

SFELC FOOD SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

APPROVED ESTABLISHMENT WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Working Group Status

The Approved Establishment Working Group (AEWG) is a sub-group of the SFELC Food Safety Sub-Committee. The AEWG Chair shall be a Local Authority Officer and shall be appointed by SFELC.

2. Working Group Objectives

The core objectives of the AEWG are:

- i. To consider all aspects of enforcement within establishments approved or liable for approval under Regulation 853/2004 (and other manufacturers as appropriate) and to provide guidance and advice to Local Authorities and Food Standards Scotland;
- ii. To co-ordinate the operation of the Specialist Officer Network (see Annex);
- iii. To assist with the operation and maintenance of the relevant components of the FSS/SFELC website;
- iv. Any specific tasks remitted from SFELC and/or the Food Safety Sub-Committee.

3. Group Membership

The membership of the Group shall be:

- i. Chair appointed by SFELC
- ii. At least one Local Authority enforcement representative from each of the four Scottish Food Liaison Group areas;
- iii. At least one representative of Food Standards Scotland;
- iv. At least one representative from FSS operations;
- v. At least two designated Specialist Officers (See Annex); and
- vi. Any other members the Group feel would assist their work on an *ad hoc* basis.

Group membership will be reviewed on an annual basis.

4. Meetings

The Group shall meet at a frequency deemed appropriate by the Chair. Ordinarily, this will require approximately 4 meetings per year. However, where a specific objective requires a shorter meeting cycle, the Chair shall agree a suitable frequency with Group members.

Meetings shall, where possible, accommodate those who wish to contribute using teleconferencing methodology. Additionally, when appropriate, the work of the Group can be discussed, and business conducted, via email.

Meetings shall be held at appropriate venues to be decided by the Chair.

Whenever a member is unable to attend a meeting every effort should be made to identify a substitute from his/her organisation.

5. Output and Group member responsibilities

- The Group will prioritise any direction on work provided by SFELC and will agree other priorities and deliverables, where possible, at the beginning of each year.
- The Chair will agree with the Chair of the Food Safety Sub-Committee the nature and frequency of reporting of the Group's work to the Sub-Committee. Where the Chair is not a member of the Sub-Committee the Working Group may nominate one of its members to act as the point of liaison at meetings.
- The Group will, where necessary or appropriate, produce *ad hoc* reports, guidance and other papers on work related to its objectives during the year. The distribution of such papers will be discussed with the Food Safety Sub-Committee Chair who will ensure they are appropriately discussed and/or approved within SFELC structures.
- The Sub-Committee and Group Chairs will liaise to ensure the Group's work is reported in the SFELC annual report.
- Group members will communicate the work and outputs of the Group to the organisations which they represent.

ANNEX – SPECIALIST OFFICER NETWORK

1. Basic Operation

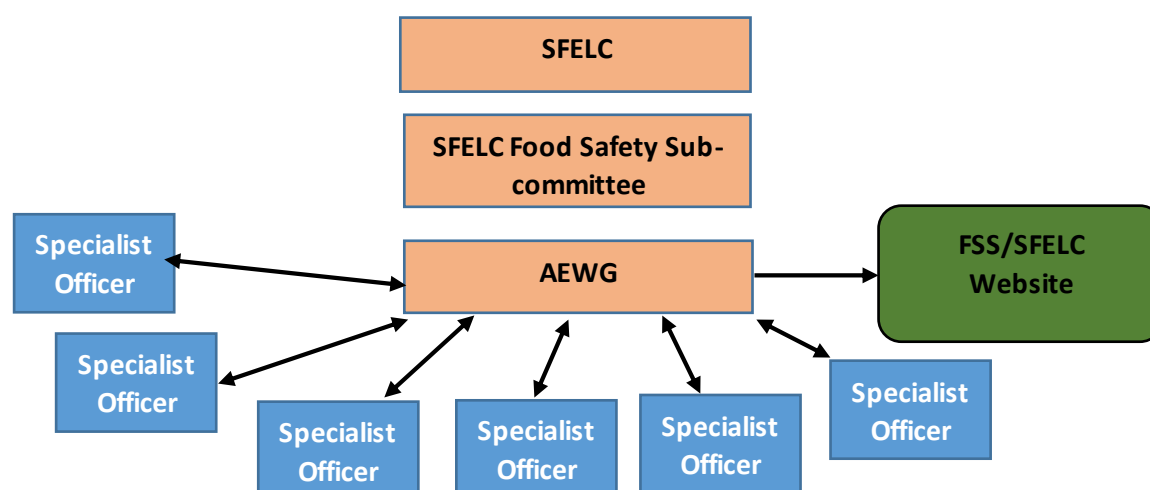
- 1.1. The Specialist Officer Network comprises a group of Local Authority officers experienced in processes found in approved establishments – as well as in other complex or high risk processes not involving products of animal origin.
- 1.2. Each Authority is invited to nominate an officer or officers deemed to have suitable expertise in a specific subject or subjects. While no level of competency is explicitly required, the nominated officers must have meaningful experience of the process or processes for which they are nominated.
- 1.3. Nominated Officers, their specialism(s) and their contact details are available to all Scottish Local Authorities upon the SFELC pages of the FSS website at [Insert Link]. Authorities seeking assistance (i.e. “requesting” or “receiving” authorities) should make direct contact with the said officer.
- 1.4. Assistance may include verbal advice via telephone, written advice via email, comment on technical information/documents via email or, where necessary, site visits to assist and advise. Furthermore, examples of good practice relating to inspection form templates etc will be disseminated.
- 1.5. The Authority providing a specialist officer (i.e. the “providing” authority) is not liable for any decisions made by the receiving authority – especially in relation to approval or enforcement.

2. Governance

- 2.1. The Specialist Officer Network is an adjunct of the SFELC Approvals Working Group. The said Working Group operates in a core or steering capacity – with a significant number of members being designated Local Authority Specialists. The Working Group is responsible for developing guidance and advice and ensuring that the Network operates on a consistent and correct.

The context within which the Specialist officer Network will operate is demonstrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Specialist Officer Network in Context



- 2.2. The Network operates subject to Terms of Reference, as drafted by the Approved Establishments Working Group, and approved by SFELC. The chair of the Working Group reports to the SFELC Food Safety Sub-committee.

Website Content

- 2.3. The Specialist Officer Network is supported via the SFELC component of the FSS website. A full contact list for Specialist Officers is available on the website at [[Link](#)]
- 2.4. The website also hosts an Approvals Question & Answer Forum. This is managed by the Approved Establishment Working Group and reflects questions received by Specialist Officers and/or the Working Group itself. Responses to such questions are moderated by the Working Group. The relevant webpages encourage Local Authority officers to submit questions directly – especially where these relate to matters covered by the National Protocol.
- 2.5. Management or oversight of the Approvals web pages is the responsibility of SFELC via the Food Safety Sub-committee and the Approved Establishment Working Group.

Key Processes

- 2.6. The list of processes covered by the Specialist Officer Network is as follows:
- 2.6.1. Vacuum Packaging and MAP processes
 - 2.6.2. Canning
 - 2.6.3. Pasteurisation and sterilisation
 - 2.6.4. Ice Cream manufacture
 - 2.6.5. Shellfish Depuration
 - 2.6.6. Shellfish aquaculture and harvesting
 - 2.6.7. Products requiring regeneration – e.g. cook chill systems
 - 2.6.8. Sandwich manufacture
 - 2.6.9. Unpasteurised juice manufacture
 - 2.6.10. Brewing
 - 2.6.11. Distilling
 - 2.6.12. Non-RTE game, meat and poultry
 - 2.6.13. Fish slaughter and cutting
 - 2.6.14. Cold stores
 - 2.6.15. Bakery processes
 - 2.6.16. Sous-vide cooking
 - 2.6.17. Manufacture of minimally processed foods or products with shelf-life extended by critical ingredients (e.g. jerky, biltong, fermented sausage, unpasteurised cheese)
 - 2.6.18. Cheese manufacture (i.e. use of raw milk)
 - 2.6.19. Manufacture of Products reliant purely on PRPs e.g. sushi/sashimi, rare burgers
 - 2.6.20. Non-POAO RTE e.g. vegetable/fruit harvesting and processing
 - 2.6.21. Seaweed processing