

## **Review of Cutting Plants and Cold Stores**

Purpose	To review meat cutting plants and cold stores
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Review Team Leader	Simon Dawson, FSA Head of Operations Assurance
Date	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2018

### **Background**

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) have announced that they will be undertaking a review of meat cutting premises and cold stores. This comes in the wake of non-compliance issues identified at various cutting plants and will be industry wide.

Slaughterhouses, Cutting Plants and Game Handling Establishments require veterinary control in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 and must be approved by the FSA in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and by FSS in Scotland.

Cutting plants do not require veterinary control on a daily basis and are inspected through periodical and unannounced visits by the FSA, FSS or Local Authorities. They are also audited by the FSA / FSS in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 854/2004. A risk based approach is used to determine the frequency. Many will also be members of assurance schemes such as Red Tractor and BRC who conduct their own inspections.

Cutting plants are wholesale/retail/catering butchery establishments engaged only with the cutting of meat and boning out of carcasses. Cutting plants can also be approved for cold storage and to produce minced meat, meat preparations and/or meat products, in addition to being approved to cut meat.

Cold storage refers to the activity of storing food which has not been produced in the establishment where the storage (under temperature control) is taking place. These establishments are approved by the local authorities.

FSA/FSS wish to assess how today's meat industry operates across the whole supply chain, including the cause and effect of shifts in the economics of the industry, and how it might continue to change, to ensure that the future regulatory direction keeps pace with and anticipates sector changes.

### **Scope**

- All meat establishments in scope, including those under Local Authority enforcement responsibility as well as those under FSA/FSS control. This includes both stand alone and co-located premises.
- All types of establishments - Red, White and Game Meat
- The review will encompass:
  - Legislative framework and guidance;
  - Policy, procedures, and process relating to delivery of official controls;
  - Respective roles and responsibilities of all actors in the meat supply chain - including all food businesses, regulators, assurance and standards bodies;
  - End to end process from approval to withdrawal – whole food chain approach; and
  - Incidents management process.
- The review will include an overall assessment of the capacity and capability of assurance framework including a delivery competency assessment.

For clarity the following areas are out of scope:

- A detailed review of the scientific evidence underpinning the delivery of controls in cutting plants and cold stores, although feedback on the scientific evidence may inform findings and recommendations for further work.
- EU Exit – although any appraisal of options will take into consideration any potential impact of exiting the EU.

### **Objectives/ Deliverables/Success Criteria**

#### Objectives

- To clearly articulate how the meat industry currently operates across the whole supply chain, identify areas which pose greatest risk to public health and food safety, and better understand factors influencing food business compliance behaviour.
- To clearly and concisely document the current official control delivery arrangements for FSA, FSS and LAs in cutting plants and cold stores, identify opportunities for improvement and make recommendations for change.
- To improve public and stakeholder confidence in the overall effectiveness of the regulatory and assurance framework governing hygiene and public health standards in Cutting Plants & Cold Stores.
- To demonstrate FSA/FSS commitment to deliver improvements as excellent, modern accountable regulators.
- To strengthen the arrangements for delivery of official controls so that they are more effective in identifying non-compliance or potential non-compliance issues and ensures corrective action is taken before escalation to an incident.
- To identify any other measures that strengthen consumer confidence in meat production.

#### Deliverables

- Document 'As Is' model.
- Identify a range of options for change, including potential for more effective use of data to inform better regulation.
- Comparative analysis of the arrangements in place in the 4 countries (Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England).
- Dependency mapping with other change initiatives – eg EU exit, FSA Regulating our Future programme, FSS Regulatory Strategy, Future Surveillance Model.
- Agree assessment criteria for appraising options.
- Options appraisal.
- High Level delivery plan for agreed options.
- Evaluation framework to assess effectiveness of agreed options.
- Report to FSA/FSS Boards by June 2018.

#### Success criteria

- Agreed options secure broad support of stakeholders.
- Options and preferred route must be deliverable and affordable.
- Provide assurance regarding Operational controls to international bodies eg Sante F and 3<sup>rd</sup> countries.

### **Approach**

- Mobilise small core team, with wider network of subject matter experts.
- Split work into workstreams – agree requirements for each workstream.
- Weekly checkpoint meetings with SRO(s).
- Map the current model end to end, adopt the RoF operating model developed for the wider review of official controls as a framework.
- Review history of official controls including lessons learned from relevant incidents.
- Risk assessment and identify gaps where any improvements could be made.
- Develop options using a combination of workshops, listening events and on-line

<p>collaboration tools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appraise options against operating model.</li> <li>• Develop recommendations.</li> <li>• Evaluate approach.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Governance and reporting</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountable to FSA/FSS Boards – initial findings to be presented in June with final recommendations and delivery plan presented in September 2018.</li> <li>• FSA SRO – Colin Sullivan, FSS SRO – Ian McWatt.</li> <li>• Project Board will consist of subset of FSA Executive Team (Jason Feeney, Colin Sullivan, Maria Jennings, Michael Wight) and Geoff Ogle and Ian McWatt from FSS - fortnightly progress reports from SRO and regular updates to FSA and FSS Board Chairs from CEO's.</li> <li>• A Challenge Group of external members (from outside the food sector) will be established to complement the Project Board by providing scrutiny, challenge and an external perspective.</li> <li>• Review Management Team Checkpoints – core team drawn from across FSA/FSS to provide day-to-day oversight and support.</li> <li>• Split into workstreams – including SME's in each stream.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Communications and Stakeholder Engagement</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder Mapping and Communications Plan to be developed.</li> <li>• Stakeholder mapping to include segmentation analysis to secure feedback from across the whole meat supply chain – including producers, meat processors, brokers, assurance schemes, standards bodies and regulators.</li> <li>• FSA is committed to transparency and will provide regular updates on review progress and findings during the review.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>High Level Milestones</b></p>	
	<b>BY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop approach and scope of reference</li> <li>• Agree review governance arrangements</li> <li>• Mobilise review team - agree approach and delivery plan</li> </ul>	End Feb 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence gathering</li> <li>• Engage stakeholders</li> </ul>	March 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Options and appraisal</li> <li>• Engage stakeholders (proposals)</li> <li>• Develop emerging findings</li> <li>• Impact assessment</li> </ul>	April 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EFRA Select Committee update</li> </ul>	May 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial findings report to FSA/FSS Boards</li> </ul>	June 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final recommendations, evaluation framework and implementation plan to FSA/FSS Boards, including piloting proposals</li> </ul>	Sep 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Implementation</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> </ul>	TBD