that food consumed, distributed, marketed or produced in the State meets the highest standards of food safety and hygiene.

To the Minister for Health

The Board is pleased to submit to the Minister, its sixteenth annual report and accounts for the twelve-month period ended 31 December 2015, in accordance with Section 25 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998.



Prof. Michael Gibney
Chairman



Dr Pamela Byrne
Chief Executive



36

THE AUTHORITY PUBLISHED 36 FOOD ALLERGEN ALERTS IN 2015, AN INCREASE OF TEN COMPARED TO 2014.

▶ READ MORE ON P18



11,832

TRAINED ADVISORS ON THE ADVICE LINE, SUPPORTED BY EXPERT STAFF, DEALT WITH 11,832 QUERIES IN 2015, AN AVERAGE MONTHLY TOTAL OF 986.

▶ READ MORE ON P25



33

THE AUTHORITY HAS SERVICE CONTRACTS WITH 33 OFFICIAL AGENCIES.

▶ READ MORE ON P6



113

THE AUTHORITY CONDUCTED 113 RISK ASSESSMENTS IN 2015. THESE WERE IN THE AREAS OF: BIOLOGICAL SAFETY, VETERINARY RESIDUES, PESTICIDE RESIDUES, CHEMICAL SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION.

▶ READ MORE ON P18

Published by:

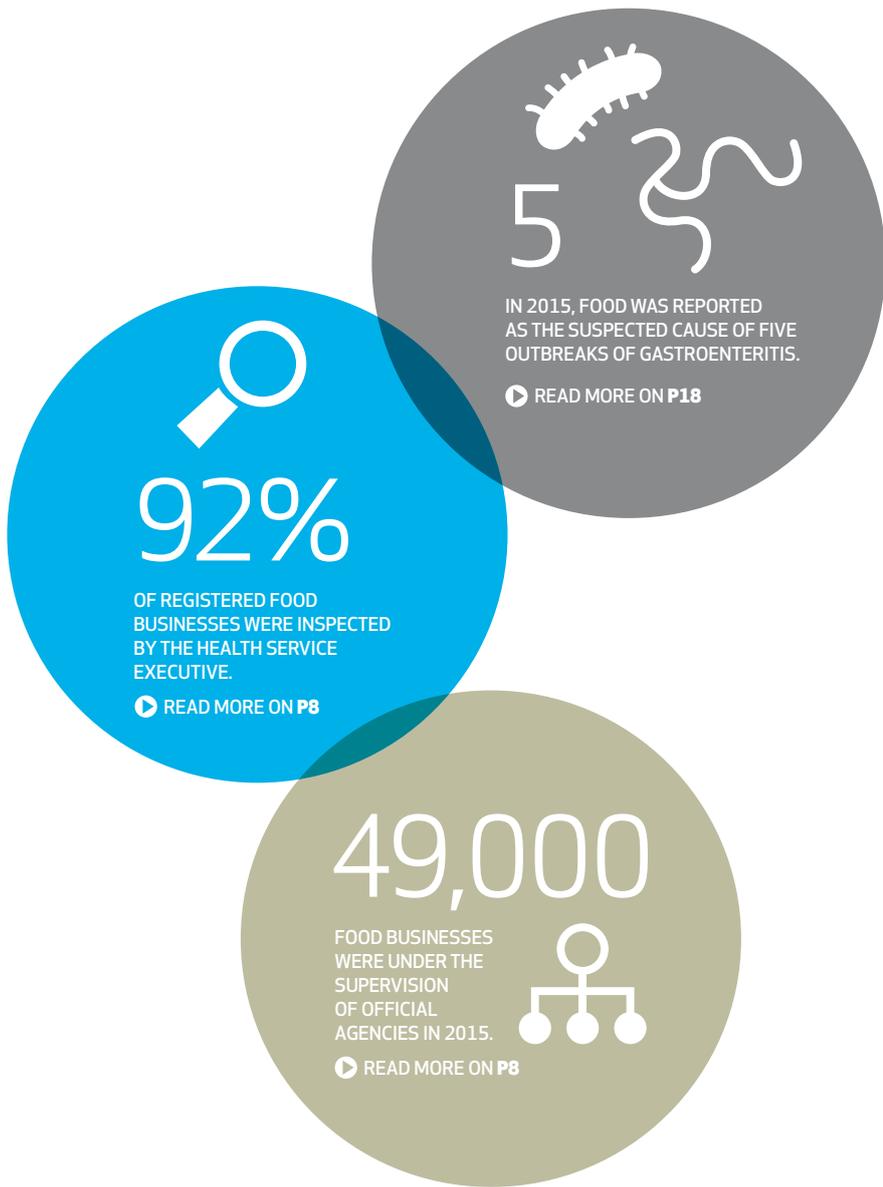
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For more information, please visit: www.fsai.ie

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Chairman's Statement

THIS ANNUAL REPORT OUTLINES THE AUTHORITY'S EXTENSIVE WORK PROGRAMME IN 2015. IT DEMONSTRATES THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE THE AUTHORITY PLAYS IN ENCOURAGING THE HIGHEST STANDARDS IN FOOD PROVISION USING A COMBINATION OF SCIENCE-BASED ACUMEN AND REGULATORY POWERS TO SAFEGUARD THE HEALTH AND INTERESTS OF CONSUMERS IN RELATION TO FOOD.

I am proud to report that the Authority delivered on its wide range of objectives and goals as set out in its Statement of Strategy (2012-2015). As is consistent with our overarching mission to take all reasonable steps to ensure that food consumed, produced, distributed or marketed in the State meets the highest standards of food safety and hygiene; we prioritised those areas where we could have greatest effect. This includes ensuring industry compliance with its legal obligations to produce safe food, as well as to monitor those areas of greatest food safety risk in the food chain.

Underpinning all activity is our core focus on effective regulation which is strongly influenced by the most up-to-date scientific knowledge available through our own expert staff, our Scientific Committee and our engagement on scientific forums at EU and international level. Ultimately, this leads to best informed decisions and the development of policies that ultimately benefit public health.

Our role is comprehensive as we monitor and intervene as necessary across the food chain from farm gate to fork. This involves monitoring for chemical and microbiological contaminants; carrying out risk assessments on food hazards; inspecting the food service sector and managing food incidents that are related to issues that have occurred both here or indeed which have emanated in other EU countries. All this requires a robust network of experts in various aspects of food science and inspection. We carry out our oversight of the food chain through our staff working in a partnership approach formalised through our service

contracts with some 33 individual State agencies in Ireland. The support, co-operation and dedication of the staff working under service contract to the Authority is a significant asset in the delivery of effective food control and, protecting public health and interests in relation to food.

During 2015, there was a notable increase in the number of national food alerts handled by the Authority. These alerts are undertaken when a food incident leads to the withdrawal or recall of a foodstuff from the market. Some 67 alerts (44: 2014) were issued to inform consumers, retailers, distributors and food inspectors of an incident and the action required. A significant trend is the growth of the food allergen alerts, whereby an undeclared allergen is identified in a product and that product needs to be withdrawn or recalled.

Of particular note in 2015, the Authority continued its strategic role to seek to control the incidence of *campylobacter* in poultry. Working in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and industry stakeholders, the recommendations of the Authority's Scientific Committee were assessed and the development of a national voluntary control programme is underway. In addition, discussions at EU level took place for the introduction of a harmonised approach to set microbiological limits for *campylobacter*. These initiatives, when fully completed, will have a significant benefit to public health and the incidence of *campylobacter* food poisoning incidents.

Our ultimate objective is to continue to develop a culture of food safety in Ireland by engaging with those who can directly improve food safety - the manufacturers, processors, retailers, caterers, as well as the State agencies. There was a significant level of stakeholder engagement during the year where the Authority provided advice, seminars and publications to support those in the food sector to continue to raise standards.

The Authority regulates and oversees a dynamic sector. A robust regulatory system for food ultimately protects consumers, but it is also important for Ireland where the agri-food sector is the most important indigenous industry, accounting for over 150,000 jobs. The Irish agri-food industry is on a significant growth path and is projected to export some €19 billion of products by 2025. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's Food Wise 2025 has set significant growth targets and aspires to deliver this growth through dairy, beef, seafood and consumer food and drinks exports. An independent, robust, respected and well regarded food safety inspectorate system is an important asset for our country's economic reliance on its food sector.

I am proud to say that the Authority's reputation is significant and that is largely due to its skilled and experienced staff dedicated to their protectorate role. The staff of the agencies who work under service contract to the Authority are vital to achieving our goal of ensuring safe food for consumers now and into the future. I thank and commend them for their ongoing diligence, commitment and dedication to their role as part of the national food safety inspectorate.

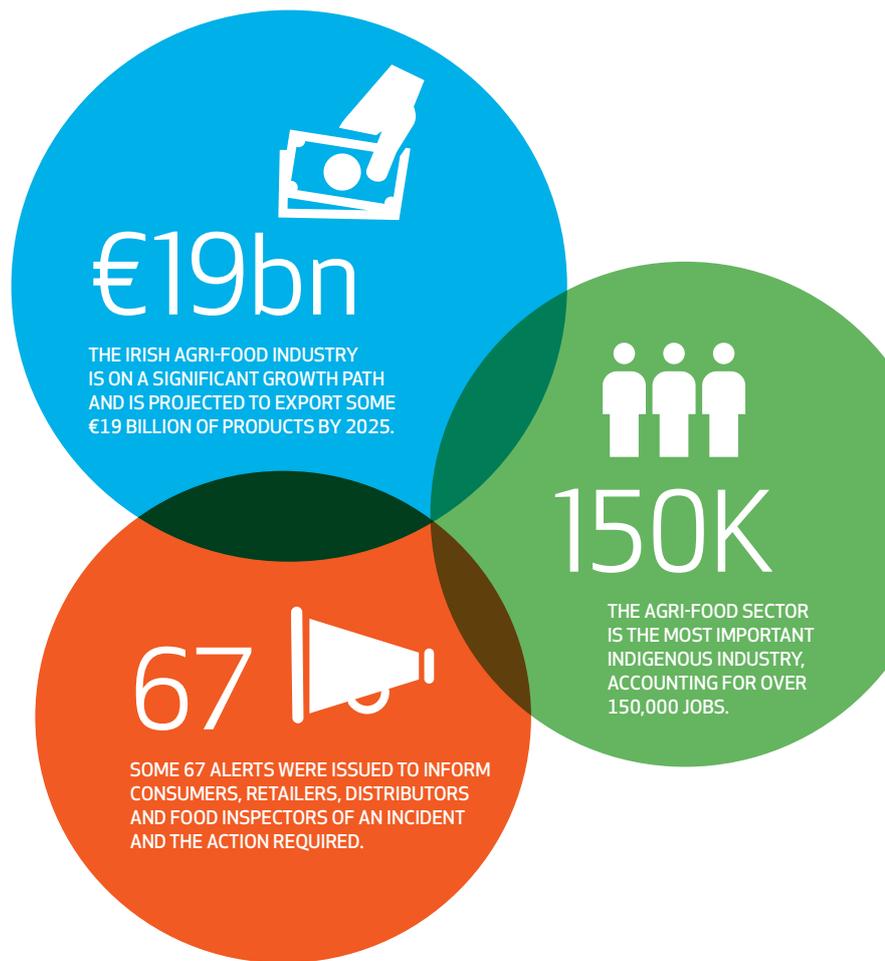
I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar T.D., and the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney T.D. and the staff of their respective Departments who have been proactive and supportive of the Authority in its endeavours and actions in 2015.

I would also like to thank my fellow Board members for their tremendous contribution to the strategic direction and workings of the Authority. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank the many scientific experts who participate in our scientific advisory structure. We have access to some of the best scientific experts in their various specialist fields in Ireland. The Authority is very grateful for the time and effort these scientists give us on a voluntary basis.

Finally, I would like to pay thanks to our outgoing Chief Executive, Prof. Alan Reilly who retired in early 2015 and to welcome our new Chief Executive, Dr Pamela Byrne who joined us in 2015. I look forward to continuing to support Dr Byrne and her management team in their focus on ensuring our food control delivers safe food for all.

Prof. Michael Gibney

Chairman



Chief Executive's Review

I AM DELIGHTED TO PRESENT THE 2015 ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND. THIS REPORT COVERS MY FIRST YEAR AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE AUTHORITY AND I WOULD LIKE TO THANK MY TEAM FOR WELCOMING ME INTO THE AUTHORITY AND FOR PROVIDING ME WITH THE SUPPORT TO DELIVER ON OUR COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING CONSUMERS AND ENSURING SAFE FOOD FOR EVERYONE.

I would also like to thank Prof. Alan Reilly for his support during the handover period and I wish him every success in his future endeavours. It is both an honour and a privilege to take over the reins of a world class organisation – an organisation which has been operating for 17 years. The commitment and professionalism of the team is commendable and I look forward to working with them in the years to come.

The Authority performs a key function in co-ordinating the implementation of food legislation in fulfilment of its mission to protect consumers' health and consumers' interests by ensuring that food consumed, produced, distributed or marketed in the State meets the highest standards of food safety reasonably attainable and that people have accurate and worthwhile information about the nature of the food they eat. The Authority fulfils this mission in partnership with others – the Health Service Executive; the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; the local authority veterinary service and others including the Marine Institute and the National Standards Association of Ireland – all of which have service contracts with the Authority. In addition, we collaborate with other organisations to facilitate a joined-up approach to the enforcement of food legislation and the assessment and management of risks.

In 2015, we signed a new memorandum of understanding with the Environmental Protection Agency which outlines key areas of mutual interest that we have agreed to tackle in collaboration. Without such partnerships in place, the Authority would not be in a position to protect those who consume food which is produced, manufactured, processed or distributed in Ireland.

Our close working relationships with those further afield such as the Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland; the European Food Safety Authority; and our counterparts in Europe and across the world enable us to access timely, accurate and robust information which supports us in our role. Robust partnerships have been and will continue to be a key part of our strategy into the future as the regulatory landscape continues to evolve, the agri-food industry continues to expand, and the global food supply chain becomes more complex.

To support us in our work we rely on our engagement with the food industry – from the large multinationals, to the artisan food producers, and the small to medium food companies, retailers and food service operators. Our Food Safety Consultative Council and industry fora facilitate direct communication with key stakeholders and provide a mechanism through which all players within the food sector have access to the tools they need to comply with the law. These fora, along with our website and active engagement with food businesses through seminars and exhibitions, are critical to building a culture of compliance within the industry and providing access to important

networks as we manage food safety risks. We are continuously monitoring and updating the Authority's website to provide the most relevant, timely and accurate information which supports our activities. We interact with consumers on a regular basis through our Advice Line – consumers are our eyes on the ground – and we ensure that we respond to their concerns in line with our customer charter.

In 2015, the Authority continued to enforce legislation through existing service contracts with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, the Marine Institute and the National Standards Authority of Ireland. We renewed our service contract with the Health Service Executive. We also extended our service contracts with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the local authority veterinary service. I would like to acknowledge that these official agencies are working with limited resources following the recession and despite this, have set out clear commitments to protect consumers of Irish food at home and abroad. I wish to express my gratitude to these official agencies and the laboratories for their continued commitment to these service contracts and for working with us as we

“Our close working relationships with those further afield such as the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland; the European Food Safety Authority; and our counterparts in Europe and across the world enable us to access timely, accurate and robust information which supports us in our role.”

enforce the legislation. Having these service contracts in place means that we are in a position to monitor compliance in just over 49,000 registered food businesses in Ireland.

Audits are a core and critical function of the Authority and as part of this work, we audit the official agencies and food businesses. As the central competent authority, we are best placed to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the official controls programme and to monitor compliance with the legislation. We provide assurances to the European Commission that we are doing our job and more importantly, we provide assurances to consumers that we have an overview of any risks in the system. Of note during 2015, was the publication of the audit report on cold stores which highlighted a number of issues: I'm glad to say these are being addressed in the sector through the development of a code of practice which will be published in 2016.

A large part of our activities relate to the management of food incidents and in 2015, there were 485 incidents covering a multiplicity of hazards from allergens, to biological hazards, to food fraud related incidents. Management of these incidents requires the Authority to work in collaboration with food inspectors within the official agencies and the co-operation of the industry ensures contaminated products are quickly removed from the market or further processing. This can often involve working with food safety agencies across the world.

We are continuously monitoring food for chemical and biological contaminants, as well as investigating the integrity and authenticity of food products. These activities provide us with further evidence to assess potential risks to consumer health and to make sure that we remove and/or manage these risks. In 2015, we monitored and assessed the food supply in Ireland for irradiated foods, GMOs, dioxins, as well as many other contaminants. The expertise available in the public analysts' laboratories, the official food microbiological laboratories and other State laboratory services are critical to providing the Authority with an understanding of what is in our food chain that could pose a risk to consumers. Their continued commitment to the annual monitoring programme, as well as their case-by-case work on food incidents protects consumers, and their

contribution to innovate and develop new methods to analyse food samples is noteworthy. These laboratories are continuing this work despite limited resources, and this must be addressed to ensure that we are in a position to protect the Irish population from contaminants in the food chain.

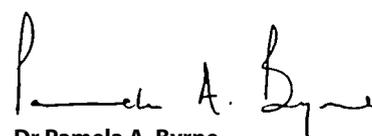
Science is central to our decisions. During 2015, the five-year term of our Scientific Committee ended and a new committee will be appointed in 2016. I would like to thank the members of the outgoing committee for their work in the areas of biological safety, chemical safety and public health nutrition and I look forward to working with the new committee over the coming years. The reports of the Scientific Committee are an invaluable resource for the Authority and provide timely and robust scientific evidence upon which to base decisions. In addition, the internal scientific and technical expertise of the Authority underpins all our decisions which are based on sound scientific evidence. Another important contributor to the knowledge base within the Authority are data which we capture through our day-to-day activities, from the datasets we access; and the databases we have developed internally – all of which ensure that we can translate what we measure into information and knowledge that helps us do our job better.

During 2015, we also started the process of developing the Authority's new strategy. To inform our future strategic

direction, I consulted internally with my team and more widely with key stakeholders and the wider public. This resulted in a very rich and informative evidence base which will inform and underpin our decisions as new challenges emerge and the regulatory environment evolves. Our new strategy will be published during 2016 and it will ensure that the Authority can continue to deliver on its legal mandate into the future. Key to our strategy will be people and partnerships and I look forward to working collaboratively within the food safety community to ensure safe and trustworthy food for everyone.

I would like to thank the Department of Health for its continued support to the Authority and in particular, for providing sanction for the recruitment of staff to fill vacancies that have arisen over the last number of years.

Finally, I would like to thank Prof. Michael Gibney, Chair of the Board and the Board members for their support and guidance since I took up the role in March. I look forward to working closely together as we implement our new strategy over the next three years.



Dr Pamela A. Byrne

Chief Executive Officer



Regulatory Review



THE AUTHORITY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF FOOD LEGISLATION IN IRELAND. IT CARRIES OUT THIS ENFORCEMENT FUNCTION THROUGH SERVICE CONTRACTS WITH 33 OFFICIAL AGENCIES FOR WHICH THE FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND ACT, 1998 PROVIDES THE LEGISLATIVE BASIS.



The official agencies working under this service contract agreement in 2015 were: the Health Service Executive; the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; 28 local authorities; the National Standards Authority of Ireland; and the Marine Institute. The Authority's role is to coordinate and monitor the activities of these official agencies, through the service contracts, which outline an agreed level and standard of food safety activity that the official agencies perform. The service contracts are in place for a minimum duration of three years, and subject to the request of either the Authority or the official agency, may be reviewed during that time. Regular meetings were held with senior management in each agency and with the line managers responsible for the delivery of inspection and analysis.

Renegotiation of the service contracts was a major activity in 2015, as the service contracts with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Health Service Executive, local authorities and the National Standards Authority of Ireland were all due to expire at the end of 2015. The Authority negotiated new contracts with the Department and the Health Service Executive. The new contract with the Health Service Executive will be in place from 1st January 2016 to 31st December 2018; the contract with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine was extended by a month to facilitate the finalisation of the negotiation in January 2016. The service contracts with 28 local authorities and the National Standards Authority of Ireland were extended for six months to end June 2016. The wider development of a shared provision of veterinary services within local authorities was discussed during the year within an inter-agency group established by the City and County Managers' Association.

An annual programme of service contract liaison meetings with official agencies to monitor implementation of the service contract, record details of meetings, track and progress action points and outcomes was developed and issued. In 2015, the Authority signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Environmental Protection Agency which is monitored through senior management meetings

between both authorities. A detailed service contract annual work programme with the Health Service Executive for the enforcement of the non-hygiene legislation in the service contract was agreed. Its implementation continues to be monitored.

The service contract activities of local authorities are financed directly by the Authority on submission of valid claims within set budgets. During 2015, two financial audits of local authorities were conducted to strengthen the verification of the claims submitted. Recommendations from individual audits are used to advise other local authorities of good practices and improved financial controls to implement.

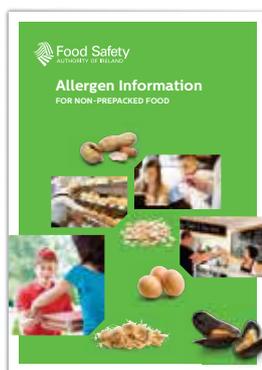
The Health Service Executive continues to provide chemical and microbiological laboratory analytical services under the terms of the service contract. The service is provided by three public analyst and six microbiological laboratories. In 2015, the Authority developed a protocol for the Health Service Executive to enable it to survey the safety of nuts, seeds and dried fruits. The Authority also provided scientific input into the food sampling plans of the official agencies.

The Authority provided expert support to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine during discussions and negotiations on food related legislation and policy in the European Commission and the European Council. A particular focus in 2015 was on the development in the European Council of a new regulation on official controls, proposed by the Commission in 2013, which is expected to be finalised in 2016.

The Authority chaired meetings of a cross-agency working group on Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers. The objective of this working group is to support a co-ordinated approach to achieving consistency in the interpretation and enforcement of the Food Information to Consumers Regulation across the entire food chain. The Regulation came into effect in December 2014, so 2015 was its first year for implementation.

The Authority worked with Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, the Marine Institute and Bord Iascaigh Mhara to produce a series of Shellfish Safety Regional Information Events. Over 170 people attended the events at five regional venues, which were open to producers, fishermen, processors, official agency staff and other stakeholders. The topics covered included risk management, incident response, classification of shellfish production areas, viruses, shellfish purification, biotoxins and traceability.

In common with all Member States of the EU, Ireland has a National Control Plan which is a requirement of European official food control regulations. This covers food safety, animal health and welfare, animal feed and plant health. The Authority is responsible for the food parts of the plan in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, which is responsible for the non-food parts. Annual reports for the operation of the plan for 2013 and 2014 were submitted to the European Commission.



Allergen Information for Non-prepacked Food

Since December 13th 2014, the requirement to declare food allergens on prepacked food is extended by EU law to include non-prepacked food. This leaflet explains the legal requirements and suggests possible ways that food businesses can comply with the national legislation.

↓ This publication is available for download at: http://www.fsai.ie/publications/allergen_non_prepacked/

INSPECTION OF FOOD BUSINESSES

In 2015, just over 49,000 food businesses were under the supervision of official agencies under service contract to the Authority. This represents a small (1.6%) increase over the previous year. Of the registered food businesses inspected, about 92% were inspected by the Health Service Executive; 5% by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority; 2% by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and 1% by the local authorities. This distribution of food businesses inspected by the official agencies was similar over the last five years. There are a wide range of activities carried out by these food businesses, from importation and manufacturing, through to distributing, retailing and catering operations.

Number and Type of Food Businesses under Supervision by Official Agencies, 2011 – 2015

Official Agency	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine					
Meat Processors	154	153	154	152	154
Egg & Poultry Processors	376	354	369	399	399
Milk Processors	233	240	231	242	261
	763	747	754	793	814
Health Service Executive*					
Primary Producers	23	21	–	–	–
Manufacturers and Packers	2,253	2,534	2,956	3,139	3,218
Distributors and Transporters	1,487	1,472	1,162	1,270	1,337
Food Service Businesses	31,404	30,311	28,214	28,843	29,222
Retailers	11,166	10,978	10,972	11,259	11,370
Manufacturers Selling Primarily on a Retail Basis*	724	695	–	–	–
Other	–	–	115	–	39
	47,057	46,011	43,419	44,511	45,186
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority					
Approved Establishment	183	189	180	179	195
Factory and Freezer Vessels (approved – Irish)	23	34	36	45	52
Fishing Vessels	2,201	2,216	2,155	2,077	2,077
Molluscan Production Areas	131	131	133	137	141
Registered Food Business on Land (including ice plants)	68	93	87	99	110
Cold stores	–	–	–	–	16
	2,606	2,663	2,591	2,537	2,591
Local Authorities					
Slaughterhouses	212	206	202	205	205
Small Meat Manufacturing Plants	180	189	180	197	200
Poultry Plants	41	35	34	34	38
Other	17	26	24	51	55
Total	450	456	440	487	498
Total	50,853	49,877	47,204	48,330	49,089

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

– Recategorisation of establishments

STAFF WORKING IN OFFICIAL CONTROL

The official agencies report annually to the Authority on the staff resources they have dedicated to official controls, under the service contracts. In 2015, 2,211 people carried out official controls. There has been a trend since 2009 of decreasing staff resources on food control, as a result of the moratorium on public sector recruitment; this has presented challenges to ensure continued effective official controls. However, 2015 saw a 2% increase in the whole-time equivalent staffing numbers over 2014.

Whole Time Equivalent By Official Agency, 2011 – 2015

Agency	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Dept of Agriculture, Food and the Marine^a					
Inspection services	353	332	333	315	319
Laboratories	87	88	89	76 ^b	84
Health Service Executive					
Environmental Health Service	333	344	307	305	304
Food Microbiology Laboratories	74	73	71	64	63
Public Analyst Laboratories	68	65	67	64	65
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority					
	45	42	41	40	43
Local Authorities^a					
	72	85	73	87	90
Marine Institute					
	33	28	27	29	38
National Standards Authority of Ireland^c					
	0.1	0.1	1.1	1	1
Food Safety Authority of Ireland^d					
	69	74	71	68	72
Total	1,134	1,131	1,081	1,049	1,079

^a These figures do not include temporary veterinary inspectors engaged in meat inspection but they do include Cork County Council Veterinary Laboratory Service since 2012

^b Excludes the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory which did not provide data for 2014. In 2013, it reported 11.25 whole-time equivalent staff working on food

^c The National Standards Authority of Ireland increased the number of staff engaged in food safety controls, to conduct official controls on food contact materials from 2012

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



New Guidance for Food Businesses

Consumers need to know that the food they buy is accurately and truthfully described.

As such, the Authority published new guidance for food businesses which aims to ensure consumers are not misled by the use of marketing terms on foods. The guidance outlines the general legal requirements that food businesses must follow when using marketing terms on food.

Pictured at the Food and drink Industry Ireland seminar on food marketing terms and health claims are Dr Wayne Anderson, Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Maree Gallagher, Maree Gallagher Associates; Dr Mary Flynn, Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Thérèse Moore, Britvic Ireland and Mary Hughes, Food and Drink Industry Ireland.

INSPECTIONS

All official agencies operate risk-based programmes of official controls. Food businesses which carry out activities that present the greatest potential risk to human health are prioritised for inspection. Unannounced inspections in food businesses are a key element of the official controls, as well as other activities such as food sampling, and investigation of incidents and outbreaks. There has been a decline in recent years in the numbers of inspections, with an increasing focus on more thorough audits of food safety management systems in larger food businesses and of establishments presenting higher risks to public health.

Number of Food Inspections by Official Agencies, 2011 – 2015

Agency	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% Change 2011-2015
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	16,786	15,618	13,733	15,021	15,011	-11%
Health Service Executive*	37,973	36,584	33,971	35,053	36,353	-4%
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	2,330	2,386	2,114	2,035	2,015	-14%
Local Authorities	5,154	4,689	5,021	4,802	5,033	-2%

* Planned inspections only

FOOD SAMPLING

The service contracts include programmes by the official agencies for the sampling and testing of food for compliance with all aspects to food legislation. Samples taken by the food inspectorates are analysed by a network of official and national reference laboratories operated by the agencies. In 2015, over 56,000 samples were sampled and tested.

Number of Food Samples by Official Agency, 2015*

Sampling Agency	2015	%
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	30,333	54%
Health Service Executive*	13,744	24%
Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority	8,229	15%
Local Authorities	3,107	5%
Other Agencies*	968	2%
Total	56,381	100%

* As reported by the official laboratories

AUDITS BY THE AUTHORITY

In 2015, the Authority carried out its audit programme to examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls and compliance by food businesses with food law requirements. These audits also verify conformance with the terms and requirements of the service contracts and adherence by the official agencies to the Multi-Annual National Control Plan provisions relevant to their activities. The findings from the audits and any associated corrective actions are monitored by the Authority through the service contract monitoring process. The Authority's audit reports are published on the website.

AUDITS OF OFFICIAL CONTROLS

In 2015, the Authority carried out official control audits in the local authorities, the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, the Health Service Executive and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls carried out by these agencies and the reports are published on the website.

AUDITS OF FOOD BUSINESSES

As part of the Authority's audit function, targeted or focused audits are carried out to determine food business operators' compliance with respect to a specific aspect of food law. In 2015, the Authority completed an audit of approved establishments utilising commercial cold stores, to assess compliance with food legislation. During the audit, seven approved establishments were selected to be visited based on information that had been gathered during the audit of cold stores, which the Authority carried out at the end of 2014. All food business operations audited were provided with an individual copy of a report which was forwarded to the relevant agency for follow-up, where necessary.

The Authority also completed a targeted audit of a food business to assess and evaluate its food safety management system, processes and compliance with food law in advance of an audit by the Food and Veterinary Office.

AUDITS BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The European Commission is responsible for ensuring that European legislation on food safety, animal health, plant health and animal welfare is properly implemented and enforced. As a Commission service, the Food and Veterinary Office plays an important role in fulfilling this task through its audits, inspections and related activities. The Authority and its official agencies are subject to regular assessments of its work on food law enforcement by the European Commission.

The Food and Veterinary Office carried out two missions to Ireland to monitor the official controls. The missions were on milk and milk products and high pressure processing. Reports on each mission, together with the official response from the Authority and the official agencies, were published on the Commission's website. A report on the 2014 mission on HACCP was also published in 2015.

ENFORCEMENT NOTICES AND ORDERS

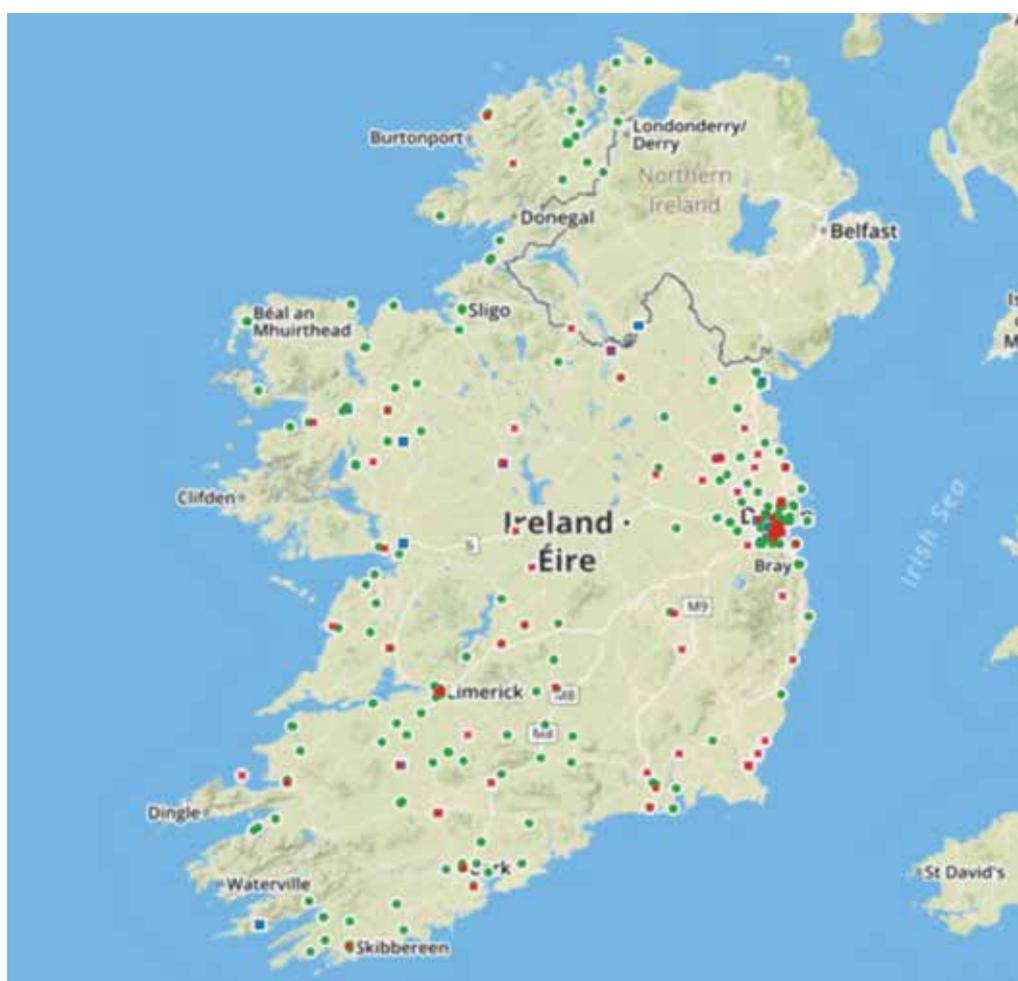
The Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 is one of the pieces of legislation which gives authorised officers the power to inspect food businesses for compliance with food safety legislation. Under this Act, authorised officers may, if conditions present risks to public health, serve an Improvement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

legislation are also taken by the official agencies; for example, compliance notices can be served which have the same effect as the enforcement measures under the Act or the Regulations.

During 2015, 371 Enforcement Notices and Orders were served on food businesses. This is a 3% decrease on the number served in 2014; the numbers had risen until 2013. As with the trend in previous years, most were served by the Health Service Executive, which supervises the majority of food businesses in Ireland.

The geographical distribution of the enforcement notices (Improvement Notices, Closure Orders and Prohibition Orders) served in 2015 can be seen in the map, with the cluster of enforcements in the greater Dublin area due to the higher population and food business numbers.

Enforcements, 2015



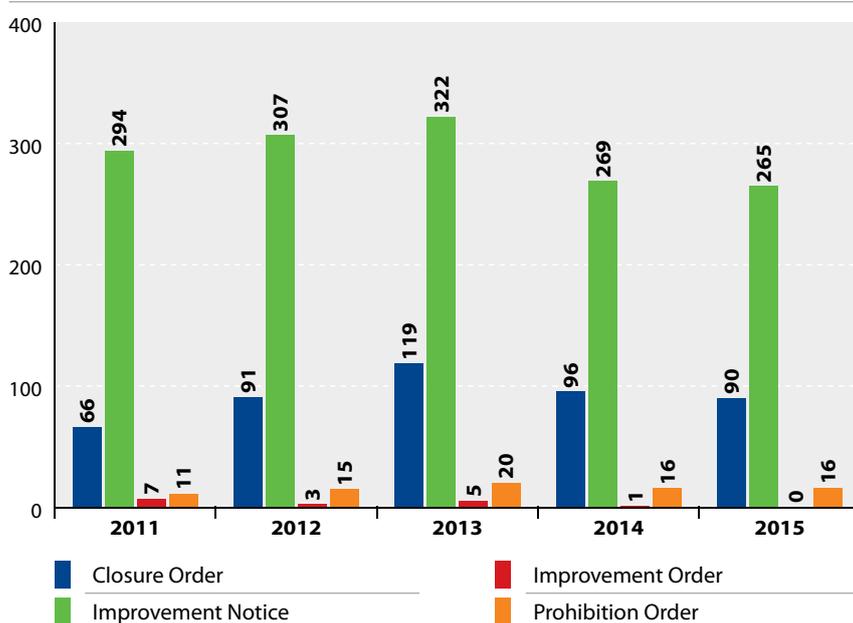
Order Type

- Closure Order
- Improvement Order
- Prohibition Order

Enforcements Served, 2011 – 2015

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Closure Order	66	91	119	96	90
Improvement Notice	294	307	322	269	265
Improvement Order	7	3	5	1	0
Prohibition Order	11	15	20	16	16
Total	378	416	466	382	371

Enforcement Orders & Notices, 2011 – 2015



During the year, one Closure Order and one Prohibition Order were served by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine following a joint investigation with the Authority the year of illegal meat processing in an unapproved premises in County Cavan.

In 2015, 90 Closure Orders were served. This is a 6% decrease on the number served in 2014 and follows a 19% decrease the previous year. Most Closure Orders are served in the service sector, which is expected as this is the largest category of food businesses.

Closure Orders Served, 2011 – 2015

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Service Sector	55	79	89	78	71
Retailers	7	9	19	10	14
Primary Producers	0	0	0	0	2
Manufacturer Selling Direct to Final Customers	1	0	0	1	0
Manufacturer/Packer	2	3	5	4	2
Distributors/Transporters	1	0	6	3	1
Total	66	91	119	96	90

PROSECUTIONS

The Authority was notified of 13 successful prosecutions in 2015, compared with 11 in the previous year. Twelve of them were undertaken by the Health Service Executive. Most prosecutions were against food businesses in the service sector: seven restaurants, two takeaways, and three public houses. The remaining prosecution was of a distributor/transporter.

The Authority took a prosecution in January 2015 against a public house operator in relation to the sale of counterfeit vodka. The owner was convicted of charges including providing misleading information to inspectors, misleading consumers and having inadequate traceability information. Fines totalling €7,000 and costs of €2,000 were imposed, underlining the gravity of the offences.

MONITORING

In addition to the food monitoring programmes conducted by the official agencies, the Authority monitors the food chain for chemical and microbiological contaminants in order to protect public health and verify compliance with the food law. In 2015, monitoring reports on: the microbiological safety of herbs and salad leaves, mycotoxins in grain, fish speciation, irradiated foods and the microbiological safety of raw milk and raw milk filters, were published.

In addition, during 2015, the Authority, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Health Service Executive (Environmental Health Service and Public Analyst Laboratories), the local authority veterinary service and the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority implemented a coordinated cross-agency programme to generate data on polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon contamination of traditionally smoked food products. The Authority collaborated with the Health Service Executive (Environmental Health Service and Official Food Microbiology Laboratories) on a survey on the microbiological safety of nuts, seeds and dried fruits.

The Authority also implemented a national dioxin monitoring programme in collaboration with Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Marine Institute and supported by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Authority provided scientific recommendations to the Health Service Executive for its chemical testing plan. Scientific input to the Health Service Executive's sampling of foods for analysis to detect food allergens, food irradiation, GMOs, and to authenticate fish species was also provided. The Authority also contributed to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's coordinated monitoring programmes on pesticides and veterinary residues.

Evaluation of the results from the sampling and analysis for the 2nd National Total Diet Study was undertaken in 2015.

IRRADIATED FOOD

The Authority is the competent authority for the enforcement of legislation governing irradiated food. It monitors the Irish market to ensure that only foods authorised for irradiation are on sale within the EU and that they are labelled correctly. In 2015, a total of 87 food samples were analysed by the Public Analyst Laboratories with none found to have been irradiated. The results from Ireland were sent to the European Commission for incorporation into its annual report on food and food ingredients treated with ionising radiation, which is compiled for the whole of the European Union. These results are routinely published on the Authority's website.

Food Tested for Evidence of Irradiation, 2015

Food Types Analysed	No. Samples Analysed	No. Samples Irradiated But Not Declared	CEN Method
Cereals, Seed, Vegetables, Fruit & Fruit Products	5	0	Screening: EN13751
Herbs & Spices	13	0	
Tea	1	0	
Sauces	1	0	
Foods for Particular Nutritional Uses	35	0	
Food Supplements	32	0	
Total	87	0	

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

The Authority is the competent authority for genetically modified food in Ireland. With the assistance of external scientific experts, the Authority reviewed applications for the approval of seven genetically modified organisms for use in maize and soybean in the EU.

These were: GM maize X 3 (5307, NK603 x T25, MON 87427) and GM soybean X 4 (FG72, MON 87705 x MON 89788, MON 87708 x MON 89788, MON 87769 x MON 89788).

The conclusions of the Authority's reviews are relayed to the Department of Health, which is the competent authority for policy matters relating to genetically modified food.

The Authority coordinated the sampling and analysis of 48 food samples (maize, soya and rice) by the Environmental Health Service of the Health Service Executive and the Public Analyst Laboratories respectively, for the authorised presence and appropriate labelling of genetically modified food ingredients. Four of the samples analysed (two containing maize and two containing soybean) were found to contain authorised GM ingredients at below the labelling threshold. The results of each year's marketplace monitoring are published on the Authority's website.

Food Tested for Genetically Modified Ingredients, 2015

Food Types Analysed	Number
Maize/Maize Products	18
Soybean/Soya Products	20
Rice/Rice Products	10
Total	48

"In addition to the food monitoring programmes conducted by the official agencies, the Authority monitors the food chain for chemical and microbiological contaminants in order to protect public health and verify compliance with the food law"



Access for Assistance and Companion Dogs to Food Premises

The Authority, in association with the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind, came together to raise awareness among food businesses of the access rights of people with guide, assistance and companion dogs. Under food hygiene regulations in Ireland, guide dogs for the blind and pups in training were permitted in food premises but more recently, this exemption was extended to assistance dogs for families of children with autism; adolescents with autism; companion dogs for persons with other disabilities; and pups and dogs in training for these categories.

Pictured are (l-r): Lean Kennedy, Access and Education Officer, Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind; Helen Crowley, Information Executive, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Lisa Sutch with puppy in training, Upsy.

NOVEL FOOD

The Authority is the competent authority for novel food in Ireland and carries out safety assessments on novel foods or food ingredients and reviews those carried out by other Member States as part of the EU authorisation process. With the assistance of external scientific experts, the Authority conducted safety assessments on applications for the approval of seven novel foods/ingredients in 2015 and forwarded the assessments reports to the European Commission for comment by other Member States.

These were: UV treated mushrooms with vitamin D, Chia seed extension of use, dried aerial parts of *Hoodia parviflora*, Alginate-Konjac-Xanthan Polysaccharide Complex (PGX), *Ecklonia cava* phlorotannins (SeaPolynoITM), di-Magnesium malate, di-Calcium malate.

The Authority also reviewed the safety assessments of eleven novel foods/ingredients carried out by other Member States and reverted to the Commission with comments within the 60 day comment period. These were in respect of: Phospholipid-Rich Krill Oil, DHC-extension of use, cranberry extract powder, fermented soybean extract (NattoKinase), synthetic L-ergothioneine, Hydroxytyrosol, Phosphatidylserine, Anatabine, Lactitol, Betaine, Isomalto-oligosaccharides

Twelve applications were made to the Authority seeking opinions on the substantial equivalence of novel food ingredients compared to food ingredients already on the EU market. Following scientific assessment, the Authority provided substantial equivalence opinions on these applications in respect of: (1 - 6) Chia seed X 6, vitamin K2, DHA-rich algal oil, cocoa extract, Astaxanthin, Magnesium citrate malate, yeast beta glucans.

The Authority is a preferred organisation of international food businesses for the purpose of the submission and assessment of novel foods for the EU market.

FISH SPECIATION MONITORING

Every year the Authority coordinates the sampling and analysis of fishery products on sale through various outlets in Ireland. This work is carried out to ensure that consumers can have confidence that the species declared on the label or in associated advertisement material is actually contained in the product they purchase. Environmental Health Officers as well as officials from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, submit samples to the Public Analyst laboratory in Cork for DNA analysis. Samples are collected from restaurants, takeaways, retail outlets and fish processors on a random basis or from targeted businesses

if specific information becomes available. Products labelled as cod or containing cod are primarily targeted in view of the results of previous surveys, but other fishery products are also sampled and analysed. In 2015, a total of 79 fishery products were sampled including, cod, hake, sea bass, haddock, plaice, pangasius, yellowfin sole, monkfish, pollock, whiting, smelt, barramundi, turbot, John dory, saithe, lemon sole and tilapia. All were compliant. The results of official controls on fish speciation are published on the Authority's website.

Development of Food Authenticity Analytical Methodologies

In 2015, in response to a shellfish poisoning incident, the Authority continued to work on developing methodologies to identify the geographical origin of mussel samples. Through stable isotope ratios in conjunction with trace element and infra-red analysis, the Authority is working with the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority and the Marine Institute in trying to develop a method that would differentiate between mussels grown in various production areas around the country. This is the first time such work has been undertaken and further development work was carried out in 2015 to determine if this technology could be used to reliably identify the growing area of mussels in Ireland.

FOOD SUPPLEMENTS, FOOD FOR SPECIAL MEDICAL PURPOSES AND FOOD FOR PARTICULAR NUTRITIONAL USE NOTIFICATIONS

Food legislation requires the food industry to notify the Authority when it is placing certain foods on the Irish market. The Authority maintains files on these notifications and in the case of food supplements, has an online notification process that populates a searchable database. The Authority is working in collaboration with the Health Service Executive to enhance the enforcement of the legislation on food supplements.

The Authority received 1,930 notifications of food supplements in 2015. Of these, 1,820 were checked for compliance with the supplements and nutrition and health claims legislation. 195 were found not to fit the definition of a food supplement.

Foods for special medical purposes are a category of foods that are specifically processed or formulated and intended for the dietary management of patients and to be used under medical supervision. In 2015, there were 104 Foods for Special Medical Purposes notified to the Authority. All notifications were assessed for safety and compliance using a risk-based selection criterion.

Foods for particular nutritional uses (general PARNUTs) are foodstuffs which, due to their special composition or manufacturing process, are clearly distinguishable from foodstuffs for normal consumption. General PARNUTs are suitable for their claimed nutritional purposes and are marketed to indicate this suitability. General PARNUTs are regulated under Directive 2009/39/EC which is valid until 20th July 2016, when it will be replaced by Regulation (EU) No 609/2013 on Foods for Specific Groups. Due to the upcoming change in legislation, the number of notifications for this category of foods is decreasing. Six general PARNUT notifications were received and assessed for safety and compliance using a risk-based selection criterion in 2015.

FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

The Authority is the central competent authority for the enforcement of the legislation on food contact materials in businesses that manufacture, import, distribute and sell food packaging and other food contact materials. There are general rules that apply to all types of food contact material including packaging. In addition, more specific rules apply to materials such as plastics or ceramics. The purpose of these regulations is to reduce the risk of harmful substances being transferred to food from packaging, wrapping or other materials with which it comes into contact. Inspection of manufacturers and importers of food contact materials in Ireland is carried out on behalf of the Authority by the National Standards Authority of Ireland. Inspections of food businesses include checks on the safe use of food contact materials. These inspections are undertaken by the other official agencies operating under service contract to the Authority.

EXPORT CERTIFICATION

Exporters of Irish food may require certificates from national authorities in Ireland to satisfy equivalent authorities in Third Countries that the food has been produced in compliance with EU food legislation. The Health Service Executive provides, on request, certificates for export of foods of non-animal origin – in 2015, 5,420 certificates were issued. A protocol with the Health Service Executive is being updated to cover this activity. The Authority issued 17 certificates for foods of non-animal origin and also two certificates for the export of food contact materials produced in Ireland.



Memorandum of Understanding with the Environmental Protection Agency

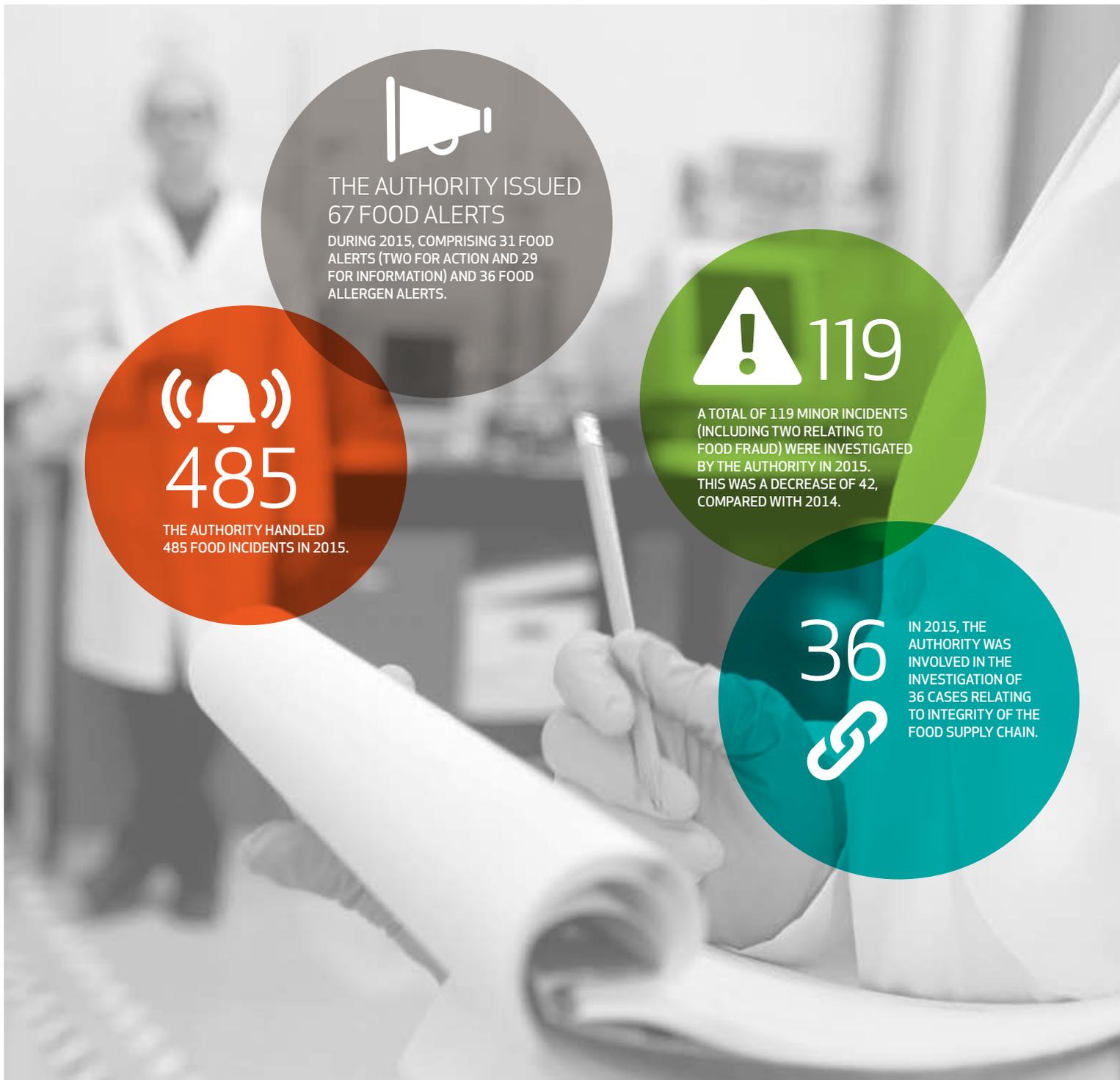
A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency. Previous to this Memorandum of Understanding, the Authority had an agreement in place with the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland which covered cooperation on the protection of the food chain from radioactive contamination.

Pictured signing the Memorandum of Understanding are Dr Pamela Byrne, Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Laura Burke, Director General, Environmental Protection Agency.

Incident Management



THE AUTHORITY IS THE NATIONAL CENTRAL CONTROL POINT FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION RELATING TO FOOD INCIDENTS AND FOOD ALERTS. EMERGENCY COVER IS PROVIDED 24/7/365. THE AUTHORITY IS ALSO THE IRISH CONTACT POINT FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S RAPID ALERT SYSTEM FOR FOOD AND FEED.



THE AUTHORITY ISSUED
67 FOOD ALERTS

DURING 2015, COMPRISING 31 FOOD ALERTS (TWO FOR ACTION AND 29 FOR INFORMATION) AND 36 FOOD ALLERGEN ALERTS.



485

THE AUTHORITY HANDLED
485 FOOD INCIDENTS IN 2015.



119

A TOTAL OF 119 MINOR INCIDENTS (INCLUDING TWO RELATING TO FOOD FRAUD) WERE INVESTIGATED BY THE AUTHORITY IN 2015. THIS WAS A DECREASE OF 42, COMPARED WITH 2014.

36



IN 2015, THE AUTHORITY WAS INVOLVED IN THE INVESTIGATION OF 36 CASES RELATING TO INTEGRITY OF THE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN.

The Authority investigated 276 full food incidents (including 36 food fraud incidents) in 2015, a further marked increase of 31(12.7%), as compared to 2014. A total of 347 causative factors were identified for the 276 full incidents.

The Authority operates to documented protocols involving partner organisations for the management of food incidents, food crises and for the investigation of foodborne outbreaks.

A total of 119 minor incidents (including two relating to food fraud) were investigated by the Authority in 2015. This was a decrease of 42, compared with 2014. In addition, the Authority managed 83 cross-country food complaints compared with 87 in 2014.

There were 45 countries of origin associated with the 485 incidents and 381 of these were from 20 European Union Member States including Ireland. Ireland was the country of origin in 43% (208) of the incidents, followed by the United Kingdom 14% (68), Northern Ireland 4.3% (21), China 3.1% (15), Poland 3.1% (15), The Netherlands 2.8% (12), France 2.3% (11), and Germany 2.3% (11).

Causative Factors for Food Incidents

Incident Factors	Frequency
Allergen	67
Microbiological	61
Chemical	60
Food fraud	42
Defective controls	36
Labelling	29
Foreign body	15
Other biological	11
Other*	26
Total	347

* The 26 'other' factors include illness report (9), novel foods (6), nutritional/ medicinal claims (4) organoleptic issues (2), choking risk (1), illegal clandestines (1), irradiation (1), packaging (1) and unclassified (1).

“The Authority operates to documented protocols involving partner organisations for the management of food incidents, food crises and for the investigation of foodborne outbreaks.”

Number of Food Incidents, 2011 – 2015

Year	Full Incidents	Minor Incidents	Cross-Country Complaints	Food Fraud	Full Incident/ Food Fraud	Minor Incident/ Food Fraud	Supplement Notification Follow-up	Full Incident/ Supplement Notification Follow-up	Other Follow-up	Other Follow-up/Food Fraud	Total
2015	239	117	83	30	3	2	2	1	7	1	485
2014	224	160	87	19	1	1	2	-	-	-	494
2013	214	146	90	5	3	1	-	-	-	-	459
2012	152	169	75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	396
2011	147	170	79	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	396



Targeted Audit of Cold Stores

The Authority audited cold stores to assess food business operator compliance with food legislation applicable to their business. The audit team examined compliance with particular focus on requirements regarding traceability, labelling and identification of product stored in the establishment.



This publication is available for download at: http://www.fsai.ie/publications_audit_coldstores/

NATIONAL FOOD ALERTS

Food incidents often result in the withdrawal or recall of foods which prompts the need to inform consumers, retailers and distributors. For this purpose, the Authority published 67 alerts during 2015, comprising 31 food alerts (two for action and 29 for information) and 36 food allergen alerts. This is a significant increase in the number of alerts published in 2014 (44) of which, 18 were food alerts (five for action and 13 for information) and 26 were food allergen alerts. A notable feature of this practice is that the allergen alerts continue to outpace the food alerts, the growing detection and reporting by producers of undeclared allergen ingredients and an improved understanding of the need to be mindful of the population groups for whom allergens are a serious risk to health. Of the 31 food alerts published, 14 related to microbiological spoilage or possible presence of pathogenic organisms. The remaining food alerts related to foreign bodies (11), labelling (2), choking risk (1), packaging (1) biological (other toxins) (1) and mycotoxins (1). All food alerts were published on the Authority's website and text messages and email notifications were issued to subscribers. Nine of the recalls related to metal, glass or plastic fragments in a range of foods.

The Authority published 36 food allergen alerts in 2015, an increase of ten compared to 2014. These food allergen alerts related to undeclared allergens on the labelling or inconsistent/incorrect labelling. These products contained a range of allergens, sometimes more than one, including 12 related to products containing gluten, milk (7), eggs (6) nuts (6) and peanuts (5), none of which were declared in the list of ingredients. All food allergen alerts were published on the Authority's website. Subscribers can receive notifications in the form of text messages and email notifications. The Authority also informs Anaphylaxis Ireland of each allergen alert.

RAPID ALERT SYSTEM FOR FOOD AND FEED

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

As the national contact point for the EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, the Authority monitored the 3,005 original notifications published on the system in 2015, of which, 748 were classified as alerts; 474 as information for attention; 378 as information for follow-up; and 1,366 as border rejections. News items (39) were circulated internally to members of the system. These original notifications gave rise to 6,204 follow-up notifications. Of the original notifications, 57 came from Ireland - of which nine related to products originating in Ireland; 55 were for food; one each for animal feed and food contact materials that were distributed to or from Ireland. In addition, the Authority responded with 115 follow-up notifications. 120 notifications involved foods distributed to Ireland. The Authority maintains a 24/7/365 capability to manage incidents and operates in close cooperation with colleagues in other Member States and particularly with those in the Foods Standards Agency's offices in Belfast and London.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Authority conducts scientific risk assessments on the hazards found in food as a basis for risk management decisions. Risk assessments support the management of food incidents as well as informing general food safety policy.

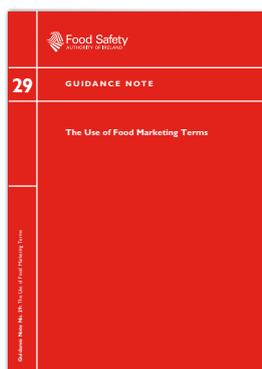
The Authority acts as the focal point for the European Food Safety Authority and as such, is involved in two way dissemination of information and data pertaining to risk assessment.

The Authority conducted 113 risk assessments in 2015. These were in the areas of: biological safety, veterinary residues, pesticide residues, chemical safety and public health nutrition.

FOODBORNE DISEASE OUTBREAKS

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

Provisional data from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre indicate that in 2015, food was reported as the suspected cause of five outbreaks of gastroenteritis (infectious intestinal disease). In only one of these outbreaks was a contaminated food identified. In the case of the other outbreaks, other possible modes of transmission were also indicated. These included possible waterborne, person-to-person and airborne transmission. Two of the outbreaks were of verocytotoxigenic *Escherichia coli* (VTEC) infection, one of which was linked to a contaminated raw milk cheese. Two of the outbreaks were of acute infectious gastroenteritis and one was an outbreak of cryptosporidiosis.



Guidance Note No. 29 – The Use of Food Marketing Terms

This document sets out guidance for food manufacturers, retailers and food service businesses to assist in the responsible use of marketing terms when placing their products on the Irish market.



This publication is available for download at: http://www.fsai.ie/publications_food_marketing_terms/



European Food Safety Authority's Executive Director Visits Dublin

Dr Bernhard Url, Executive Director, European Food Safety Authority, together with his colleagues Dr Marta Hugas, Acting Head of Department of Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance, and Mr Jeffrey Moon, Advisory Forum Team Leader, Advisory Forum and Scientific Cooperation Unit, visited the Authority in 2015. The purpose of the visit was to strengthen collaboration between the agencies and plan for cooperative working into the future.

Pictured are Mr Jeffrey Moon, Dr Marta Hugas and Dr Bernhard Url, European Food Safety Authority, Dr Pamela Byrne and Mr Raymond Ellard, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

CAMPYLOBACTER CONTROL IN THE POULTRY FOOD CHAIN

Campylobacter is the biggest cause of foodborne disease in Ireland (2,452 cases in 2015 based on provisional data from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre) and poultry is recognised as the main food source. In 2015, the Authority initiated further action with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and stakeholders, to improve controls in the poultry food chain. Following verification of recommendations of the Authority's Scientific Committee, an industry-led group was charged with the development of a national voluntary control programme. There were three meetings of this group and a draft plan was developed. In addition, discussions took place with the European Commission and other Member States on the introduction of a harmonised microbiological limit for *campylobacter* at the end of the poultry slaughter process.

INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

The Authority continues to conduct investigations in conjunction with competent authorities in other Member States and official agencies where serious breaches of food law or food fraud were detected or alleged. These investigations are designed to determine the nature and extent of non-compliance with food law and/or related food fraud. Outcomes of the investigations may result in enforcement actions and criminal proceedings being taken against offenders.

In 2015, the Authority was involved in the investigation of 36 cases relating to integrity of the food supply chain. The cases were varied in nature and included illegal slaughtering of meat; mislabelling of meat; sale and supply of counterfeit alcohol and stolen animals.

The National Food Fraud Task Force is chaired by the Authority and consists of representatives from An Garda Síochána, the Health Products Regulatory Authority, the Health Service Executive, the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, local authorities, the Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland and the Revenue and Customs Service. In 2015, a representative from the Department of Social Protection joined the Task Force. The committee met three times during the year and acts as a communications, coordination and networking group where intelligence and research are shared at national and international level.

During the year, the Authority commenced participation in road side checkpoints organised by An Garda Síochána. The purpose of these checkpoints was to target unmarked food vehicles which were not directly linked to approved or registered food businesses.

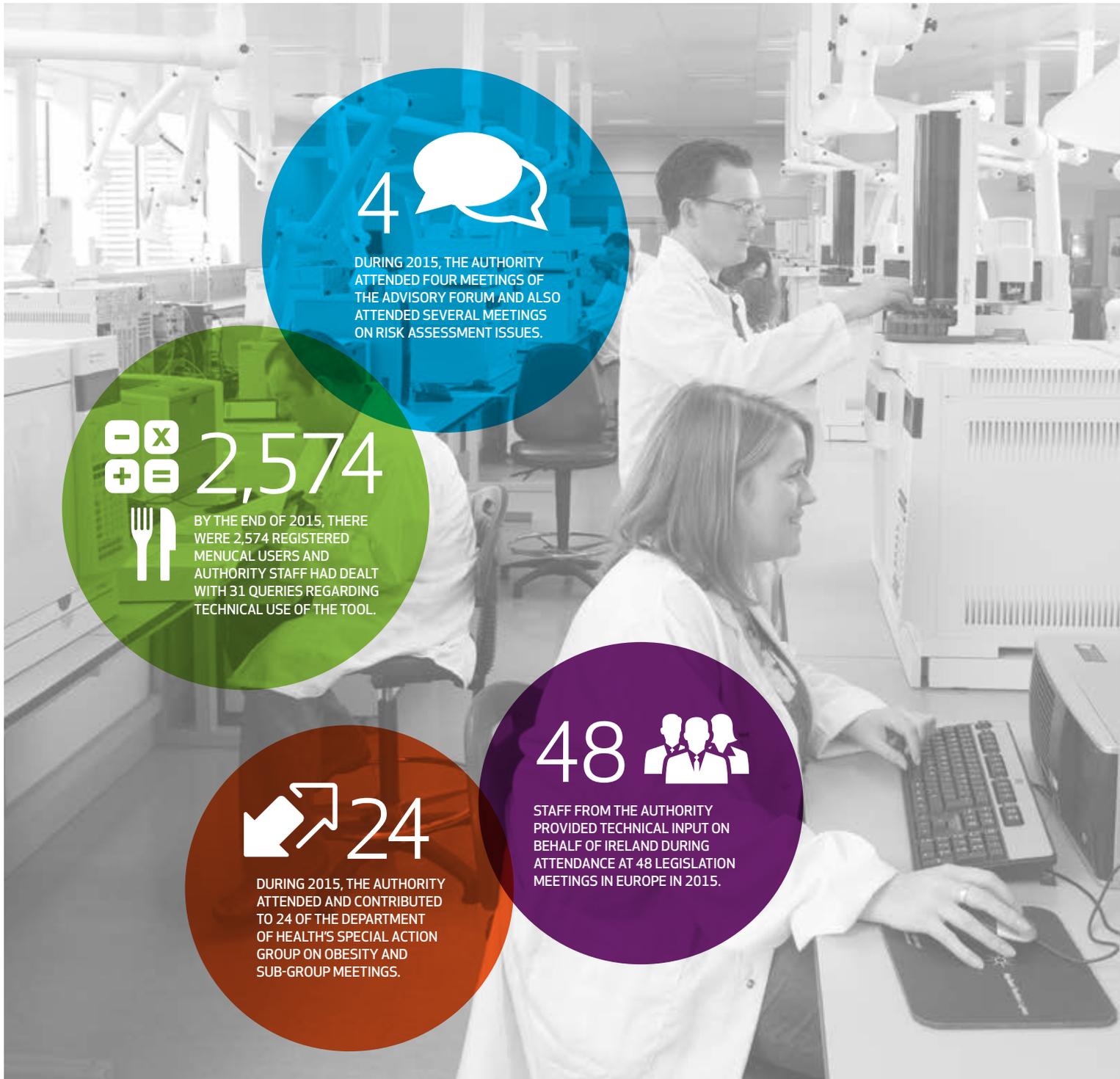
Operation OPSON – Europol and Interpol

Operation OPSON, led jointly by Europol and Interpol, has grown from a European-based operation to encompass more than 50 countries across Asia, Africa, and North and South America. During OPSON V, more than 10,000 tonnes and one million litres of hazardous fake food and drink have been seized in operations across 57 countries in an INTERPOL-Europol coordinated initiative to protect public health and safety. Targeted operations in Ireland carried out by the Authority, An Garda Síochána, the Customs and Revenue Service and official agencies, resulted in 5.89 tonnes of meat, 1,546 food items and 371.4 litres of counterfeit alcohol being seized and destroyed.

Science and Scientific Advice to Government



KEY TO THE WORK OF THE AUTHORITY IS THE IDENTIFICATION AND ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE FOOD CHAIN. STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION WITH OFFICIAL AGENCIES IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF BOTH A RISK-BASED AND EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH TO THE ENFORCEMENT OF FOOD LAW IS ALSO IMPORTANT.



4 

DURING 2015, THE AUTHORITY ATTENDED FOUR MEETINGS OF THE ADVISORY FORUM AND ALSO ATTENDED SEVERAL MEETINGS ON RISK ASSESSMENT ISSUES.

 2,574



BY THE END OF 2015, THERE WERE 2,574 REGISTERED MENCUAL USERS AND AUTHORITY STAFF HAD DEALT WITH 31 QUERIES REGARDING TECHNICAL USE OF THE TOOL.

 24

DURING 2015, THE AUTHORITY ATTENDED AND CONTRIBUTED TO 24 OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S SPECIAL ACTION GROUP ON OBESITY AND SUB-GROUP MEETINGS.

48 

STAFF FROM THE AUTHORITY PROVIDED TECHNICAL INPUT ON BEHALF OF IRELAND DURING ATTENDANCE AT 48 LEGISLATION MEETINGS IN EUROPE IN 2015.

The Scientific Committee is the statutory science body appointed by the Minister for Health to advise the Authority on scientific matters and food safety, nutrition and organisation of enforcement activities. In 2015, there was a joint meeting with the Food Safety Consultative Council and the Scientific Committee as well as six meetings of the Scientific Committee including one teleconference. There were also seven meetings of the sub-committees (Biological Safety, Chemical Safety, Public Health Nutrition).

In 2015, the Scientific Committee published the *Potential for Transmission of Antimicrobial Resistance in the Food Chain* and an update to the *Scientific Recommendations for a National Infant Feeding Policy, 2nd Edition*. The Scientific Committee also signed off on five reports (review of official controls, folic acid and neural tube defects, antimicrobial resistance, marine biotoxins and heavy metals) four factsheets, two amendments to a report and one set of amended rules of procedure.

The Scientific Committee completed its five year term of office on 31st December 2015. Twenty names of prospective members for the new Scientific Committee were sent to the Department of Health following development of a new selection process by the Authority.

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION

The Authority provides advice to Government on issues of food safety and nutrition. During 2015, the Authority attended and contributed to 24 of the Department of Health's Special Action Group on Obesity and sub-group meetings. The Authority produced one document for the group on calories on menus and reviewed two documents.

The Authority continued to contribute technical and scientific advice to the Department of Health on the update of the food pyramid through its participation on the Healthy Eating Working Group of the Special Action Group on Obesity. During 2015, the Authority attended seven meetings and reviewed ten documents.

The Authority supported the Government's policy of supplementing all infants with vitamin D by assessing the suitability of vitamin D supplement products and advising the Health Service Executive. Eight vitamin D supplements were evaluated for suitability and the Authority attended and contributed numerous teleconferences and meetings with the Health Service Executive regarding policy implementation.

The Authority continued to provide advice as requested to the Irish Heart Foundation, Healthy Food for All and the Irish Nutrition and Dietetics Institute.

Five peer reviewed abstracts on 'MenuCal', folic acid and the prevention of neural tube defects, vitamin D, folic acid fortification and nutrition regulation from Authority staff were published in 2015. Three of these were original communications that were presented at the proceedings of the Nutrition Society and two were presented at the Proceedings of the 2nd European Food Safety Authority Scientific Conference. Of these, one was awarded funding under the European Food Safety Authority Young Researcher Initiative.

CALORIES ON MENUS

The Authority continued to develop 'MenuCal' – a free tool for food businesses and successfully added allergen labelling capability to the software. This enhancement enables users to label allergens on their menus in accordance with the legislative requirements. By the end of 2015, there were 2,574 registered users and staff had dealt with 31 queries regarding technical use of the tool.

A licence for the software was sold to the Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland who is now promoting its use in Northern Ireland, making MenuCal an all-Ireland application. During 2015, a follow-up study of the impact of MenuCal continued at Cherry Orchard Hospital and is due for completion in 2016.

In 2015, the Authority facilitated a national consultation by the Department of Health to seek views on the legislation for the introduction of mandatory posting of calories on menus. The consultation was based on the Government's proposed Health and Wellbeing Bill, which will apply to non-prepacked food served by food businesses for immediate consumption on or off the premises. All interested parties were invited to communicate their views by completing an online questionnaire hosted on the Authority's website.



Raw Milk and Raw Milk Filter Microbiological Surveillance Programme

The Authority coordinated a year-long study between June 2012 and June 2013 to establish the prevalence of pathogens in raw milk and raw milk filters from bovine, ovine and caprine dairy farms.



This publication is available for download at: http://www.fsai.ie/publications_survey_raw_milk/

SALT REDUCTION PROGRAMME

The Authority continued its verification role in salt reduction during 2015. The Authority met with Food and Drink Industry Ireland to monitor progress on its initiatives to reformulate foods. The Authority also reviewed Food and Drink Industry Ireland's Crème Model on reformulation impact and made recommendations on improvement. A report on the Food and Drink Industry Ireland's model of reformulation will be published by the industry in 2016. It is hoped that following this report, the Authority will expand its surveillance and verification activities to include other nutrients such as sugars and fats and support a wider programme of food reformulation by the Irish industry going forward from 2016.

In 2015, the Authority published the findings of two surveys on salt in food and three further surveys were carried out with the assistance of the Public Analyst Laboratory in Galway. The results of all these surveys will be published in 2016.

SCIENTIFIC PARTICIPATION ON EXPERT WORKING GROUPS

The Authority consults with Member States to ensure that legislation is workable, based on sound science and achieves the objectives for which they were conceived. The Authority contributed to the development of international food standards by participating in and providing technical input to various meetings of the European Working Groups including the Codex Alimentarius Commission. During 2015, the Authority acted as the head of Irish delegations for three of the Codex Alimentarius Commission committees (Food Additives, Food Contaminants, and Dietetic Foods) and was a member of the Irish delegation for Food Hygiene. Technical input was provided by the Authority into two further committees.

Overall, staff from the Authority provided technical input on behalf of Ireland during attendance at 48 legislation meetings in Europe in 2015. These meetings covered areas such as microbiological criteria, nutrition and health claims, industrial contaminants, food additives and novel foods.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

The Authority provides expert support to the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine during discussions and negotiations on food related legislation and policy in the European Commission and the European Council.

During 2015, the Authority provided the scientific evidence-base that underpinned advice to Ministers on the development of food safety policy, public health nutrition policy and associated legislation. The Authority also consulted with and availed of advice from the European Food Safety Authority.

The Authority contributes reliable, independent advice to the Government for the development of food safety and nutrition policy through the work of its Scientific Committee and through the Authority's participation on obesity and nutrition related Government working groups.



2,452

CAMPYLOBACTER IS THE BIGGEST CAUSE OF FOODBORNE DISEASE IN IRELAND (2,452 CASES IN 2015 BASED ON PROVISIONAL DATA FROM THE HEALTH PROTECTION SURVEILLANCE CENTRE) AND POULTRY IS RECOGNISED AS THE MAIN FOOD SOURCE.

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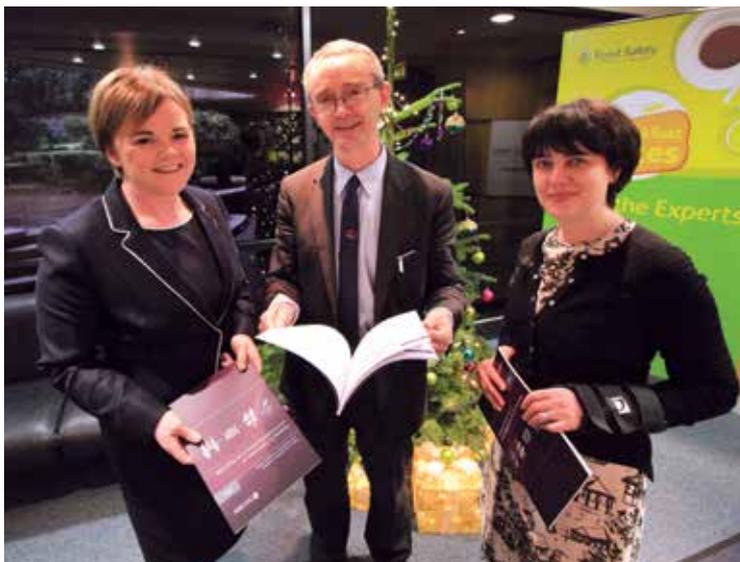


THE AUTHORITY PUBLISHED THE FINDINGS OF TWO SURVEYS ON SALT IN FOOD AND THREE FURTHER SURVEYS WERE CARRIED OUT WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE PUBLIC ANALYST LABORATORY IN GALWAY. THE RESULTS OF ALL THESE SURVEYS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN 2016.



THE AUTHORITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS

BY PARTICIPATING IN AND PROVIDING TECHNICAL INPUT TO VARIOUS MEETINGS OF EXPERT EUROPEAN WORKING GROUPS.



Antimicrobial Resistance – Report Launched

A report *'Potential for Transmission of Antimicrobial Resistance in the Food Chain'*, produced by the Authority's Scientific Committee, recommends a series of control strategies along the food chain to reduce the risk of transmission of antimicrobial resistance. This forms part of a cross-sectoral response across all areas – veterinary, human and environmental – to address the serious impact posed by the potential transmission of antimicrobial resistance in the food chain.

Pictured at the launch of the report are: Dr Pamela Byrne, Chief Executive, Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Prof. Martin Cormican, Medical Microbiology, University College Hospital, Galway and Scientific Committee member and Dr Lisa O'Connor, Chief Specialist Biological Safety, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATION WITH THE EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY

The Authority has developed strong links with the European Food Safety Authority and acts as the National Focal Point. In this capacity, the Authority is involved in two way dissemination of information and data pertaining to risk assessment. An annual report on the activities of the Irish focal point was provided by the Authority to the European Food Safety Authority.

The Authority also represents Ireland on the European Food Safety Authority's Advisory Forum, which is the European Food Safety Authority's main point of contact with the food safety agencies in the Member States. During 2015, the Authority attended four meetings of the Advisory Forum and also attended several meetings on risk assessment issues. The Authority hosted a visit from the Director General of the European Food Safety Authority in 2015 to discuss opportunities for collaboration. The European Food Safety Authority also hosts a number of specific expert meetings on areas such as emerging risks, zoonosis, communications and microbiological risk assessment. Authority staff attended 12 of these meetings in 2015.

"The Authority has developed strong links with the European Food Safety Authority and acts as the National Focal Point. In this capacity, the Authority is involved in two way dissemination of information and data pertaining to risk assessment."



Potential for Transmission of Antimicrobial Resistance in the Food Chain

This report focuses on the potential for transmission of antimicrobial resistance through the food chain, while recognising the interconnectedness between the food chain, the environment and humans, and to identify control strategies.



This publication is available for download at: http://www.fsai.ie/publications_AMR/

Communication and Information



THE AUTHORITY IS COMMITTED TO ACTIVELY COMMUNICATING WITH AND PROVIDING INFORMATION TO INTERESTED PARTIES ON ALL ASPECTS OF FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE. THE AUTHORITY ALSO ENCOURAGES CONSUMERS TO CONTACT IT WITH ANY FOOD SAFETY COMPLAINTS OR ISSUES THEY MAY HAVE. THE AUTHORITY'S TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION IS FACILITATED BY ITS ADVICE LINE, WEBSITE, LIBRARY, FACEBOOK PAGE, TWITTER PAGE, YOUTUBE CHANNEL AND EXTRANET.



 **11,832**
11,832 QUERIES WERE DEALT WITH BY ADVICE LINE STAFF IN 2015.

 **15**
THE ADVICE LINE AIMS TO ANSWER 90% OF CALLS IN FIFTEEN SECONDS AND RESPOND TO ALL QUERIES WITHIN FIVE WORKING DAYS.

318 
THE AUTHORITY'S PRESS OFFICE DEALT WITH APPROXIMATELY 318 QUERIES FROM THE MEDIA AND 27 PRESS RELEASES WERE ISSUED.

247 
WEBINARS WERE USED TO COMMUNICATE WITH INSPECTORS ON NEW INFORMATION ON FOOD SERVICE ALLERGEN LABELLING RULES WHICH ATTRACTED 247 PARTICIPANTS.

ADVICE LINE

Trained advisors on the Advice Line, supported by expert staff, dealt with 11,832 queries in 2015, an average monthly total of 986. This represented a 21% decrease on requests received in 2014 – the result of a number of initiatives which were put in place to direct people to the comprehensive information and resources on the website rather than the use the Advice Line as the first point of contact, e.g. the launch of an e-commerce section on the website where all publications can be downloaded.

The Advice Line, which operates Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, is an important resource for the food industry where the Authority's experts are available to assist food business owners and managers understand their legal requirements. The Authority encourages food businesses to take full advantage of the information and support provided to ensure they reach their food safety legal requirements. The Advice Line aims to answer 90% of calls in fifteen seconds and respond to all queries within five working days.

As in previous years, the most frequent requesters were caterers, consumers, manufacturers and personnel from the official agencies. Requests for information were the most popular reason and complaints about food and food premises were once again the second most popular reason for contacting the Advice Line, representing approximately 23% of all requests. In addition, there has been an increase in complaints from consumers about lack of allergen information (42 in 2015 compared to nine in 2014) in food businesses serving food loose, such as cafés, restaurants, delis etc. (see Table 1).

Of the 11,832 queries received in 2015, 9,093 involved requests for advice across a range of food-related areas, a decrease of 22% from 2014. Of note is that 2,739 related specifically to complaints by consumers about food and food premises, a figure largely unchanged from 2014 (see Figure 1).

A large proportion of the calls to the Advice Line in 2015 sought advice on food labelling, despite this total reflecting a 23% reduction on labelling requests during 2014. This decrease was due to the fact that the new rules on labelling foods came into effect on 13th December, 2014 and many food businesses were faced with the challenge of updating their food labels before that date. Other key areas of advice sought included information on new business start-ups, training, standards and legislation, as well as requests for the Authority's publications. In addition, 895 queries were received from official agency staff (see Figure 2).

Of the total requests to the Advice Line in 2015, approximately 49% were received by telephone, which represented a 20% decrease in the number of calls received in this way, while 38% were received by email, highlighting an increased popularity in corresponding by this route. The remainder resulted from the website, walk-ins, attendance at exhibitions, staff requests and through the Authority's facebook and Twitter pages.

The majority of queries from manufacturers and processors were on the new Food Information to Consumers legislation and the Authority's service contract personnel also had questions on new labelling requirements.

WEBSITE

The authority's website is a comprehensive source of information on all aspects of food safety and related guidance and legislation and continued to be a popular source of information. In 2015, the number of page views was up 10% from the previous year. The number of site users was up 15% from 2014 and the total number of sessions was up by 17%. 67.5% of site visitors were new and 32.5% were returning visitors, similar to the previous year. The website is also popular with overseas enquirers with 917,652 sessions coming from 225 countries/territories. Just over 50% of visits came from Ireland with 17% from the UK and 7% from the USA.

During 2015, the website's home page and legislation pages were redesigned following analysis of user experience. A new training module was also added to the website. The new E-commerce facility allows all publications to be downloaded directly from the website or purchased.

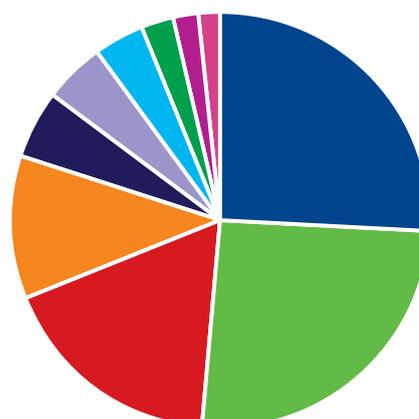
Also, consumers who wish to make a complaint about a food or a food premises can complete an online 'make a complaint' form.

Figure 1: Category of Complaint, 2015

Complaint Type	2015
Total Complaints	2,739
Labelling Complaints	192
Allergen Labelling Complaints	42

Figure 2: Category of Caller (Top 10), 2015

Information Request	2,789
Complaints	2,739
Labelling	1,900
Business Set Up	1,179
Standards	554
Training	530
Legislation	421
Imports/Exports	271
Food Supplements	196
Nutrition	163



OTHER RESOURCES

The extranet site, SafetyNet, is a communication tool between the Authority and staff of the official agencies. This online resource allows for the sharing of internal documentation such as staff contact details, standard operating procedures and publications. Through SafetyNet, the Authority continues to make available to staff and official agency staff, a suite of online learning programmes. In 2015, SafetyNet recorded 8,195 visits to the site. The home page was the most frequently visited, followed by the contacts section and shared files.

During 2015, the Authority's library continued to develop its collection of resources of books, journals and online databases. An upgrade of library software was completed in 2015 and a new library newsletter launched for staff which incorporates information on relevant conferences and training.

The library is primarily a resource for staff of the Authority, consisting of a physical space housing print books, journals and newspapers. It also provides inter-library loans and a search facility for specific topics for research, videoconferencing facilities and study spaces. The Authority also provides a library service for staff working in the official agencies. They can borrow books, avail of the journal updates and request articles. This service allows agency staff to stay abreast of scientific developments and helps in continuing their professional development.



Minister Launches Allergen Tool for Food Businesses

A new, online and mobile-compatible tool was developed by the Authority to assist Ireland's 22,000 food service businesses identify and manage allergens in the food they serve. The easy-to-use facility was launched by Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar, to help food businesses comply with their legal requirements to display allergen information on loose food so that consumers can make more informed choices about the food they purchase. The tool is an additional application to the Authority's MenuCal calorie calculator.

Pictured at the launch of the allergen tool are Dr Pamela Byrne, Chief Executive, Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar and Prof. Mary Flynn, Chief Specialist Public Health Nutrition, Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

PUBLICATIONS

All of the authority's publications are available to download from the website and new publications in 2015 included guidance on topics such as: food additives, the potential for transmission of anti-microbial resistance in the food chain, the use of food marketing terms and the high pressure processing of foods and surveys on raw milk and raw milk filters and mycotoxins in Irish grain samples.

MEDIA RELATIONS

Food and food safety continue to be topics of great interest for the media. The Authority's press office dealt with approximately 318 queries from the media and 27 press releases were issued. Press releases were issued on areas including: the serious impact posed by the potential transmission of antimicrobial resistance in the food chain, the launch of an allergen tool for food businesses, a food recall of fresh mussels, raw milk containing harmful bacteria, the need to control *campylobacter* contamination in poultry, enforcement orders and new guidance for the use of food marketing terms.

Authority staff were regularly invited to speak on national and local radio and on occasion, the Authority was represented on national TV. The Authority continued its active engagement with stakeholders through Facebook and Twitter, with an increase in the number of followers to 3,792 and 3,662, respectively. The great interest in food matters means that a day does not pass without some comment in the media about food.

TRAINING AND E-LEARNING

Training on food safety, food legislation and food controls serves to improve the effectiveness of food business operators in providing safe food and food inspectorates in ensuring compliance and safety. Training is an important means of communicating food safety messages. The Authority's objectives for training are to provide relevant training for official agency staff on food control to bolster enforcement activities and also to assist the food industry to understand and comply with the legal and technical requirements of food law.

In 2015, the Authority's learning management system for staff in the official agencies was further developed. A major emphasis was placed on the development of e-learning programmes on food law for the inspectorates through the SafetyNet Learning platform. This approach proved successful, with a number of new modules developed in 2015 including Food Information for Pre-packed Foods; Introduction to Food Contact Materials and Regulation 2073/2005 on Microbiological Criteria; and Food Additives.

The online learning management system continues to support the professional development of staff both in the Authority's and the official agencies. It provides people with a variety of learning resources such as e-learning courses, factsheets, videos and other digital resources. The online materials can be used to get up-to-date information on a topic relevant to a particular work area, refresh on a topic that was covered at recent training, or in some cases, just to broaden the knowledge base of a particular subject. Webinars were used to communicate with inspectors on new information on food service allergen labelling rules which attracted 247 participants.

In 2015, the Authority also organised a number of workshops for staff in the official agencies. Workshops were delivered on specialist topics such as supplements in food, bottled water and butcher shops.



Breakfast Bites

The June session of the ever popular Breakfast Bites series looked at the legal requirement for allergen declaration for non-prepacked (loose) foods, which applied from 13 December 2014. Information on the types of food covered by these requirements, what allergens must be declared and the options available for food businesses, was presented. Food businesses affected include restaurants, takeaways, pubs, caterers, hotels, hospital canteens, crèches etc. The legislation also covers 'distance selling' whereby food is purchased on the internet or over the phone and delivered to the consumer.

Attending the Breakfast Bites on allergens were Elizabeth Collins and Marisol Troya Gonzalez, both from Capital Foods.

The Authority also collaborated with Quality and Qualifications Ireland, the State agency responsible for maintaining the ten-level National Framework of Qualifications, to instigate a review and rationalisation of its current suite of HACCP and Food Safety Awards Standards. As a result of this work, these awards standards were finalised and adopted by the Quality and Qualifications Ireland Policies and Standards Committee in June, 2015.

The Agri-Food Development Programme provides skills training to postgraduate students and early career researchers in universities and research institutions in Ireland. The Authority assisted the delivery of their management and career development skills for the Food Industry Module in University College, Cork in 2015. Requirements for starting your own business which included food hygiene legislation, HACCP, food safety training and food labelling, were outlined by the Authority.

The Authority acts as the national contact point for the EU's Better Training for Safer Food programme. 209 staff from the food control services in Ireland participated in Better Training for Safer Food training programmes in 2015.

The well-established *Food Safety and You* training programme, which is aimed at managers or trainers working in the food industry, continued in 2015.

SEMINARS

In 2015, the Authority continued to assist small food businesses and those thinking of setting up a small food business, meet their food safety requirements through its programme of engagement. The Authority hosted a number of small food business start-up seminars aimed at demystifying food safety and hygiene requirements for entrepreneurs wishing to start a food business. The Authority held small food business start-up events in Athlone, Waterford and Dublin. Over 100 people attended each event.

The Authority also hosted six 'Breakfast Bites' seminars on the following topics: how to manage food safety in your business, training, producing food for farmers markets/market stalls, how to declare allergens information on non-prepacked (loose) foods (update), food marketing terms and the allergen function of MenuCal. The Authority continued its partnership with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation at the 'One Stop Shop' event in Waterford which aimed to help small and start-up businesses to understand and benefit from the services provided by State regulatory agencies. The Authority also had information stands at: Who to Talk to Expo, Clonmel and National Start-up Week, Dublin Central Library.

The Authority also continued to maintain a presence at key trade exhibitions to provide advice and promote the Authority's information resources such as Catex, the foodservice event.

FOOD SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

Established under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998, the Food Safety Consultative Council is an integral part of the Authority's structure. The Food Safety Consultative Council allows the Authority to meet its obligation to consult widely about its activities and the Council is a good sounding board for broad discussion with a cross section of stakeholders.

The Council met four times in 2015 and also held a joint meeting with the Northern Ireland Food Advisory Committee, a part of the Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland. Both groups presented on their respective memberships, roles and objectives. The Northern Ireland Food Advisory Committee outlined its strategic priorities. The Authority's staff presented on BSE and veterinary drug residues, while the Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland explained Northern Ireland's Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

Other topics discussed at the regular Council meetings focussed on subjects such as official controls, the analysis of data from the official agencies and the International Agency for Research on Cancer/World Health Organization report on red meat, processed meat and cancer. Themes for the Open Meeting, 2016 were also discussed.

INDUSTRY FORA

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

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

Artisan Food Producers' Forum

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

In 2015, the Artisan Forum members met twice and discussed a wide range of topics, including the concept of artisan apprenticeships and the need for hands-on training. Germany was given as an example of where excellent systems are in place. Bee health, the results of a Food and Veterinary Office audit on poultry, Teagasc's national residues database and food additives, were also discussed. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine presented to the Artisan Forum on the scope of the term 'organic' and elaborated on the certification system in Ireland for organic suppliers. The legislation pertinent to the sector was also outlined.

Retail Forum

The Retail Forum includes members from the main supermarkets and the major symbol groups. The Forum met three times in 2015. The Forum serves as a useful mechanism to increase understanding of food legislation, disseminate food safety advice and share best practice. During 2015, members discussed the preliminary results of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine funded *campylobacter* research project and shared members' plans to reduce *campylobacter* in poultry sold in their store. Members contributed to the revision of the Authority's guidance on egg storage at retail and were briefed on a wide range of topics, including Food and Drink Industry Ireland's Health Strategy and the Health Service Executive lead initiative for the management of national issues with retail multiples. A representative of frozen berry suppliers in Ireland attended to discuss the microbiological safety of imported frozen berries and a representative from the Artisan Forum attended to discuss issues around private audits of artisan producers. Updates were given on the use of the term 'butter', country of origin labelling, food marketing terms and the adaptation of the MenuCal system to enable storage of allergen information.



High Pressure Processing of Foods

This factsheet explains high pressure processing of food and outlines food business operators' responsibilities if using high pressure processing in their business.



This publication is available for download at:
http://www.fsai.ie/publications_high_pressure_processing/

Food Service Forum

The Food Service Forum draws its membership from catering businesses, food service businesses and representative organisations. The Forum is used to disseminate food safety advice, share best practice and improve understanding of relevant food legislation. The Forum met twice in 2015. Some of the main issues discussed included compliance with the new requirement for allergen labelling of non-prepacked food, inconsistency in inspections, *campylobacter* controls and the Authority's consultation on behalf of the Department of Health on the proposal to introduce mandatory labelling of calories on menus. Members were updated on how the MenuCal system was being adapted to enable it to be used to store allergen information, new guidance on the use of food marketing terms, eLearning on food contact materials, the legal position regarding guide/assistance/companion dogs in food premises and the Surplus Food Working Group. Other issues discussed included the safety of sous-vide cooking, an outbreak of norovirus linked to frozen berries served in a nursing home abroad and the Authority's continuing precautionary advice to boil imported frozen berries.

Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee

The Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee is the national stakeholder committee for the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme, which aims to ensure that only safe shellfish are placed on the market. The Committee, which is chaired by the Authority, includes representatives from the official agencies, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, the shellfish industry and other stakeholder groups. During 2015, the Committee met five times and a wide range of issues was discussed such as shellfish monitoring around the country's 8,000km coast, support for the seafood industry and publication of a Bord Iascaigh Mhara report on rope mussels. Updates to the Committee were provided by Authority staff on the Code of Practice for Shellfish Safety Monitoring, the EU Bivalve Mollusc Working Group, Shellfish Regional Information Events, 2015 and the Authority's proposed consultation with stakeholders as part of the development of the Authority's strategy, 2016 – 2019.

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The Authority continued its collaboration with a number of organisations both in Ireland and abroad, during 2015. Its close cooperation and collaboration with the Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland continued and is supported by means of a memorandum of understanding that is designed to ensure rapid and effective co-operation in the event of a food incident and common enforcement matters in both jurisdictions. The memorandum of understanding between the Loughs Agency and the Authority covers assistance provided by the Loughs Agency to facilitate the operation of the Irish Shellfish Monitoring Programme in Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough.

Collaborative working continued through cooperation agreements with Teagasc where the Authority participated in the FIRM project on *campylobacter* reduction in conjunction with University College, Dublin. The Authority was also involved with joint Teagasc/Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine studies on reduction of cadmium in root vegetables.

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

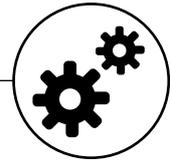
The Authority is an on-going active contributor on a number of other committees, the purposes of which are to raise and maintain standards in the food sector. Committees from these organisations include: Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland; Bord Bia; Broadcasting Commission of Ireland; Food and Drink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

The Authority chairs the Food Law Enforcement Practitioners, an EU group of inspectors and laboratory personnel engaged in food law implementation. The Authority participates in the relatively recently formed Heads of European Food Safety Agencies group. In 2015, the Authority contributed to the revision of the terms of reference, and the development of a website/portal and ensures proper co-ordination between Food Law Enforcement Practitioners and the Heads of Agencies in order to develop a sustainable and effective group.

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

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

Corporate Management



CORPORATE FUNCTIONS OF THE AUTHORITY PLAY A KEY PART IN ENSURING THAT THE AUTHORITY HAS THE CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY, SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES, TO FACILITATE EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF THE AUTHORITY'S SERVICES TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS. THEY ALSO ENSURE GOOD CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRACTICES ARE DEVELOPED, MAINTAINED AND ADHERED TO.



DURING 2015, THE AUTHORITY RECEIVED 20 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS. FIFTEEN OF THE REQUESTS WERE FROM JOURNALISTS AND FIVE WERE FROM EITHER BUSINESS OR INTEREST GROUPS.

FRS 102



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR HAVE BEEN PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF FRS 102 AND CIRCULAR 13/2014.

16



THE AUTHORITY PROVIDED ADVICE IN RESPONSE TO 16 PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS FROM VARIOUS POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES THAT WERE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH OR THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND THE MARINE IN 2015.

A COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT



FOR 2015 WAS DEVELOPED DETAILING THE SERVICE DELIVERABLES AND PLANNED WORK PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS FOR THE YEAR.

While the main function of the Authority is to protect consumers' health and interests, a key role is played by the corporate functions in ensuring the Authority is effectively managed and developed and resources are most effectively deployed so as to best deliver services. The key resources available to the Authority are primarily the executive and staff, financial resources, technology, information infrastructure and systems, and ensuring the best utilisation and development of these continue to be a priority. To underpin this, the Authority is committed to having in place, a strong quality management system which is essentially based on the concept of: identifying customers and their requirements; planning how to meet these requirements; documenting procedures where appropriate; setting measurable objectives for all divisions and all staff; and regularly reviewing achievements.

A comprehensive Service Level Agreement for 2015 was developed detailing the service deliverables and planned work programmes and projects for the year. These in turn formed the basis of the annual work plans at organisation, divisional, team and individual staff member level. A strong performance management system is in place and through this relevant training and development needs are identified. The Authority is focussed on ensuring that staff have the requisite competencies, skills and knowledge to meet both organisational and personal development needs. It places a strong emphasis on continuing learning and development and encourages staff to engage in continued professional and personal development

activities. During the year, a broad range of training programmes were delivered to support this and the Authority also supported a number of staff through developmental and further education programmes. Planning, performance management and continual review and improvement are an integral part of the Authority and the process is facilitated by the quality management system.

The quality management system is certified to the international standard ISO 9001:2008, against which the Authority is subject to an annual external audit. In 2015, the Authority's Quality Management System was subjected to a two day audit by the National Standards Authority of Ireland. The outcome was successful for the Authority and resulted in continued certification to ISO 9001:2008. As part of continuous improvement, the quality management Share Point platform was further developed to enhance the quality management system and make it more user-friendly.

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

rates, procurement and other expenditure savings. Financial statements for the year have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of FRS 102 and Circular 13/2014.

The Authority's key resource continues to be its very committed staff who are dedicated to delivering a top class service. There is a Staff Committee comprising staff at all levels throughout the Authority which is consulted on many organisational issues, including the development of human resource policies and processes. Regular meetings were held during the year and a number of issues progressed through the forum. The Authority is fully committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its staff and to complying with the requirements of the relevant health and safety legislation and promoting the health and wellbeing of staff. The Authority's Health and Safety Committee met regularly in 2015 and its work programme was implemented. Training was provided on relevant issues and monitoring of the workplace continued on a regular basis to ensure a healthy work environment.

The Authority continues to be subject to the public sector recruitment embargo. However, approval was received to recruit a number of staff during the year, including a new Chief Executive Officer who was appointed and took up the position in March 2015. The recruitment process was managed in line with requirements of the Department of Health and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.



Small Food Business Start-Up Seminar

The Authority hosted small food business start-up seminars in Waterford and in Athlone. The aim of the events was to make it easier for new food businesses to get up and running and help them to comply with all the relevant food safety requirements. At the seminars, various experts from the Authority outlined the many information resources available to food businesses, the food safety training requirements, how to set up a food safety management system, labelling regulations and what businesses need to do in the case of a product recall.

Pictured at the Athlone event are: Raymond Ellard, Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Karen Gordon, Roscommon Chocolate Company (speaker) and John Hanily, Principal Environmental Health Officer, Health Service Executive, Roscommon (speaker).



'Who To Talk To' Expo

The Authority participated at the 'Who To Talk To' Expo which took place in Clonmel. The event was designed to inspire and encourage individuals considering self-employment in all sectors and to inform new and existing business promoters about supports available for business creation and development. The Authority had a well-attended information stand which offered advice and outlined the resources available to those thinking of starting a food business.

Elaine Connolly and Vanessa Cooling of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland are pictured at the Authority's information stand.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

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

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

During 2015, Dr Pat O'Mahony resigned from the Board. There were no new appointments to the Board but an appointments process by State Boards sought expressions of interest by 8th December, 2015 to fill current and impending vacancies. The Authority had a fully functioning Board Audit Committee which undertook a Review of Service Contracts and followed up on a Review of IT Systems and a Remuneration and Nominations Committee which oversaw the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer. In May 2015, the Board engaged in a Board Effectiveness Review. The review was facilitated via electronic questionnaire and followed up with a report, a facilitated off-site meeting and an implementation plan to improve how the Board conducts its business.

The financial statements, as approved by the Board Audit Committee and the Board, were subject to audit by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General with no findings. Three Board Audit Committee meetings were held in 2015.

Central Government frameworks were availed of where relevant and available. The Authority was also advised by the National Procurement Service that no new frameworks (other than those established by the National Procurement Service) should be established.

"The implementation of a business continuity and disaster recovery system commenced and on completion will ensure that the Authority can continue to carry out its legislative duties should the Information Technology systems or the facilities become unavailable."

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Information and Communications Technology systems continue to be key in enabling the Authority to support and enhance service delivery. Information Technology infrastructure and support are vital for the efficient functioning of the Authority and the in-house Information Technology staff provide a wide range of tools to facilitate effective management. The Information Technology group successfully delivered several high value and technically complex projects during the year.

The implementation of a business continuity and disaster recovery system commenced and on completion will ensure that the Authority can continue to carry out its legislative duties should the Information Technology systems or the facilities become unavailable.

The server infrastructure for the secure transfer of data submitted by official agencies was upgraded. Interactive handing for the Advice Line call centre system was implemented. The SirsiDynix library catalogue system was migrated to a cloud-based environment adding resilience and increased availability. Upgrades to the Information Technology network security including anti-virus systems and perimeter firewalls were also completed.

A number of Information Technology development projects were delivered. These included the redevelopment of the internal audit system which is used in conjunction with the ISO 9001:2008 accredited Quality Management System.

The Advice Line call logging system was enhanced and redeveloped. This has provided additional functionality to the system resulting in efficiencies for those managing the Authority's Advice Line.

The business critical server computers were upgraded to Microsoft Server 2012 R2 and a new human resources information system was successfully procured and implemented.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

The Authority continues to meet its obligations in relation to responding to Freedom of Information requests and parliamentary questions. During 2015, the Authority received 20 Freedom of Information requests. Fifteen of the requests were from journalists and five were from either business or interest groups. Request topics included: records relating to Enforcement Orders; *campylobacter*; food supplements and calories on menus.

The Authority provided advice in response to 16 parliamentary questions from various political representatives that were submitted to the Department of Health or the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in 2015. This is a decrease from 30 in 2015. Questions received included those on: financial and staffing arrangements, iodine, and growing food crops in the region of waste incinerators.



Catex

The Authority took part at CATEX 2015, a foodservice exhibition held in the RDS, Dublin. Visitors to the stand had many queries for the Authority's expert staff, focusing mainly on labelling and allergen labelling. There was also considerable interest in MenuCal at the event, with Authority staff taking visitors through the simple steps involved in putting calories on their menus using the free online tool.

Pictured at the Authority's information stand at CATEX are Clodagh Crehan, Information Executive, Food Safety Authority of Ireland and two visitors to the stand.

Service Contracts and Memoranda of Understanding

The Authority is responsible for the enforcement of food legislation in Ireland and carries out this enforcement function through service contracts with official agencies. Section 48 of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 provides the legislative basis for this. The contracts drawn up between the Authority and the official agencies outline the level and standard of food safety activity that the official agencies will perform, as agents of the Authority. Key clauses in these contracts require the agencies to undertake official controls under the following schedules:

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

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

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

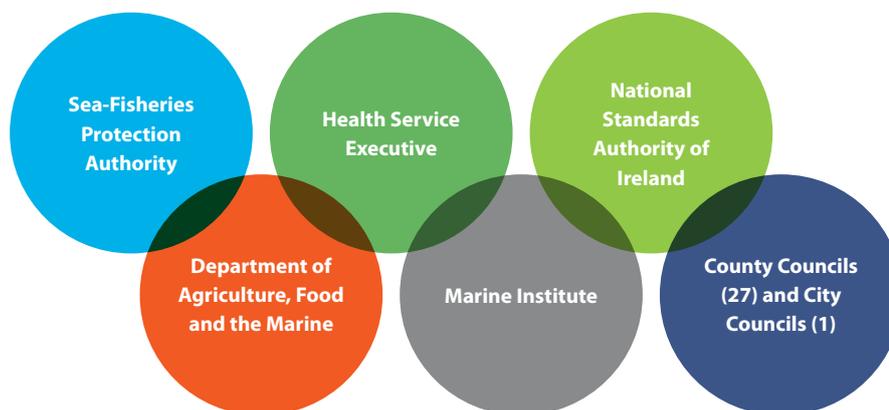
Schedule 4: Reporting requirements for the agency

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

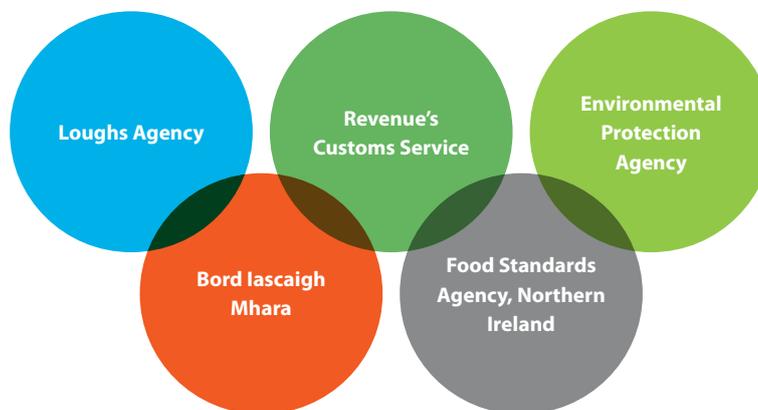
The Authority has also signed a memorandum of understanding with various other organisations both in Ireland and abroad, in order to facilitate cooperation and the exchange of information related to food safety.

A service contract is a legal agreement to enforce food safety legislation, whereas a memorandum of understanding sets out a framework for cooperation between organisations in their food safety activities.

Official agencies with which the Authority had service contracts in 2015

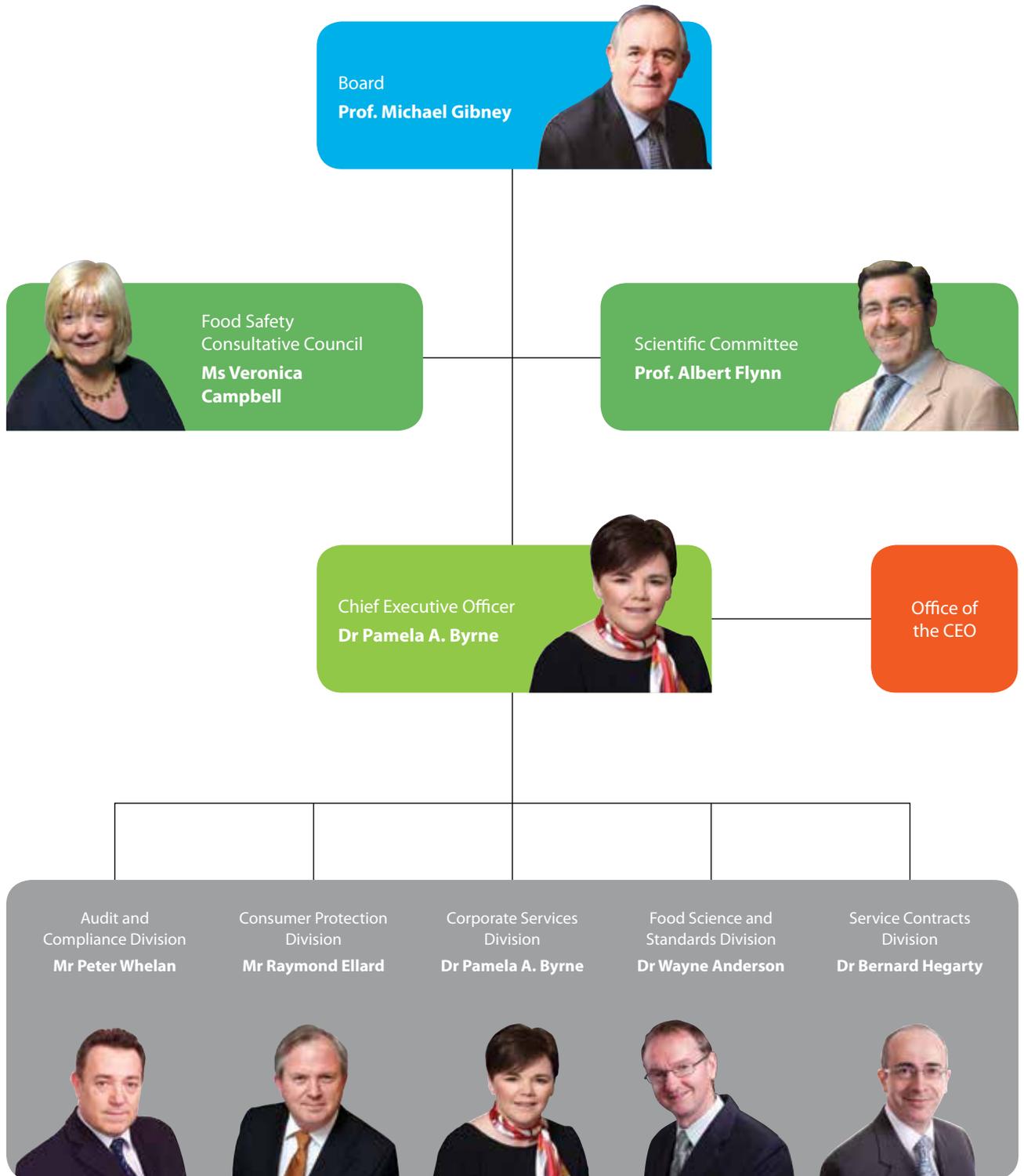


Organisations with which the Authority had a Memorandum of Understanding in 2015



Management Structure

AT 31 DECEMBER 2015



Board Members 2015



Prof. Michael Gibney (Chair)

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

Mr Ciaran Byrne

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

Mr Derek Cunningham

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

Prof. Albert Flynn

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



Ms Margaret Moran

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

Dr Pat O'Mahony

Dr Pat O'Mahony, MVM, MBA, C Dir, is Deputy Secretary General and Head of Governance and Performance at the Department of Health since September 2015. He joined the Department having led the Health Products Regulatory Authority as its CEO for the previous 13 years. Having spent a number of years in private practice and as technical manager in the pharmaceutical industry in Ireland and the UK, he worked in public health and was Director of Consumer Protection at the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

Dr O'Mahony has served on a variety of high profile boards including the European Medicines Agency where he served as Chairman from 2007 to 2011, the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the National Patient Safety Advisory Group and was vice Chair of the International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory Authorities. Dr O'Mahony resigned from the Board in January 2015.

Mr Raymond O'Rourke

Mr Raymond O'Rourke is a qualified barrister and a specialist food regulatory and consumer affairs lawyer. He worked for many years in legal firms both in Dublin and Brussels and now has his own law practice. Author of European Food Law (3rd Edition), he is a member of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority; the Taste Council; the Irish Codex Committee; and is Chairman of the Consumers' Association of Ireland.

Dr Susan Quinn

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

Prof. Patrick Wall

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

Scientific Committee Members

AS AT DECEMBER 31ST 2015

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Prof. Albert Flynn (Chair)

University College, Cork

Ms Paula Barry Walsh

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Colette Bonner

Department of Health

Prof. Martin Cormican

University College Hospital, Galway

Dr Geraldine Duffy

Teagasc

Prof. Peter Jones

University College, Cork (retired)

Prof. Brian McKenna

Formerly of University College, Dublin

Dr Paul McKeown

Health Protection Surveillance Centre

Dr Michael O’Keeffe

Residues Expert

Dr Dan O’Sullivan

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (retired)

Dr Margaret O’Sullivan

Health Service Executive

Mr Ray Parle

Health Service Executive

Ms Ita Saul

Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital, Crumlin

BIOLOGICAL SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

Prof. Martin Cormican (Chair)

University College Hospital, Galway

Ms Paula Barry Walsh

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr William Doré

Marine Institute

Dr Theo de Waal

University College, Dublin

Dr Geraldine Duffy

Teagasc

Ms Catherine Foye

Health Service Executive

Dr John Griffin

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Montserrat Gutierrez

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Kieran Jordan

Teagasc

Prof. Simon More

University College, Dublin

Dr Paul McKeown

Health Protection Surveillance Centre

Mr Micheál O’Mahony

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

Dr Helen O’Shea

Cork Institute of Technology

Dr Margaret O’Sullivan

Health Service Executive

Mr Ray Parle

Health Service Executive

Dr Paul Whyte

University College, Dublin

Mr Vincent Young

Health Service Executive

CHEMICAL SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr Michael O’Keeffe (Chair)

Residues Expert

Dr Thomasina Barron

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Pdraig Burke

Health Service Executive

Dr Claire Chambers

Consultant Toxicologist

Dr Mary Canty

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Colman Concannon

Environmental Protection Agency

Ms Catherine Cosgrove

Health Service Executive

Dr Martin Danaher

Teagasc

Mr John Keegan

Health Service Executive

Dr Peadar Lawlor

Teagasc

Dr Dave McGrath

Heavy Metals Expert

Dr John Moriarty

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Dr Evin McGovern

Marine Institute

Dr Dan O’Sullivan

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (retired)

Mr Joe Silke

Marine Institute

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION SUB-COMMITTEE

Ms Ita Saul (Chair)

Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital, Crumlin

Dr Teresa Bennett

Health Service Executive

Dr Clare Corish

Dublin Institute of Technology

Dr Eileen Gibney

University College, Dublin

Dr Hilda Griffin

Health Service Executive

Dr Tom Hill

University of Newcastle

Dr Mairead Kiely

University College, Cork

Prof. Barbara Livingstone

University of Ulster

Prof. Fionnuala McAuliffe

University College, Dublin

Dr Sinead McCarthy

Teagasc

Prof. Malachi McKenna

St Vincent’s Hospital

Prof. Helene McNulty

University of Ulster

Dr Anne Nugent

University College, Dublin

Dr Claire O’Brien

Nutrition Science Research Consultant

Dr Margaret O’Neill

Health Service Executive

Dr Kate Younger

Dublin Institute of Technology

Food Safety Consultative Council Members

AS AT DECEMBER 31ST 2015

CHAIR

Ms Veronica Campbell
Campbell Bewley Group Ltd

MEMBERS

Mr Ray Bowe
Musgraves

Dr Susanne Boyd
Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland

Mr Pat Daly
Teagasc

Ms Sinead Finnegan
Beverage Council of Ireland

Ms Una Fitzgibbon
Bord Bia

Ms Maree Gallagher
Solicitor

Mr Cormac Healy
Meat Industry Ireland

Mr Dermott Jewell
Consumers' Association of Ireland

Mr Brendan Kehoe
Farmer

Ms Margaret Leahy
Organic Farmer

Mr Donal Maguire
Bord Iascaigh Mhara

Ms Paula Mee
Nutritionist

Mr Tim O'Brien
Restaurateur

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

Mr Martin Roper
Excellence Ireland Quality Association

Industry Fora Members

AS AT DECEMBER 31ST 2015

RETAIL FORUM

Dr Lisa O'Connor (Chair)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Mr Ray Bowe

Musgrave Group

Ms Selena Burke

ADM Londis Plc.

Ms Elaine Clohosey

BWG Foods

Ms Suzanne Cullen

Superquinn/Musgraves

**Ms Mary Daly/
Ms Jennifer Smith**

Dunnes Stores

**Ms Tracey McDermott/
Ms Pauline Ryall/
Mr Stuart Challenor**

Tesco Ireland

Mr Jonathan Halls

Boots

Ms Aoife Harrison

Lidl Ireland

Mr Peter Jackson

Barry's of Mallow

Ms Lynda Kenny

Musgrave Group

Ms Denise Lord

Gala Retail Services Limited

Mr Shane Lyster

IBEC

**Ms Paula McGrath/
Sarah Woods**

Aldi

Mr Rob McEvoy

Topaz

Ms Lucy Magner

Pallas Foods

Ms Trish Twohig

Iceland

Mr Peter Wight

Marks and Spencer

ARTISAN FOOD PRODUCERS' FORUM

Dr Wayne Anderson (Chair)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Ms Darina Allen

Ballymaloe Cookery School

Ms Myrtle Allen

Ballymaloe House

Ms Sally Barnes

Woodcock Smokery

Mr John Brennan

Leitrim Organic Centre

Ms Mary Burns

Ardrahan Cheese

Ms Jeffa Gill

Durrus Cheese

Mr Michael Gleeson

Beekeeper

Mr Michael Healy

Game expert

Mr Rupert Hugh Jones

Farmer and micro-brewer

Mr Frank Hederman

Belvelly Smokehouse

Mr Sean Kent

Poultry Expert

Mr Dave Lang

Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland

Mr Donal Lehane

Food-NPD Teo

**Mr Eddie O'Neill/
Mr Pat Daly**

Teagasc

Mr Raymond O'Rourke

Solicitor

Mr Declan Ryan

Arbutus Bread

FOOD SERVICE FORUM

Dr Lisa O'Connor (Chair)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Mr Adam Heyes

Subway Ireland

Ms Louise Collins

Eddie Rockets (IRL) Limited

**Ms Niamh Devaney/
Mark Anderson**

Gather and Gather

Mr Adrian Cummins

Restaurants Association of Ireland

Ms Martina Donohoe

Aramark

Ms Caroline Byrne

Euro-Toques Ireland

Ms Nicola McDonnell

McDonalds Restaurants of Ireland

**Ms Helena O'Brien/
Ms Mary Dowling**

Catering Management Association

Mr Conor O'Kane

Maldron Hotel/Irish Hotel Federation

Mr Pat O'Sullivan

Irish Prison Service

Ms Charlene Thornton

Compass Group

MOLLUSCAN SHELLFISH SAFETY COMMITTEE

Food Safety Authority of Ireland (Chair)

**Ms Vicky Lyons/
Dr Terence O'Carroll**

Bord Iascaigh Mhara

Mr Paul Hickey

Health Service Executive

**Mr Richie Flynn/
Mr Jerry Gallagher/
Mr John Harrington/
Mr Pat Mulloy/
Mr Finian O'Sullivan**

Irish Shellfish Association

Dr Sarah McLean

Loughs Agency

**Mr Bill Doré/
Mr Conor Duffy/
Dr Sinead Keaveney/
Mr Aengus Parsons/
Mr Joe Silke**

Marine Institute

**Mr Brian Nolan/
Mr Daniel O'Callaghan**

Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority

Board Members'/Chief Executive's Statement of Interests

FOR 1 JANUARY 2015 TO 31 DECEMBER 2015

Board Member	Commercial Interests		Non-Commercial Interests	
	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests
Mr Ciaran Byrne	None	–	None	–
Mr Derek Cunningham	None	–	None	–
Prof. Albert Flynn	Tate & Lyle Americas LLC, USA	Scientific Advice	None	–
Prof. Michael Gibney	Nestle Research Centre	Consultancy	International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) Europe	Board Member
	Cereal Partners Worldwide	Consultancy	Google Food Innovation Lab	Advisor
			DSM Publication	Member of Editorial Board
Ms Margaret Moran	None	–	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Two family members currently employed as solicitors by Arthur Cox
Mr Pat O'Mahony	None	–	None	–
Mr Raymond O'Rourke	Bord Bia	Board Member	Consumers Association of Ireland (CAI)	Chairman
	EFSA	Board Member	Taste Council (c/o Bord Bia)	Board Member
			Irish Codex Committee	Member
Dr Susan Quinn	None	–	None	–
Prof. Patrick Wall	Independent Milk Laboratories	Non-Executive Board Member	Horse Sport Ireland	Chair
	Moypark Poultry N.I.	Member of Food Safety Committee	Agriaware	Board Member
	Aryzta	Shares	International Scientific Advisory Committee, Chinese National Centre of Food Safety and Risk Assessment	Member
	Luxcel Biosciences	Non-Executive Director		
	Scientific Advisory Committee, ALT	Member		
	Dawn Farm Foods	Research Funding		
Chief Executive Officer				
Dr Pamela Byrne <i>From 1 March 2015</i>	Abbot Nutrition – <i>until 29 February 2015</i>	Director Regulatory Policy & Intelligence	None	–
		Executive Director		
Prof. Alan Reilly <i>Retired 27 February 2015</i>	None	–	None	–

Scientific Committee Members' Statement of Interests

FOR 1 JANUARY 2015 TO 31 DECEMBER 2015

Scientific

Committee Member

Commercial Interests

Non-Commercial Interests

	Commercial Interests		Non-Commercial Interests	
	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests	Name of Organisation	Nature of Interests
Ms Paula Barry-Walsh	None	–	None	–
Dr Colette Bonner	Not submitted	–	–	–
Prof. Martin Cormican	None	–	None	–
Dr Geraldine Duffy	None	–	None	–
Prof. Albert Flynn	Tate & Lyle Americas LLC, USA	Scientific Advice	None	–
Prof. Peter Jones	Not submitted	–	–	–
Prof. Brian McKenna	None	–	UCD	Emeritus Professor of Food Science
Dr Paul McKeown	Not submitted	–	–	–
Dr Michael O'Keeffe	None	–	European Food Safety Authority	Member, CONTAM Panel
Dr Dan O'Sullivan	Not Submitted - <i>Resigned from Committee</i>	–	–	–
Dr Margaret B. O'Sullivan	None	–	None	–
Mr Redmond Parle	None	–	None	–
Ms Ita Saul	None	–	None	–

Index to Financial Statements

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General

REPORT FOR PRESENTATION TO THE HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS

FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

I have audited the financial statements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2015 under the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998. The financial statements comprise the statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves, the statement of financial position, the statement of cash flows and the related notes. The financial statements have been prepared in the form prescribed under Section 26 of the Act, and in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice as modified by the Minister for Health in relation to accounting for superannuation costs.

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

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. The Board of the Authority is responsible for ensuring that they give a true and fair view and for ensuring the regularity of transactions.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL

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

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

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

SCOPE OF AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

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

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

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

OPINION ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

In compliance with the directions of the Minister for Health, the Authority accounts for the costs of superannuation entitlements only as they become payable. This basis of accounting does not comply with Financial Reporting Standard 102 which requires such costs to be recognised in the year the entitlements are earned.

In my opinion, except for the accounting treatment of the Authority's superannuation costs and liabilities, the financial statements, have been properly prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in Ireland and give a true and fair view of the state of the Authority's affairs at 31 December 2015 and of its income and expenditure for 2015.

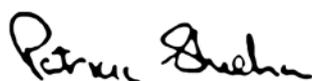
In my opinion, the accounting records of the Authority were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited. The financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

MATTERS ON WHICH I REPORT BY EXCEPTION

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

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

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



Patricia Sheehan

For and on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General
June 2016

Board Members' Report

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

BOARD MEMBERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

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

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

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

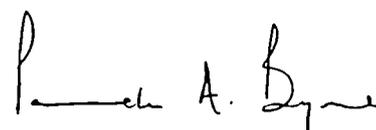
On behalf of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland:



Prof. Michael Gibney

Chairman

14th June 2016



Dr Pamela A. Byrne

Chief Executive Officer

14th June 2016

Statement on Internal Financial Control

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SYSTEM OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL

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

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

KEY CONTROL PROCEDURES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

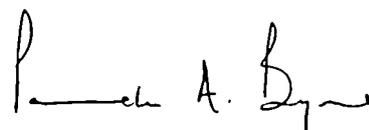
ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONTROLS

I confirm that for the year ended 31st December 2015 the Board carried out a review of internal financial controls.

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



Prof. Michael Gibney
Chairman
14th June 2016



Dr Pamela A. Byrne
Chief Executive Officer
14th June 2016

Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

		2015	Restated 2014
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Income			
Oireachtas Grant	2	15,424	15,303
Other Income	3	530	516
Total Income		15,954	15,819
Expenditure			
Administration, Operations & Promotion	4	8,426	8,114
Communications activities	5	495	508
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	6	225	232
Local Authority Veterinary Service	7	6,952	6,852
Total Expenditure		16,098	15,706
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Appropriations		(144)	113
Transfer from/(to) the Capital Account	8	52	(134)
Surplus/(Deficit) for year after Appropriations		(92)	(21)
Balance at 1 January		364	385
Balance at 31 December		272	364

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

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

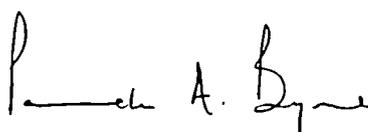
On behalf of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland:



Prof. Michael Gibney

Chairman

14th June 2016



Dr Pamela A. Byrne

Chief Executive Officer

14th June 2016

Statement of Financial Position

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015

		2015	Restated 2014
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Fixed Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	6	227	331
Intangible Assets	6 (a)	100	49
Current Assets			
Receivables	9	437	456
Cash and Cash Equivalents		115	119
		552	575
Current Liabilities (amounts falling due within one year)			
Payables	10	279	211
		273	364
Net Current Assets			
		273	364
Net Current Assets / Liabilities			
		273	364
Total Assets less Liabilities before Pensions			
		600	744
Representing			
Capital Account	8	328	380
Retained Revenue Reserves		272	364
		600	744

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

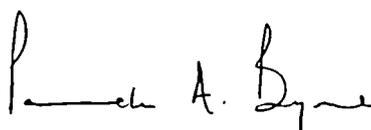
On behalf of the Board of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland:



Prof. Michael Gibney

Chairman

14th June 2016



Dr Pamela A. Byrne

Chief Executive Officer

14th June 2016

Statement of Cash Flows

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

		2015	Restated 2014
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Net cash inflow from operating activities			
Excess Income over Expenditure		(144)	113
Depreciation and Impairment of Fixed Assets	6	225	232
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	9	19	26
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	10	68	(30)
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities		168	341
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Payments to acquire Plant & Equipment	6	(59)	(296)
Payments to acquire Intangible Assets	6(a)	(114)	(70)
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities		(173)	(366)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		(5)	(25)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January		119	144
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December		114	119

Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

a) General Information

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

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

To take all reasonable steps to ensure that:

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

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

b) Statement of Compliance

The financial statements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2015 have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), as promulgated by Chartered Accountants Ireland. These are the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's first set of financial statements prepared in accordance with FRS 102. The date of transition to FRS 102 is 1 January 2014. The transition to FRS 102 has not affected its reported financial position or financial performance.

c) Basis of Preparation

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

During 2015 the expenditure categorisation was altered. The 2014 comparatives have also been reclassified.

d) Revenue

Oireachtas Grants

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

Other Revenue

Other Revenue is recognised on an accruals basis.

e) Plant and Equipment

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

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

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

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

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

f) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at fair value.

g) Operating Leases

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

h) Employee Benefits

Short-term Benefits

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

Retirement Benefits

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

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

i) Local Authority Veterinary Scheme

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

Funding received from the Department of Health and amounts paid to Local Authorities are recognised on cash received and cash paid basis.

2. OIREACHTAS GRANTS

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

		2015	Restated 2014
	Sub-head	€'000	€'000
Grants for			
Current Expenditure	E.1.	15,424	15,303

3. OTHER INCOME

	2015	Restated 2014
	€'000	€'000
Superannuation Deductions	263	268
Sale of Publications	153	153
Sundry Income	114	95
	530	516

4. ADMINISTRATION, OPERATIONS & PROMOTION

		2015	Restated 2014
	Notes	€'000	€'000
Remuneration and			
Other Pay Costs	4(a)	5,062	4,885
Rent, Rates, Service			
Charges and Insurance		1,223	1,125
Research Costs		273	171
Legal and Consulting Fees		247	206
IT, Telephone and Internet		695	546
Operating Expenditure	4(e)	926	1,181
		8,426	8,114

4. ADMINISTRATION, OPERATIONS & PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

(a) Remuneration and Other Pay Costs

	Notes	2015	Restated 2014
		€'000	€'000
Staff Salaries		4,225	4,083
Pension Payments		46	21
Employer's Contributions to Social Welfare		375	370
Staff Training and Development		183	172
Staff Travel and Subsistence Costs		181	202
Board Members' Emoluments	4 (c)	52	37
		5,062	4,885

(b) Employee benefits breakdown

Range of total employee benefits		Number of Employees	
From	To	2015	2014
€10,000	€59,999	58	63
€60,000	€69,999	8	4
€70,000	€79,999	5	7
€80,000	€89,999	9	6
€90,000	€99,999	5	3
€100,000	€109,999	3	1
€110,000	€119,999	2	1

(c) Board Members' Emoluments

Board Member	Board Fee	Travel Expenses	Meetings Attended
Michael Gibney Chairman	12	0	7
Raymond O'Rourke	8	0	3
Derek Cunningham	8	0	7
Margaret Moran	8	0	7
Ciaran Byrne	8	0	7
Patrick Wall	0	0	4
Susan Quinn	0	0	6
Pat O'Mahony	0	0	1
Albert Flynn	0	1	5
	44	1	

During 2015, seven Board meetings were held. Pat O'Mahony resigned from the Board in January 2015. Four Board Members did not receive a Board fee under the One Person One Salary (OPOS) principle, as they are employed by other State organisations. Albert Flynn attended two Board meetings, as chair of the Scientific Committee by invitation of the Board, while ratification of appointment was being granted by the Minister for Health. An overpayment to a Board Member of €7 k was written-off during 2015.

4. ADMINISTRATION, OPERATIONS & PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

(d) CEO Remuneration

	2015	Restated 2014
	€'000	€'000
Alan Reilly (retired 28th February 2015)	28	143
Pamela Byrne (appointed 2nd March 2015)	114	0
	142	143

The CEO remuneration package for 2015 was as follows: annual basic salary of €125,760 with standard public sector pension arrangements.

The senior leadership team comprises the CEO and four Directors.

(e) Operating Expenditure

	2015	Restated 2014
	€'000	€'000
Recruitment Expenditure	23	50
Stationery and Postage	43	55
Cleaning and Catering	97	99
Repairs and Maintenance	44	34
Audit Fee	12	14
Food Legislation Compliance	63	104
Training – Official Agency Staff	11	79
Committee Expenses	25	19
Library Supplies	92	102
Temporary Staff	356	502
General Expenditure	160	123
	926	1,181

5. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

	2015	Restated 2014
	€'000	€'000
Public Relations	83	84
Industry Events	96	89
Industry Liaison	26	51
Publications	290	284
	495	508

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment	Office Equipment	Office Furniture	Leasehold Improve.	Scientific Equipment	Total
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cost:						
At 1 January 2015	844	126	375	130	311	1,786
Additions	54	4	1	0	0	59
Disposals	(11)	(00)	(01)	(00)	(00)	(12)
At 31 December 2015	887	130	375	130	311	1,833
Accumulated Depreciation						
At 1 January 2015	685	103	361	101	206	1,456
Charge for the year	112	7	6	11	26	162
Depreciation on Disposals	(11)	(00)	(01)	(00)	(00)	(12)
At 31 December 2015	786	110	366	112	232	1,606
Net Book Value						
At 31 December 2015	101	20	9	18	79	227
At 31 December 2014	160	23	14	29	105	331

6(A). INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	2015	Restated 2014
	€'000	€'000
1 January, Opening Net Book Value	49	56
Additions at Cost	114	70
Less Depreciation Charge for the year	(63)	(77)
31 December, Closing Net Book Value	100	49

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

7. LOCAL AUTHORITY VETERINARY SERVICE

	2015	Restated 2014
	€'000	€'000
LAVS Payments	6,952	6,852
Number of Local Authorities paid	26	26

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

8. CAPITAL ACCOUNT

	2015	2015	2014	Restated 2014
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
At 1 January		380		246
Transfer from/(to) Income and Expenditure Account				
Funds allocated to acquire Fixed Assets	59		296	
Funds allocated to acquire Intangible Assets	114		70	
Amount released on Disposal	(00)		(0)	
Amount amortised in line with asset depreciation	(225)	(52)	(232)	134
Balance at 31 December		328		380

9. RECEIVABLES

	2015	Restated 2014
	€'000	€'000
Sundry Income	8	2
Prepayments	429	429
Salaries	0	7
Local Authority Veterinary Service	0	18
	437	456

10. PAYABLES

Amounts falling due within one year	2015	Restated 2014
	€'000	€'000
Trade Creditors	45	53
Accruals	147	19
Payroll Accruals	(2)	4
Pension Levy	0	22
Tax Creditor - PAYE/PRSI	(2)	0
Tax Creditor - VAT	52	71
Tax Creditor - PSWT	39	42
	279	211

11. OPERATING LEASES

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

(a) The Authority has two commitments in respect of leases, held by the Office of Public Works:

(i) a 20 year lease which commenced in 1997 with five yearly rent reviews

(ii) a 20 year lease which commenced in 1997 with five yearly rent reviews

The annual costs of the leases excluding service charges is €583,000 (2014: €583,000)

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

At 31 December 2015 the Food Safety Authority of Ireland had the following future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:

	€'000
Expiring within 1 year	794
Expiring during the years 2 to 5	199
Expiring thereafter	0

12. BOARD MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

13. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Financial Statements were approved by the Board on 14th June, 2016.



Food Safety Authority of Ireland

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