

Performance Reporting

1 Purpose of the paper

1.1 This paper provides a six monthly update for the Board on FSS performance in delivering key activities and provides additional context in support of the metrics detailed in Annex A.

1.2 The Board is asked to:

- **Consider and comment** on reported performance metrics
- **Note** that measures on Pages 9,10 and 11 related to Veterinary Audits, and Audit Assurance have been impacted by Covid-related capacity issues and the measures are not reflective of the measures that would be reported during a standard six monthly period.

2 Strategic Aims

2.1 This work supports the FSS Strategic Outcome 6 – FSS is efficient and effective.

3 Background

3.1 This paper builds on the Board discussion on performance monitoring and proposed metrics in November 2017. The FSS Board Terms of Reference (ToR) confirm that the Board has overall responsibility for the actions and decisions of FSS, and is ultimately accountable to the Scottish Parliament for policy delivery, compliance with statutory duties and performance against agreed strategic objectives.

4 Discussion

4.1 Following consideration at the November 2017 Board meeting, minor amendments were proposed to the reporting format and content. The reported metrics and presentation thereof continues and the Board are invited to provide feedback .

5 Annex Metrics

5.1 Animal Welfare

5.1.1 A key function of FSS is to ensure that animals are protected by Food Business Operators (FBOs) prior to and during slaughter and killing. FBOs have a duty under the Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (WATOK) Regulations 2012 and welfare controls in approved meat establishments are delivered by the FSS veterinary and inspection personnel on behalf of Scottish Government (SG). FSS also plays an important role in relation to assisting the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Local Authorities (LAs) through providing information relating farm and/or during transport.

5.1.2 The welfare metrics cover the period from vesting day to 31st March 2020 and FSS has continued to refine the reporting procedures. personnel in slaughterhouses have reported the following:

The six monthly total incidents for 20/21 equates to 0.004% of total red meat and 0.00003% poultry throughput.

An FSS performance update on Animal Welfare can be seen in Annex A: Page 1, accompanied by welfare data showing non-compliance figures in abattoirs, farm and transport over a period of 4 years.

- 5.1.3 Page 1 of Annex A: 'Issues within reporting period', highlights a slight increase in the recorded on-farm and/or on-transport breaches being reported to the relevant Competent Authority in Q1 & Q2. These types of incidents are discussed at a strategic level by the Scottish Livestock Welfare Group involving all enforcement authorities relevant to animal welfare. At a local level, the Animal and Plant Health Agency and Local Authorities risk assess incidents reported to them and investigate accordingly. Out of the incidents linked to abattoir operations in Q1 & Q2, 8 involved evidence of animal pain and suffering (i.e. score 4). This is the same as the comparable reporting period for 2019/20. The main issues detected were related to stunning/killing operations, with the others being linked to lairage operations and handling of animals before stunning.

5.2 Shellfish Sample Compliance

- 5.2.1 FSS carries out an annual review of all Scotland's shellfish production area classifications using the previous three year data-set, or less if not available, from the production areas to inform classification award decisions for the coming classification year. This process is carried out in accordance with EU guidance. FSS monitors these classified production areas for the presence of marine biotoxin producing phytoplankton in waters and marine biotoxins in shellfish flesh.

- 5.2.2 Changes in the number of classification awards will vary due to the following reasons:

- Changes in levels of E.coli reported throughout the year
- Decisions, taken by harvesters, not to continue with the classification
- Insufficient samples submitted to either maintain the same level of classification award i.e. 10 samples required for Class A or a minimum of 8 samples to retain a classification award

- 5.2.3 New classification awards

Up until the end of March 2018, Shellfish sampling across Scotland was being carried out by 3 separate contractors, HallMark Scotland, Highland and Argyll & Bute Councils. In addition, FSS Operations staff carried out sampling within North and South Ayrshire and Dumfries & Galloway.

- 5.2.4 In 2017, during the run-up to the end of the sampling contracts and following a robust procurement exercise, FSS entered in to discussions with the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) to create a Government to Government arrangement for the delivery of the FSS Scottish Shellfish Monitoring Programme.

- 5.2.5 The new arrangements for the Scottish Shellfish Monitoring Programme take effect from 01 April 2018. The key change is that although FSS remain the Competent Authority, Cefas will deliver and manage the majority of the shellfish programme requirements. For Cefas to deliver this service, they have contracted out several elements of the programme – the key change being HallMark Scotland will now carry out shellfish sample collection for the whole of Scotland.
- 5.2.6 During the course of the year, sampling contractors collect monthly *E.coli* samples according to the sampling plan and compliance can be routinely affected by a number of factors including the following:
- Inactive harvesting
 - Availability of vessels
 - Poor weather and/or
 - Logistical issues – performance of carrier
- 5.2.7 Levels of marine biotoxins in shellfish samples from shellfish production areas determine whether an area should be open or closed for harvesting. Details of shellfish sample compliance showing sample numbers and compliance figures for the past 2 years can be seen in Annex A: Page 10.

5.3 Visible Contamination

- 5.3.1 Incidence of visual contamination presented at the final carcass inspection point has been recorded since 2013 and are taken as a proxy measure of hygienic production. Scotland has historically recorded lower contamination levels than other UK countries through an active programme of industry and individual plant engagement and ensuring consistency and accuracy of recording through regular assessment and monitoring of the FSS systems applied. The Board previously noted that the FSS use of a Scottish average by which to measure performance may give the impression of this being an acceptable target. However, plant level management of contamination monitors trends in daily contamination as the primary means of control rather than performance against a Scottish average.
- 5.3.2 Other EU countries do not record contamination of every carcass, preferring to rely on assurance sampling by the FBO and verification of such during audit. Details on contamination in Scotland can be seen in Annex A: Page 5. Bovine, Ovine and Porcine contamination levels over the last 4 years can also be seen in Annex A, with the graphs accompanied by narrative detailing levels in Q1 & Q2.
- 5.3.3 As the Board will recall, this recording of contamination takes place at the final inspection point before a health mark is applied. As an added assurance we also check a sample of carcasses after post mortem inspection to satisfy ourselves that appropriate inspection standards are being applied. This is far more rigorous than the previous approach of assurance sampling for a particular period of time.

5.4 Veterinary Audit

- 5.4.1 Veterinary audits of approved meat establishments are part of a suite of official controls carried out by FSS. The audit arrangements apply to all approved meat establishments under veterinary control in Scotland and include:
- Red meat / farmed game slaughterhouses
 - Poultry meat slaughterhouses
 - Cutting plants
 - Wild game handling establishments
 - Minced meat, meat preparations and mechanically separated meat plants co-located with slaughterhouses or cutting plants
 - Meat product plants co-located with slaughterhouses and cutting plants co-located cold stores
- 5.4.2 Audits are risk-based as required by Article 4 of Regulation EC No 854/2004, and take into account the following:
- Public health risks
 - Animal health risks (where appropriate)
 - Animal welfare risks (where appropriate)
 - Type of process carried out
 - Throughput
 - FBOs past record of compliance with food law
- 5.4.3 The aim of veterinary audit is to verify compliance with legal requirements and to ensure adequate FBO standards in relation to public health, animal health and welfare. Sections of the audit are based on the priorities that have been agreed between FSS and SG as we carry out on a wide range of controls on their behalf. Audit findings aim to provide individual FBOs as well as the relevant competent authority (FSS and SG) with information on areas for correction or improvement as well as providing assurance that performance and compliance is as required.
- 5.4.4 In addition to the audit of good hygiene practice, the auditor must verify the FBOs continuous compliance with their own procedures for, amongst others, all aspects of animal by-product handling (including Specified Risk Material (SRM) controls for BSE), animal identification, animal health and welfare, etc.
- 5.4.5 During audit of HACCP-based procedures, the auditor must check that the operator's systems of work and food safety management provide assurance that meat is free from pathophysiological abnormalities or changes, faecal or other contamination and SRM.
- 5.4.6 Following audit, plants are awarded an Audit Outcome as detailed below:

Audit Outcome	Tolerance for audit outcome	Standalone Cutting Plants	Slaughterhouses/ Game Handling Est. /Co-located Cutting Plants	Follow Up Partial Audits of critical and major NCs
Good	No majors or critical on day of audit or during audit period	12 months	18/12 months	N/A
Generally Satisfactory	No more than 2 majors during audit or during audit period rectified promptly No critical during audit period	12 months		Within 3 months
Improvement Necessary	3-6 majors during audit or during audit period No critical during audit period	3 months		Within 1 month
Urgent Improvement Necessary	1 critical or >6 majors during audit or during audit period	2 months		Within 1 month

5.4.7 Subsequent audits are therefore scheduled on the basis of the audit outcome.

5.4.8 Reports are produced following each audit and sent to the FBO. The report details the non-compliances identified and provides an indicative timescale for the business to address them. Audit reports will be published on the FSS website after the period for appeals has expired. Where applicable (in accordance with the table above), an additional partial audit may be carried to assess the actions taken to address the non-compliances raised at audit. Where significant non-compliance is noted, additional checks on performance may be undertaken in the form of Unannounced Inspections.

5.4.9 The most frequent major non-compliances raised against requirements during audits from April last year in all plants are as follows:

- Monitoring procedures are effective and supported by records – CCP monitoring
- Controls ensure that risk of cross contamination is minimised, prevented or reduced to acceptable levels during operation and appropriate action taken should contamination occur
- The implementation of the operating procedures is effective and supported by records – maintenance
- Animal By-Products, including SRM, are dispatched to approved premises with correctly completed commercial documentation
- Animals spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations
- All handling and processes from slaughtering to dispatch are done in a way that avoids the contamination of meat and offal entering the food chain
- FBO traceability system allows identification of any person from whom they have been supplied with food products, and businesses to which their products have been supplied
- The implementation of the operating procedures is effective and supported by records – cleaning
- The implementation of the operating procedures is effective and supported by records – Staff training and supervision

5.4.10 Overall, the compliance trend continues to remain fairly stable with the majority of establishments reporting good or generally satisfactory compliance levels.

5.5 Local Authority Audit

5.5.1 The power to set standards, monitor and audit the performance of enforcement authorities was conferred on Food Standards Scotland by Sections 3 and 25 of the Food (Scotland) Act 2015 and Regulation 7 of The Official Feed and Food Controls (Scotland) Regulations 2009. Similar functions are also contained within section 7 of The Official Feed and Food Controls (Scotland) Regulations 2009 as amended in 2019 which implement the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.

5.5.2 As a designated competent authority as defined within Schedule 5 of the Official Feed and Food Control (Scotland) Regulations 2009, LAs are required to comply with Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (Official Control Regulation). In order to help LAs fulfil this requirement, (as part of our central role as described above) FSS will continue to deliver external audit arrangements in addition to the above.

5.5.3 The Audit programme was suspended at the start of the COVID-19 outbreak as Local Authorities were given a deviation from complying with the Food Law Code of Practice. The Audit Team has however, been fully involved in our Local Authority recovery planning and will play a key role in assuring the delivery of this once it has been implemented. Some routine follow up of previous open audit files has continued, however this is only in relation to recommendations that have not been impacted by the deviation from the Food Law Code of Practice.

5.6 Audit of FSS OFFC Delivery

5.6.1 From April 2020 FSS took in house responsibility for delivering the Competent Authority audit requirement under Regulation (EU) 2017/625 which was previously carried out on our behalf by the Food Standards Agency.

5.6.2 An audit programme is in place for 2020/2021 and is currently on track. Quarter 1 audit activity was a review of previous audits and quarter 2 was a focussed audit on Post Mortem Inspection. This report is currently at the draft stage.

6 European Union considerations

6.1 None required at this stage.

7 Conclusion and recommendations

7.1 The Board is asked to:

- **Consider and comment on reported performance metrics**

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