

Food Standards Scotland Health and Safety Annual Summary Report

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Executive summary

The report offers a comprehensive summary of Food Standards Scotland's (FSS) Health and Safety performance throughout the designated reporting year. This included a five-month period of interim arrangement while the organisation recruited a new HSE Manager. This report outlines the organisation's performance during the twelve months from April 2024 to end of March 2025. The report catalogues the proactive and reactive response of FSS, presenting a clear picture of FSS' commitment to Health and Safety management and its effectiveness in safeguarding the wellbeing of its stakeholders. In doing so it provides the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) with an annual overview of FSS' performance, providing it with the information required for its assurance purposes.

Introduction

This report covers the reporting period of health and safety performance of FSS for the reporting period from the 01 April 2024 to the 31 March 2025. This report serves to fulfil the obligation of providing the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) with an annual overview of FSS performance concerning the measurement, monitoring, and management of its health and safety (H&S) responsibilities.

The reporting year started with interim arrangements in place for the management of health and safety following the departure of the previous HSE Manager near year end of the previous year (2023-2024). An experienced HSE Manager was recruited, who commenced in post in August 2024. The interim arrangement enabled FSS to continue to provide its discharge of its legal duties and to maintain its health and safety systems. This was due to the maturity of the organisation, the system it already had in place with the Governance arrangements, including its Health and Safety Committees.

It is within this context FSS presents its annual health and safety performance for the reporting period of 01 April 2024 to the 31 March 2025.

Scope

This report encompasses a detailed analysis of Food Standards Scotland's (FSS) health and safety (H&S) performance for the reporting period from 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. The scope of the report includes governance arrangements, legal compliance, performance monitoring and occupational health.

Governance Arrangements

Governance arrangements at FSS include three Safety Committees. The quarterly HSE Operation Committee and quarterly Office Hybrid Committee drawn on a broad pool of staff. The Strategic HSE Committee is chaired at Head of Division Level. Each committee is attended by a union representative, ensuring active staff consultation routes. FSS also undertook a staff Safety Climate Survey which will be conducted every three years to gain staff options and shape current and future approaches. The next assessment is scheduled for Quarter 4 in 2026. External oversight is provided by ARC's review of this report.

Current arrangements continue to be fundamental in providing an inclusive integrated approach to progress Health, Safety, and Welfare engagement throughout the year.

Health and Safety management system

The Health and Safety Management System is the cornerstone of the organisation approach to health and safety management. It provides staff with policies, procedures and risk assessments to ensure staff have the correct information and instructions to discharge their duties safely and meet the relevant statutory duties. The working version of the HS Management System is accessed internally on FSS SharePoint. During the current reporting year the Management System was migrated to a new SharePoint site. This prompted a full management system review to ensure that documentation is fit for purpose, such as checking all hyperlinks. This review is being undertaken with relevant internal stakeholder input to ensure operational appropriateness and will continue into next year. Post incident any related management system documents are reviewed. This year a series of escaped animal events at Food Operating Businesses resulted in a full review of the suite of documentation, including risk assessments pertaining to work with live animals, with updates being reissued to staff.

Legislative compliance

HSE Enforcement

FSS has had no Improvement or Probation Notices issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

RIDDOR

FSS had a single RIDDOR reportable incident of an over seven-day absence. This resulted from a member of staff falling on the stairs and taking time off work. Post incident interviews were held

with the affected party and others. A site visit was undertaken, and areas of concern highlighted to the FBO management. The incident was reported to the HSE in a timely manner.

First Aid

On review of current status, it was identified that the required legal provision of First Aid trained staff at Pilgrim House was lacking. This was a result of hybrid working arrangements, with a trained first aider not always being present at Pilgrim House. This issue was resolved by expanding the pool of First Aiders to include a member of staff who works in the building daily, with holiday cover provided by those who normally have a hybrid working pattern.

Fire Safety

A review of Fire Safety at Pilgrim House identified areas to be improved upon. Testing of fire evacuation procedures identified that the roll call procedure was ineffective at identifying all persons in the building. The process has been altered using a mixture of the Skedda Booking system and a signing in book. Longer term, upgrading the existing swipe card entry to provide a list of staff in the building is the preferred solution, with upgrade costs being sought. A non-complaint fire door was also identified, which requires upgrading.

Electrical Safety

Pilgrim House Portable Appliance Testing and electrical inspection of floor boxes was undertaken in 2025 to confirm that electrical equipment was suitable for use. Some issues were identified on testing and these items were removed from service. Hardwire testing remains the duty of the landlord.

FSS' Health and Safety Performance - KPIs

FSS set leading and lagging Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to drive continual improvement and implement effective preventative measures. Lagging indicators are more focused on performance of dealing with incident management. The performance summary for each KPI in the 2024-25 period is provided in Table 1. Previous KPIs have been refined and where this has happened direct comparison are not included (Table1). This included reducing the 90% time to close out incidents from 180 days to 90 days. Where a direct comparison with the previous year performance was possible, this information is provided (Table 1).

Table 1 KPI performance 2024-2025 versus 2023-2024

	KPI	Descriptor Against KPI	2024-25 Baseline Target	2024-25 Stretch Target	2024-25 Actual YTD	2023-24 Actual YTD
i	Office Inspections / FBO Safety Tours	Office Inspections and FBO Safety Tours completed on approved premises with permanent FSS presence	90%	95%	97%	90%
ii	Injury (per 100,000 hrs)	Manage and prevent injurious incidents	1.1	1.0	1.36	0.65
iii	Mandatory HSE Training Completed	Timely completion levels of staff's mandatory HSE Training	85%	90%	87%	91%
iv	Management System Development	Review and publication of HSE Management System Documents	8	12	8	NA
v	Risk Assessment Review	Review of live risk assessments to ensure they are up to date, effective and relevant	90%	95%	95%	97%
vi	Post Incident Risk Assessment Review	Completion of post incident topical safety tour or risk assessment review	80%	90%	100%	100
vii	Incidents Investigated <1 Working Day	Timescale for commencing investigation into H&S incidents	90%	95%	92%	96
viii	Incident close out within 90 Days	Close out of incidents through implementing effective controls, following investigation.	80%	90%	92%	NA

Notes

- I. Office Inspections / FBO Safety Tours: Excellent sustained performance throughout the year, exceeding stretch target.
- II. Injury (per 100,00 hrs): Note that the Injury (per 100,00 hrs) rate is an all-injury rate, including minor injuries where no first aid was administered.
- III. Mandatory HSE Training Completed: Exceeded target levels, reflecting positive staff engagement with H&S initiatives.
- IV. Management System Development. Target was met and KPI aimed at driving continued review and improvement of existing safety management processes.
- V. Risk Assessment Review: Stretch target achieved.
- VI. Post Incident Risk Assessment Review: Outstanding performance, indicating a proactive approach to risk mitigation.
- VII. Incidents Investigated <1 Working Day: Achieved target.
- VIII. Incident close out within 90 Days. Surpassed stretch target.
- NA. Not applicable. Target new for 2024-2025.

The 2024-25 KPIs demonstrate a continued organisational commitment to try and achieve best performance where possible. Seven of the eight KPI targets were met or surpassed. The All Injury KPI was not met. The 'All Injury' KPI includes all work-related injuries, even when no first aid was

administered. The number of injuries that occur throughout the organisation remains low. This equated to six injuries in the year compared to three in the previous year. Encouraging staff to report even minor injuries, which in the past may have gone unreported, has noted a slight increase in the All Injury rate. An additional incident measure, the Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR), has also been included in this year's statistics. The TRIR omits minor injuries and focuses on injuries above the First Aid level.

A continued emphasis on leading indicators will be crucial for maintaining health and safety excellence. The commitment to incident management remains paramount, ensuring incident information is promptly reported, enabling timely investigations, the implementation of effective corrective actions and communication of lessons learnt.

FSS' Health and Safety Performance – Incident Management

Incidents are reported through the HSE-Incident email. These are allocated a unique incident number to accompany the incident investigation, with the level of investigation depending on severity. Investigation aims to identify the cause(s), and the investigation outcome aims to identify corrective and preventative measures to reduce the likelihood of a recurrence. Staff are also encouraged to report all Near Misses and Undesirable Events.

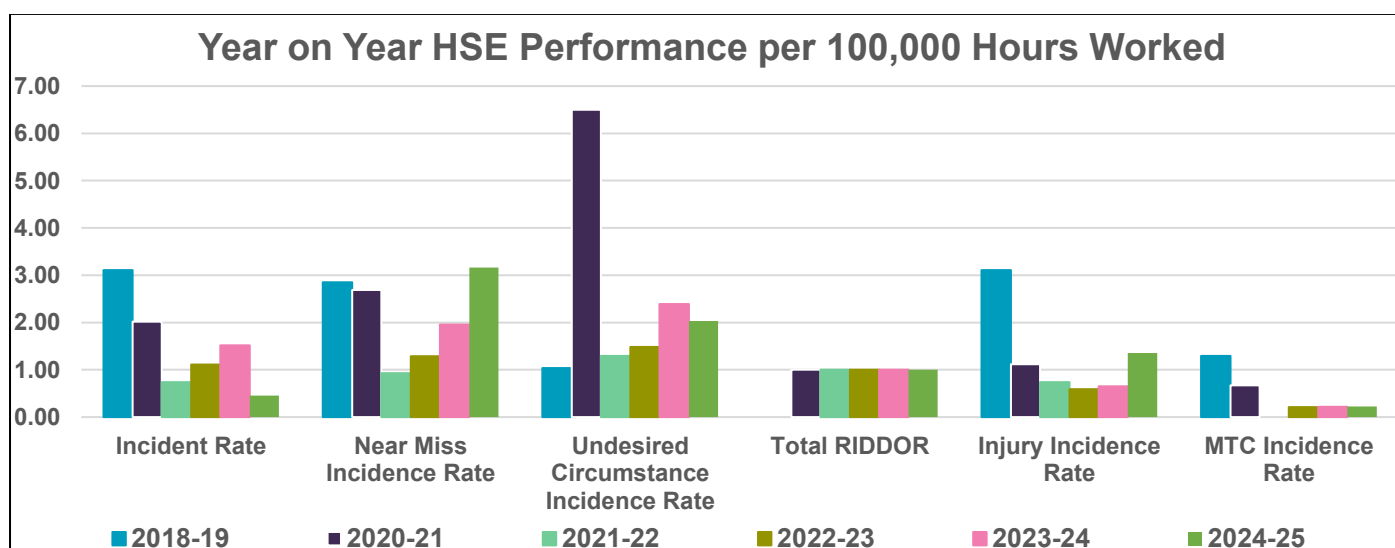


Figure 1: Year on Year HSE Performance. Covers a variety of metrics over a six-year period. Rates stated are based on 100,000 man hours. RIDDOR data is number of RIDDOR reported in any one FSS reporting year. MTC= Medical Treatment Case.

The information in Figure 1 has been reported in previous years with incidence rate based on 100,00 hours worked. The incident rate is incidents excluding injuries. Near Miss rates have increased and is seen as a positive, as staff have been asked to report issues that previously may

have gone unreported. Undesired circumstances are slightly lower than the previous year. RIDDOR are actual numbers rather than an incidence rate and remain constant over the past five years as a single reportable event. Injury Incidents is an all-injury rate. This includes any injury, whether a low level injury occurs which does not require first aid as well as all first aid incidents of those of a greater severity. An increase from the previous year was observed. This equates to six injuries in total compared to three in the previous year. This metric may increase as staff are encouraged to report all injuries, irrespective of how minor.

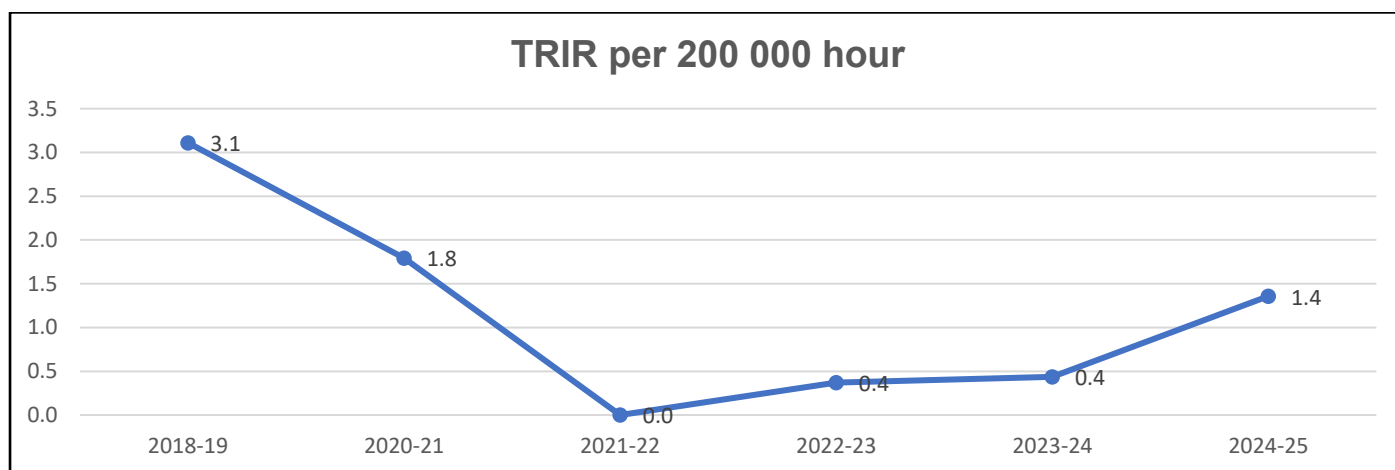


Figure 2: Toal Recordable Injury Rate (TRIR) rates per 200,000-man hours.

The Total Recordable Injury Rate data has been included and calculated for the previous five years. $TRIF = (\text{Number of injuries} \times 200,000) / (\text{number of hours worked})$. The TRIF is a standard calculation used in health and safety and is based on the hours logged by 100 workers working a 40-hour week. TRIR is used to focus on injuries of a higher severity (Lost Time Injury (LTI) where a person is unable to come back to work for their following shift; Medical Treatment Case (MTC) which is an injury where treatment was above a First Aid and a Restricted Work Case (RWC) (where someone can work but is unable to perform their normal duties). Therefore, the TRIR omits lower-level injuries such as paper cuts.

We can see from Figure 2 that the TRIR has increased from the previous year but is still under half the value from 2019. This parameter can be used to set future targets to provide a focus on reducing significant injury events to our staff.

Adverse Weather

FSS manages the risk of all potential incidents. In January 2025 Storm Éowyn saw FSS put into practice its Severe Weather Guidance to staff which states that staff do not travel in Red Alert

Weather warnings issued by the Met Office. This was the first time FSS had been unable to provide some Food Business Operators with Meat Hygiene Inspectors and Vets for a short period of time when the worst of the storm crossed Scotland. The approach was fully endorsed by our Chief Executive, putting the safety of staff first and working with the industry to then recover the lost time. It was the correct call with one FBO suffering significant structural damage. Ensuring staff safety during severe weather conditions may become more frequent and FSS has the processes in place to aid decision making.

Health and Safety Training



Compliance: 87%

Figure 3: EssentialSkillz training compliance dashboard illustrating 87% of all allocated courses, completed in 2024-2025.

The EssentialSkillz dashboard (Figure 3) is used to monitor training progress throughout the year. Courses and refreshers can be allocated right up until the 31 March 2025, therefore 100% completion is never expected.

Table 2 provides a breakdown of course allocation and completion for online Health and Safety learning. 1813 Health and Safety related training courses were allocated to staff, with 1583 completed. The 87% average completion rate is within the H&S Training KPI target.

Table 2: Health and Safety Training via online learning (2024-2025)

Course Title	Number of courses allocated	Course completion	Compliance (%)
Asbestos Awareness	107	91	85
DriveWize	4	4	100
ErgoWise	265	230	86
Fire Safety	107	100	93
Fire Warden	158	115	72
Hazardous Substances (COSHH)	107	95	89
Health and Safety Induction	107	95	88
Home Working	162	142	87
Lone Working	265	226	85
Manual Handling	107	94	87
Noise at Work	103	95	92
Personal Protective Equipment	107	97	90
Risk Assessment	4	4	100
Slip Trips and Falls	107	100	93
Working at Height	103	94	91
Totals	1813	1583	

In addition, external courses such as First Aid, IOSH Working Safety and IOSH Managing Safety are provided to staff to allow FSS to discharge its responsibility and increase Health and Safety understanding, particularly those in supervisor's roles. This year the HSE Manager was approached by the Feed Department to develop and deliver face to face training in Dynamic Risk Assessment. This was to supplement existing risk assessment training and pre-written risk assessments. The approach was to develop a mind and skillset for Feed Officers visiting multiple locations, where the hazards can differ between visits. This course was built around the spatial awareness ABBI acronym (Above, Behind, Below, Infront). This course was well received, and requests have been made to deliver it to other parts of the business

Personal Risk Assessments

In addition to the risk assessment that forms part of the Health and Safety Management System, EssentialSkillz facilitates individual person specific assessment (Table 3). These are generated as staff complete their online training. Conditional logic is used to flag person specific issues, prioritizing them as red, amber and green. Of the 1520 items of concern raised, 116 were

identified as High Priority and 430 were Medium Priority. These are then handled by the HSE Manager or allocated to the Facilities Manager or IT Department to resolve through the purchase of new equipment or furniture. 97% of all identified issues were closed out within the time period.

Table 3: Person specific risk assessment in 2024-2025

Name	Number of risk assessments
DriveWize Assessment	156
Expectant And New Mothers Risk Assessment	2
Lone Worker Risk Assessment	372
Homeworkers Risk Assessment	271
ErgoWize Risk Assessment	255
Fire Safety Self-Assessment	130
Manual Handling Self-Assessment	127
Vulnerable Worker Risk Assessment	2

Operational Inspection and Compliance Reviews

FSS Operational teams cover three operational areas in Scotland with 24 Food Business Operator establishments. Throughout the year, and on a planned quarterly basis, health and safety related inspections, audits and document reviews are undertaken. This ensures a focus on health and safety throughout the year.

Table 3: Review of Operational Health and Safety Schedule

Subject area	Number of planned reviews	Number undertaken	% Completion
7.12.2 Personal Protective Equipment Inspection Record	19	19	100
7.12.1 PPE Check Sheet	19	19	100
7.3.16 Animal Containment Controls Inspection	16	16	100
7.6.5 Fire Safety Inspection	19	19	100
7.6.6 Fire Risk Assessment	19	19	100
SSOW (All species) / Review Plant Induction Packs	23	23	100
7.19.3 Generic Zoonosis Risk Assessment	21	21	100
7.8.1 Formal Visual Inspections Electrical	18	18	100
6.2.3 First Aid Risk Assessment	20	19	95
7.16.1 Noise Risk Filter	18	18	100
7.16.2 Noise Risk Assessment	18	18	100

7.3.14 Smaller Sites Safety Tour	7	7	100
7.15.2 Working at Height Risk Assessment	16	16	100
7.3.3 Ergonomic Risk Assessment	20	20	100
7.14.4 Contact with Live Animals RA	16	16	100
SSOW / Review of FSS Plant Induction packs	20	20	100
7.10.1 Knife Safety Record	18	18	100
7.3.6 FBO Safety Tour	16	16	100
7.15.1 Working at Height Checklist	18	18	100
7.14.1 Generic IPRA Per Line/Species	20	20	100
7.14.8 Standard Avian Inspection Risk Assessment	3	3	100

Note: Number referencing in Subject Area refers to a specific requirement within the FSS Health and Safety Management System for which compliance was checked.

Occupational Health.

FSS continues to use Occupational Health for referrals where staff are identified as having underlying health conditions that individuals have declared. These then trigger a review and person specific risk assessment. FSS would benefit from widening its use of occupational health for post injury assessment. This could improve an injured persons recovery time, provide the organisation with a medical opinion from an Occupational Health specialist, and help protect the company in any future claims for damages.

Routine Occupational health monitoring is planned for 2025-2026. This will be necessary to confirm if existing control measures are still valid, meet legal requirements and identify persons whose health may be impacted and who may require an intervention.

FSS does not carry out health surveillance of new employees who work in industrial areas with exposure to occupational risks. Without base line measurements for audiometry (hearing test), spirometer (lung function) and skin checks (dermatitis) FSS does not have the knowledge or understanding to manage any pre-existing conditions. The lack of a proactive approach for new starts leaves the organisation open to potential unwarranted claims for health damage due to prior occupational exposure.

Conclusion

The annual overview of Food Standards Scotland's health and safety performance for the reporting period spanned from the 01 April 2024 to the 31 March 2025. Staff and management have delivered another strong performance but we also recognise there is always room for improvement. FSS will continue to focus on delivering all our H&S obligations to our employees. The data presented demonstrates the focus and commitment to safeguarding the wellbeing of our staff and those we have contact with. It validates FSS' health and safety commitment to our stakeholders. Through measurement, monitoring, and management of health and safety responsibilities, FSS continues with a proactive approach to ensure compliance with regulations and promotes a culture of safety across all of its operations.



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