Chapter 1

Introduction

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1. Background and functions

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1.1 Food Standards Scotland

1.1.1 Food Standards Scotland remit

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) took over the remit of Food Standards Agency in Scotland from 1 April 2015.

FSS is the competent authority responsible for food safety and food hygiene across Scotland.

FSS’s remit includes:

- within the European Union; negotiations on behalf of Scotland by legal experts and policy officials to ensure that EU law reflects the interests of Scotland’s consumers
- removing unsafe food from sale, in conjunction with other enforcement organisations
- ensuring good food hygiene, through various initiatives delivered in partnership with Local Authorities (LAs)
- ensuring meat hygiene in approved slaughterhouses and meat establishments throughout Scotland
- approval of establishments
- CoC Assessment Centre

This guidance manual, the Manual for Official Controls (MOC), contains details of the tasks, responsibilities and duties FSS staff and veterinary contractors undertake in approved meat establishments.

The FSS website is www.foodstandards.gov.scot
## 1.2 Food Standards Scotland Operations (meat hygiene)

### 1.2.1 Principle function

The principal functions of the FSS staff working in approved meat establishments are listed in the table below, together with other responsible Government departments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Policy lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of meat inspection and health marking</td>
<td>FSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcement of Food Hygiene Regulations in approved slaughterhouses, cutting plants and minced meat, meat preparations and meat products premises which are combined with approved fresh meat premises</td>
<td>FSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcement of controls over Specified Risk Material (SRM) and other animal by-products</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcement of welfare at transport and slaughter regulations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection and despatch of samples for statutory veterinary medicines residue testing and testing of suspect cases</td>
<td>Defra Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection and despatch of sheep and goat brain stem samples for the testing of TSEs</td>
<td>Defra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision of BSE testing</td>
<td>Defra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection and despatch of samples for examination and testing for some notifiable diseases</td>
<td>Defra, Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of export certification when required by the importing authority or by European Union (EU) regulations</td>
<td>Defra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection of imported meat in approved premises</td>
<td>FSS, Defra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of services to British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) for the Cattle Tracing System</td>
<td>Defra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of other services on a repayment basis to other Service Level Agreement customers</td>
<td>Other customers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 1.3 Contact page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ops Approvals and Registrations</td>
<td>T: 01224 285368 Email: <a href="mailto:Approvals@fss.scot">Approvals@fss.scot</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ops SLA and Contracts</td>
<td>T: 01224 285190 Email: <a href="mailto:Operations@fss.scot">Operations@fss.scot</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ops Technical Co-ordination Team</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:Operations@fss.scot">Operations@fss.scot</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSS Throughput</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:Operations@fss.scot">Operations@fss.scot</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find a relevant APHA regional office</td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/animal-welfare/News/8377#a4">http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/animal-welfare/News/8377#a4</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companies House</td>
<td>T: 0303 1234 500 Website: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companies-house">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companies-house</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Standards Agency - Operations</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:business.support@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk">business.support@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. **Relationship with other bodies**

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Scottish Government

2.3 Animal and Plant Health Agency

2.4 Local Authorities (LAs)

2.5 Meat industry

2.1 **Introduction**

2.1.1 **Stakeholders and customers**

FSS has many stakeholders and customers, primarily consumers and the public, but also including:

- other government departments and agencies
- health ministers in Scotland, Wales and England
- meat industry (example e.g. SAMW)
- Muslim, kosher and religious slaughter groups
- staff and their professional/ representative organisations
- Local Authorities
- farming industry
- Animal welfare organisations
- European Commission (EC)
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (NI)/ Veterinary Public Health Unit (VPHU)

2.1.2 **Service standards**

Our approach to customers and stakeholders, including Food Business Operators (FBOs) and their staff, must be:

- courteous
- professional
- considerate
patient

FSS officials must always make a clear distinction between statutory requirements and recommendations of best practice. All advice and enforcement action should be proportionate and comply with the Enforcement Policy.

Reference: For additional information see Chapter 7 on ‘Enforcement’.

2.2 Scottish Government

2.2.1 Responsibility

Scottish Government is the competent authority for animal health and animal welfare legislation in Scotland.

2.2.2 Executive agencies

FSS Operations carries out work on behalf of the following Defra Executive Agencies:

- Rural Payments Agency (RPA), which incorporates British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) for cattle identification matters
- Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) for medicinal residues
- Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) for animal welfare, identification and disease control and monitoring

2.2.3 Work on behalf of Scottish Government and Defra

The work that FSS undertake on behalf of Scottish Government and Defra and its agencies is outlined in this chapter at section 1.2.

2.3 Animal and Plant Health Agency

2.3.1 Background

FSS Operations works closely with APHA (an Executive Agency of Defra) on matters relating to animal welfare and disease control.

2.4 Local Authorities

2.4.1 Local Authorities purpose

Local Authorities (LAs) provide services directly to the local communities. These services include trading standards and environmental health.
2.4.2 LA Animal Health Enforcement Officers

LAs are responsible for the enforcement of legislation relating to the health and welfare of farmed animals. The Trading Standards department within these authorities usually provides this service, but this is dependent on the individual structure of each authority.

LA Animal Health officers are responsible for the enforcement of legislation related to the health and welfare of animals on farms and during transport. The legislation covers animal identification, animal movements, disease control, animal welfare, animal by-products, bio-security and contingency planning.

LA Food Officers may visit food premises and have right of entry.

2.4.3 LA Food Enforcement Officers

LA Food Enforcement Officers are responsible for enforcement in all food establishments, except for those requiring approval by FSS under the food hygiene legislation.

Food establishments falling within the remit of the LA range from major national manufacturers to stand-alone cold-stores where FSS is not present.

LA Food Enforcement Officers are also responsible for the prevention of illegal slaughter outside approved establishments, and for investigating food complaints from consumers.

2.4.4 FSS and LAs

FSS officials are required to liaise with LA Animal Health and Food Standards Enforcement Officers, usually within the Trading Standards Department, about:

- welfare of animals in transit
- confirmation of validity of cattle passports
- processing of animal by-products
- identification of animals
- movements and documentation of animals
- bio-security
- beef labelling requirements
- ‘use by’ date marking
- food incidents investigations, and joint unannounced visits to approved food premises and matters related to the transfer of approved premises from LAs to FSS and vice versa.
2.4.5 FSS and Environmental Health Officers (EHOs)
FSS officials liaise with Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) about:

- complaints from the general public relating to physical and chemical contamination of meat
- issues relating to meat hygiene outside approved establishments

2.4.6 Relationships
Effective communication between FSS staff and LA enforcement officers is essential. Communication can:

- identify local risks and concerns
- promote understanding of individual pressures and priorities
- facilitate successful enforcement activities that make the most effective use of local resource

2.4.7 Means of communication
Local Government Regulation (LGR) and FSS recommend that local communication channels be maintained, for example:

- proactive and informal communication when the LA enforcement officers are attending slaughterhouses
- maintaining on-going discussions in relation to referrals or areas of common interest
- inviting FSS staff to LA regional meetings where appropriate, to discuss priorities and issues; FSS staff attending where staffing allows, for example Animal Health and Welfare Strategy Group and Animal Health and Welfare Local Panels.
- considering possible joint local training opportunities, and sharing of information

2.4.8 Partnership working
Effective partnership working by FSS and LAs will help achieve enforcement objectives and will also be resource effective.

FSS should always provide the LA with referral information at the earliest opportunity.

The LA should respond to the referrals at the earliest opportunity or advise when and how they will be able to respond. Where the LA is unable to respond straight away, they should offer advice to the FSS staff on any immediate action required to ensure future enforcement action can be successful.
The LA should proactively advise the FSS staff on the outcomes of any non-compliance detected within the slaughterhouse, and explain why such an enforcement approach has been taken.

2.4.9 LA Food Complaints

Periodically LAs receive complaints from consumers and retailers about meat, meat products and meat preparations produced in approved establishments.

In order that the matter is investigated, the LA should refer the complaint to FSS Operations.

FSS Operations will assign an appropriate officer at the establishment concerned to investigate. The assigned officer will be provided with a Food Complaint Investigation Report for completion:


Once the investigation is concluded and the form completed by the assigned officer, it must be returned to FSS Operations and any physical evidence handed back to the LA officer who referred the matter (observing all security and continuity of evidence issues).

2.5 Meat industry

2.5.1 Liaison with industry

As well as day-to-day dealings with FBOs, FSS also liaises with industry customers through their representative organisations.

2.5.2 The Partnership Working Group

The Partnership Working Group (PWG) is a core group of key UK wide meat stakeholders, of which the Director of Operations for FSS is a member. The group’s main purpose is to identify opportunities for efficiencies both in the discharge of FBO responsibilities and delivery of official control duties in approved meat establishments and to consider the operational impact of implementing legislative or policy changes and contribute views to the development of policy affecting the meat sector.

2.5.3 Scottish Meat Industry Forum

The Scottish Meat Industry Forum (SMIF) is a core group of Scottish meat industry stakeholders and includes all sectors of the Scottish industry. It's
primarily role is to act as a consultative body for FSS with the industry and receives updates on FSS initiatives and provides a forum for the industry sectors to update FSS on matters of mutual interest.

2.5.4 The Food Standards Agency’s Meat Industry Guide

The Meat Industry Guide (MIG) provides guidance for FBO’s on compliance with public health, animal health, and animal welfare legislation. It also provides guidance for Official Veterinarians (OVs) who audit compliance with the legislation. MIG was produced by Food Standards Agency (FSA) in consultation with, and endorsed by, the meat industry, and is designed to assist FBOs in meeting the requirements of the legislation.

**Regulation:** (EC) 852/2004, Articles 7 and 8.

3. Communication and guidance

3.1 Lines of communication

3.2 Manuals and guides

3.3 Daybook

3.4 Official notebooks

3.5 Operations staff personal conduct

3.6 Authorisation certificate

3.7 Cutting plant unannounced inspection

3.1 Lines of communication

3.1.1 Communication procedure

All staff follows a standard set of procedures when dealing with communications and queries. These procedures allow FSS Operations staff to work efficiently and effectively. There are situations where the lines of communication are different to those detailed here, and are outlined in the relevant instructions.

3.1.2 Summary

The table below summarises the point of contact for technical advice, and also provides points of contact where non-technical advice is required.

Note: In Urgent Improvement Required establishments, technical matters should be discussed by the Veterinary Manager (VM) and the contactor’s Area Veterinary Manager (AVM). The OM should be involved in these discussions when necessary.

Please refer to Annex 5 for Communication Strategy
### 3.1.3 FBOs seeking advice

FBOs should be made aware to ask for advice in the first instance from their Official Veterinarian (OV).

### 3.1.4 Technical advice for OMs/HODs

OMs/ HODs should always seek technical advice from the Veterinary Manager when making decisions relating to application or enforcement of Official Controls.

### 3.1.5 OV to OV non-compliance reporting

When reporting an incident regarding any consignment arriving at the premises, which does not comply with the Regulations, the OV must
complete a Non-Compliance Report (ENF 11/22). OV sending the report from one site to another should copy operations@fss.scot

Records of OV to OV reports are monitored in FSS Office Aberdeen. This analysis allows the premises regularly dispatching non-conforming product to be identified and enables follow-up action to be initiated.

3.1.6 Liaison with other authorities

There will be occasions where it will be necessary for the OV to contact other authorities, such as APHA, Defra, Scottish Government and LAs. For ease of reference, the OV should be aware of their local points of contact.

3.2 Manuals and guides

3.2.1 Manual for official controls

The MOC provides details of the tasks, responsibilities and duties FSS staff and veterinary contractors undertake in approved meat establishments.

Link to the MOC can be accessed from: 1) Any computer 2) SCOTS laptops http://saltire/my-workplace/Operations/User-guides-and-standards/Pages/Manual-for-official-controls.aspx?pageid=e5005cba-5ce4-44b8-bb1d-20be5622a7dd

Volume 1 contains detail of the Official Controls and forms (FSS forms only available through access from the SCOTS laptops or from FSS office)

Volume 2 contains relevant legislation.

The manual includes guidance for staff on:

- inspection
- verification and audit
- health marking
- decision making and actions to be taken following official controls
- enforcement
- sampling procedures
- monitoring and surveillance programmes

The OV is responsible for ensuring that all members of the team read and understand the instructions and is also responsible for making the FBO aware of any changes to the manual.

Note: All staff must be aware of any updates to the manual and should sign off the SMOC amendment form in Annex 7 to provide evidence of this.
3.2.2 User identifies requirement for MOC amendment

Users of the MOC may identify areas of the manual where they feel that an amendment to existing instructions is warranted. In this case, they should email FSS Operations at operations@fss.scot, providing full details of their suggestion for improvement or amendment.

The FSS Operations Team will evaluate the suggestion and commission to the relevant Portfolio Group.

3.3 Daybook

3.3.1 Daybook maintenance

An official daybook must be maintained by the FSS staff at each approved establishment (does not include cutting plants). The day and date of operation must be entered by the Authorised Officer (AO) on arrival at the premises. All operational staff should contribute to the daybook when necessary. The daybook is the property of FSS and must remain under official control at all times. The daybook should not be used in place of other operational records or to needlessly duplicate information recorded elsewhere.

After completion of the day’s entries, the OV should enter their signature then rule a line across the page, immediately below the signature. This is to prevent further, non-contemporaneous entries being made.

3.3.2 Daybook access

All FSS operational staff must have ready access to the daybook. The OV should inform the FBO that they are entitled to read and make entries in the daybook and reasonable access should be provided.

3.3.3 Other daybook functions

The daybook should be used to:

- record the health mark number(s) issued to or used by operational staff
- record the serial numbers of seals applied along with date and time of application and/or their removal
- record the start and end times of regulatory duties
- record the time of the first kill and last carcase inspected each day, along with any relevant comments; inspection teams may choose to record specific times for each species slaughtered at their establishment
• create a daily record of significant incidents, events or actions which occur at the establishment
• record certain specific actions taken by the FSS
• provide a means of communication between members of the operational team
• record significant details of non-compliances or offences that may become a source of evidence for legal proceedings
• record all informal enforcement action taken by operational staff
• record all verbal technical advice given by veterinary colleagues or management
• record all verbal technical advice given by veterinary colleagues or management to OVs or other operational staff

**Note:** Contemporaneous notes should be recorded in your personal official notebook where access to the daybook is not readily available. These notes need not be transcribed into the daybook although a reference to their existence should be made.

**Reference:** See topic 3.4 on ‘Official notebooks’ in this section for additional information.

### 3.3.4 Arrival and departure

For health and safety purposes all members of the FSS team and their visitors must print their name, designation and time of arrival and departure at the establishment. If necessary, extend the vertical lines by ruling down. After all expected staff has arrived, the OM should rule across the daybook page leaving four blank lines to accommodate other FSS officials who may visit the establishment.

**Note:** These entries must be signed by the team member or visitor at the time of departure from the premises.

### 3.3.5 Use and recording of stamps

It is very important that Health Marks (HMs) are controlled to prevent fraudulent use. All stamps used by FSS staff working in approved establishments must be kept in secure storage when not in use and be recorded in the daybook when issued and returned.

### 3.3.6 Health mark stamp

All members of staff using a HM stamp must record:

• the number of the HM and the time of issue
the time stamps are returned to storage

### 3.3.7 Guidance on daybook entries

All entries in the daybook may be disclosed, for example, to the FBO, and
must be professional and courteous. The daybook is an open document and
it may be used as evidence in court.

**Entries in the daybook:**

- must not be written in offensive language
- must not be derogatory about any individuals
- must adhere to the facts
- must state professional opinions that the author is prepared to defend in
court if necessary
- must not be used to record disagreements within the team
- must not be used to record criticism of any FSS staff or policy

**Daybook entries must be:**

- indelible (in ink or ballpoint pen, not pencil)
- relevant
- factual
- legible
- concise
- unambiguous
- written in clear English
- contemporaneous
- signed (not just initialled - plus printed name if signature is illegible)
- dated

### 3.3.8 Record of incidents

The format to be used to record incidents should include:

- time of the incident
- description of the incident
- action taken, including details of evidence collected and held under official
control and advice given
- names of FSS and FBO staff involved
3.3.9 Retention

In accordance with FSS retention policy, all daybooks should be securely retained at plant for a period of 6 years prior to disposal.

3.4 Official notebooks

3.4.1 Official notebook use:

These are to be used for recording contemporaneous notes where the daybook is not readily available; for example where an incident occurs in the lairage that requires facts to be recorded immediately.

The use of the notebook is not to replace the plant daybook for recording of day-to-day activities and is only to be used for recording factual information, which may need to be presented at a subsequent prosecution.

3.4.2 Reference to notebook entries

Where information is recorded in an official notebook, this need not be transcribed into the daybook; however, an entry should be made in the daybook referring to the fact that notes have been taken.

3.4.3 Important points

The notebook may be inspected in court and the following guidance must be adhered to maintain validity:

- record name on front cover, designation and date started
- make all entries with ink or ballpoint pen
- include only original entries and do not copy notes from elsewhere
- record the date and time at commencement of an entry, and upon completion
- enter the notes at the time ‘the offence’ is witnessed or as soon as possible afterwards whilst the facts are fresh in the memory

Note: Include names of other FSS staff present at the time

- make alterations by striking once the pen through the words, writing the correction, and initialling in left hand column; notes must not be erased
- do not remove pages from the notebook
- sign and date each entry at the base of each page
- do not use the notebook for any purpose not connected with your official duties
The notebook may have to be produced in court and read by all parties so entries must be relevant, factual, legible, concise and written in plain English.

3.4.4 Security
You are responsible for ensuring the security of your notebook and producing it in court. Further notebooks are available from Food Crime and Incidents Unit team on return of your completed notebook. The detailed procedure can be found in Chapter 7 on Enforcement.

3.4.5 Return of all notebooks
Notebooks remain the property of FSS and must be returned to FSS prior to leaving employment or upon completion.

3.4.6 Storage of completed notebooks
Completed notebooks which have been returned as above will be stored by FSS, as may be required for evidence in the future.

3.5 Operations staff personal conduct

3.5.1 Staff conduct
All staff should adopt, maintain and demonstrate best practice in the course of their duties and conduct themselves in a professional way at all times.

3.5.2 Personal standards
Every person working in a food handling area is to maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and is to wear suitable, clean and, where necessary, protective clothing.

 Regulation: (EC) 852/2004 Annex II Chapter VIII.

3.5.3 Personal hygiene
FSS staff is to:

- wear white, clean protective clothing when handling exposed meat
- wear hairnets (and beard snoods if appropriate) to cover the hair of the head and where necessary the neck
- wear clean waterproof footwear
- wear designated waterproof footwear and lairage coats when working in dirty areas or with livestock
- not wear watches, jewellery (except plain wedding rings), aftershaves and perfumes in production areas
3.5.4 **Operational hygiene**

When working in an approved establishment, FSS staff must:

- keep personal equipment clean and change protective clothing as necessary
- use the proper hygiene facilities at all times and in such a way that there is no risk of contamination of meat
- wash contaminated aprons in the apron wash facilities
- use a dedicated hygiene facility
- wash hands, or gloves, whenever they become soiled, and always after handling detained or rejected product
- use a rubber glove over a chain mail glove to reduce the risk of cross contamination
- use blue, food safe, waterproof dressings to protect cuts

**Note:** some FBOs may require that dressings are also metal detectable.

3.5.5 **Health status**

FSS staff handling food or entering any food handling area in any capacity where there is any likelihood of direct or indirect contamination must not be:

- suffering from a disease likely to be transmitted through food
- a carrier of a disease likely to be transmitted through food
- afflicted, for example, with infected wounds, skin infections, sores or diarrhoea

**Reference:** See the MIG for additional information.

3.6 **Authorisation certificates**

3.6.1 **OA or MHI title**

EC 854/2004 uses the title of Official Auxiliaries (OAs) for Meat Hygiene Inspection (MHI) staff.

MHIs can continue to use the title of MHI except when participating in enforcement action, when the title Official Auxiliary must be used. Authorisation certificates will also use the title Official Auxiliary.

3.6.2 **Authorisation certificates**

FSS staff is issued with authorisation certifications depending on their designations, along with photo ID cards.
You must sign the authorisation documentation, carry them whilst engaged in official duties, and be prepared to produce them on request. You are responsible for ensuring you possess all relevant authorisations for the establishment where you work.

When ceasing to work on behalf of the FSS you must return all authorisation certificates and letters of confirmation to your OM. Any lost or found authorisation certificates or ID cards must be reported to FSS Admin Team Mailbox at adminteam@fss.scot

3.6.3 Electronic Records

All FSS staff and contractors have a responsibility to manage the electronic records we create, receive and hold on behalf of FSS and across all records and document management repositories.

FSS IT Systems:

Access to IT systems and FSS data shall only be granted to personnel with the right level of security clearance who need to use the system or data to perform their job function. Systems and applications available for staff in plants to use are:

- Operations Workflow System (OWS) – A corporate system to record and report official control data.
- SCOTS - It is the name of the IT network being provided to FSS. If you have any issues using SCOTS, please report the problem through the iFix Web Portal. You will be asked to provide details about yourself, including your PC asset number (the blue label on your laptop), your User ID, location, and a brief description of the fault or issue. You can also report any issues by telephone to the Scottish Government IT Corporate Services desk on 0131 244 8500.
- SharePoint – FSS corporate browser-based collaboration and document management platform where FSS official polices, guidance, instructions and documents are stored.
- Microsoft Outlook – Secure email environment for transmission of information.

Always think about Security:
- Do not leave any official FSS information unattended in FSS or FBO offices, at home or areas accessible to the members of the public.
- Do not send any confidential, personal, or commercially sensitive data over unencrypted portable storage devices, and think carefully before sending them in an email.
Do not send any FSS official information or communication through a personal email account.

FSS IT Contact Details:
Email: FSS-IT@fss.scot
Tel: 01224 285121/5126

3.6.4 Powers of entry
Authorisations give the holder the powers to enter approved establishments within their authority and must be produced upon request. This power of entry exists at all reasonable hours and is for the purposes of ascertaining contraventions of provisions of the legislation for which they are authorised and the performance of statutory duties.

Regulation: The Official Feed and Food Controls (E/W) Regulations 2009.

3.6.5 Action without authorisation
Do not take any enforcement action for which you have not been authorised, as such action is not valid.

If you are in any doubt as to whether you are appropriately authorised for any action, you should seek technical advice as detailed in the topic ‘Lines of Communication’ previously in this section.

3.7 Cutting Plant Unannounced Inspections

3.7.1 Scope of guidance
This guidance is designed to provide a high-level outline of the Unannounced Inspection (UAI) process and to detail areas of responsibility for relevant staff. Individual guidance will be provided where necessary by the VM and Service Delivery Partner (SDP) management.

3.7.2 Background and purpose
Unannounced Inspections (UAI) were introduced as a supplementary method to verify FBO compliance with European and domestic legislation. The frequency of UAIs is established following a risk based assessment. Every FBO with no permanent FSS attendance will receive at least one UAI during the audit period. If findings of an UAI will indicate an increased risk, the frequency will be amended accordingly.

Authorised Officers (OVs, VMs and MHIs) may undertake, as per FSS policy, UAIs to cutting plants (either stand-alone or co-located) and GHEs,
under the direction of the relevant VM and OM. Those unannounced visits in some circumstances may also be joined by LA Food Enforcement Officers.

EC law indicates official controls (which consist of audit or inspection tasks) should be carried out without prior warning (except audits). This process is intended to introduce unannounced inspections that may inform the periodic audit at cutting establishments to provide evidence of continuous and proper application of HACCP based principles by FBOs.

**Reference:** EC 882/2004, Recital 13, Article 3, Paragraph 2

The purpose of UAI is to:

- augment the work the FSS Veterinary Auditors (VA) carry out at the periodic audit and to provide evidence of continuous application of HACCP based procedures by FBOs; where HACCP deficiencies are identified by MHIs, their actions should address any immediate risks arising and leave escalation of any systematic failures to the OV/VM/OM
- bringing an unannounced element to official controls at cutting and game handling establishments
- follow up on non-compliances (NCs) raised by the VA and provide feedback to them via UAI reports
- take enforcement action as appropriate
- provide management information to inform the VM, HOD and SDP

**Note:** UAI is an internal process to supplement and add value to the formal FBO audit. Following an UAI, the AO must provide the FBO with a verbal summary regarding the results of the inspection, followed by an exception report sent to FBO within 10 working days, where non-compliances have been identified. OVs will have access to all UAI carried out, via Unity Live Manager report module.

### 3.7.3 Programme of inspections

A programme of risk-based inspections will be established by the VM and OM utilising information from the FSS-FBO audits and partial audits, follow up visits, previous UAI and in some circumstances reports from the LA food officers. The SDP will follow the same process for RTE establishments and any other ones, as agreed with the OM & VM. The schedule of UAI carried out and planned during the year is a live document populated and updated by authorised personnel and by the authorised officers carrying out the visits and saved on FSS Share Point. Authorised personnel who manage the UAI Document include OMs, VMs SDP, Audit team and Administration team. The protocol includes a RAG system which informs the administrators when the
UAI is complete and ready for distribution to the relevant Food Business Operator. The live document can be found at:

http://fss/operations/Shared%20Documents/UAI/Copy%20of%20FSS%20UAI%20%20Schedule.xlsx

This programme of inspections does not supersede the protocols for review of approval or emergency inspections following receipt of intelligence/ food complaints.

All cutting plants and GHEs must receive at least one UAI during the period between audits. After this initial UAI, the need for further UAl is may be identified and VM, OM and SDP will utilise a risk based approach when scheduling further inspections. Time spent on UAl will be variable, dependant on findings, and managed accordingly utilising local knowledge. A minimum of 3 hours should be charged to conduct a normal UAI visit; this includes preparation and write-up; if more time is required by the MHI/ OV conducting the visit, the OM should be informed.

3.7.4 UAI reports

UAI report forms are based on audit categories, to allow appropriate benchmarking and to further inform future FBO audits carried out by OVs. VMs and OMs will manage inspections at a local level, advising on the relevant sections to be completed; for example, RTE may be included only if it is appropriate to the premises.

The general inspection theme is set out below and inspections will encompass some or all of the following:

- hygienic production/ operational practices
- environmental hygiene
- HACCP based procedures and implementation
- animal by products
- TSE/ SRM controls
- documentation
- structure
- traceability
- health marks and identification marks
- approved site areas and activities as per FSS approval documents.
3.7.5 Roles for inspections

The following table details which personnel should carry out UAIIs at different types of establishment. These responsibilities have been identified as a suitable resourcing model based on the risk presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of establishment</th>
<th>UAI by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RTE products</td>
<td>RTE trained VM/ OV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditionally approved cutting plants or GHEs</td>
<td>VM or designated OVs following request from VM (also called inter-approval visits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other cutting plants and GHEs</td>
<td>VM/ OV/ MHI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7.6 VM process

The relevant VM liaising with OM is accountable and responsible for the UAI process, which may be carried out by employed or SDP staff. The SDP are responsible for carrying out UAIIs in all RTE premises.

The VM may personally conduct UAIIs, or may nominate suitably experienced employed MHIs who have the appropriate level of authorisation and training and passed the assessment to carry out the inspection.

The VM and OM should liaise with the SDP who will allocate suitably competent and trained staff to carry out UAIIs allocated to OVs.

Note: Prior to an MHI carrying out such inspections, the VM and OM must ensure that the individual has received the necessary level of training, support and guidance.

NB. Only trained MHIs will be allowed to undertake UAIIs and take enforcement action. Names of MHIs who have completed the FSS enforcement training course will be provided to the VM and OM. A central list of MHIs authorised to carry out UAIIs will be recorded on the Staff Authorisations Database.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Employed MHI: From within area teams, the VM and OM will identify trained, qualified and competent MHIs to act as AOs in carrying out UAIIs. OV: The SDP (via the AVM) will be asked by the VM to nominate suitably trained and competent OVs. Only OVs who have successfully completed the Ready To Eat training course should be considered to carry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>out inspections to that type of establishment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The VM will liaise with the OM using the results of previous audits, inspection and enforcement activity for a cutting plant/GHE and will choose the establishments and the frequency of inspections by the AOs. The OM will then schedule the inspections taking account of establishment and resource availability. This will be discussed during monthly contract meetings. The SDP will follow the same process for RTE establishments. Intelligence can also lead to additional UAI visits being introduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MHIs will request the latest audit report and ENF 11/5 form or access them directly from the SharePoint site. OVs should be provided by their management with copies of the latest audit report and ENF 11/5 form or access it directly from the SharePoint site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>AOs must liaise with the veterinary auditor and the OV who conducted the last site visit to discuss the enforcement programme and the areas of operation of particular interest to be reviewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>MHIs must liaise with their VM should they need to discuss technical issues prior to the inspection. OVs must liaise with their AVM/deputy AVM should they need to discuss technical issues prior to the inspection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Throughout the duration of the inspection carried out by the employed MHIs, the VM should ensure that they are available to take calls from the MHI should the need arise. VM deputy arrangements during leave should be notified to the MHIs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>If formal enforcement action is taken, the VM/OM and SDP must be informed on the same day. The VM in liaison with the OM and the SDP will organise follow up inspections where appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Following completion of the inspection, the MHI will complete any letters UAlS undertaken by SDP should be completed within 5 working days. The AVM or Deputy should quality check all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
or notices necessary, depending on the findings of the inspection. The VM will provide technical support for the drafting of any letters or notices produced by MHIs before distribution. The MHI will also complete the inspection report, update the enforcement programme (within 5 working days from completion of the inspection), then inform the VM to allow quality checking of the UAI report. The SDP will check all ENF programme entries. These actions must be completed within another 5 working days from completion of the inspection, to allow for the 10 day deadline for issuing the final report to the FBO to be met.

| 9 | When quality checks have been completed by the VM (only when the inspection has been undertaken by an MHI) the Administration team should then be informed and the UAI spread sheet updated by the MHI, OM or Admin The SDP should also follow this protocol UAI spread sheet should be updated by the OV, AVM or Deputy. The Administration team will then inform the finance team for charging purposes. Finance will then liaise with OMs to verify all chargeable time on OWS concerning UAIIs is accurate and justified. The report will then be sent by the Administration team to the relevant FBOs within 10 working days of the visit, before any billing is sent out by the Finance team. |
| 10 | At the monthly contract performance meetings, the OM/VM and AVM will review scheduling of future inspection, and outcomes and actions from inspections undertaken. Details of such meetings are |
3.7.7 **Pre-inspection preparation: Authorised Officer**

Prior to carrying out any UAI to a cutting plant, the AO must ensure that:

- (MHIs only) they have received the training, guidance and support to enable them to carry out an unaccompanied UAI
- they have had discussions with the VA conducting the last audit and VM prior to the inspection, to discuss the enforcement programme and the areas of operation to be reviewed
- they are clear on the scope of activities to be reviewed during the inspection
- they have received, read and understood the current Enforcement Programme (ENF 11/5) (where available) and most recent FBO Audit (AUD 9/-3)
- they have the contact number for the relevant VM (or deputy) and that the VM and OM are aware of the day and time of the inspection
- they are equipped with:
  - authorisations and FSS ID card
  - printed version of the UAI report form for the inspection (note: this can be accessed and printed from the SharePoint site)
  - contemporaneous notebook
  - calibrated thermometer
  - camera
  - torch
  - appropriate enforcement forms (RAN, HIN, Detention Notice)
  - detention tape and seals

SDP staff carrying out UAls will follow their own processes under the arrangements of the fully managed service.

3.7.8 **AO refused access**

If, when undertaking an UAI, the AO is refused access to the premises they should contact the VM immediately to seek guidance and note the details in their contemporaneous notebook. SDP staff should also notify their line management in these circumstances, VM to be informed by the AVM or Deputy about the incident.
3.7.9 During the inspection: Authorised Officer

The AO should carry out the inspection following the protocols established in the guidance and following any instructions provided, specific to the plant in question. The AO should follow the printed UAI report form during the course of the inspection, making appropriate entries to aid subsequent electronic completion. AOs must take an overall view of the operating practices on the day of the inspection.

**Note:** If a serious public health contravention is identified during the course of the inspection, regardless of whether it is outside of the pre-defined scope of the inspection, the AO must immediately telephone the VM/OM. The AVM should also be informed. Appropriate support should be given to the on-site MHI/OV immediately; a team should be assembled and dispatched to the site in question without delay. The VM/AVM will instruct the AO on the necessary enforcement action to be taken (where staff have the necessary competence and training) and appropriate evidence to be gathered.

Corroboration is essential for successful prosecution- see Chapter 7, Section 2 “Gathering and Preserving Evidence” for further detail.

3.7.10 After the inspection: Authorised Officer

Using the entries made during the course of the inspection, the AO should electronically complete the UAI form –

http://fss/operations/SitePages/Home.aspx?RootFolder=%2Foperations%2FShared%20Documents%2FUAI%2FForm%20Templates&FolderCTID=0x01200078B99089F4C9F647AE9D85B232E52988&View={50928C9F-0377-4F12-ABA1-35279214F756}

After completion, the VM or SDP must be informed, and the updated enforcement programme and any other relevant letters or notices sent to them, as previously detailed at 3.8.7.

3.7.11 Time coding for UAI

Time spent undertaking UAI should be time-coded to the unannounced inspection code. Activities that should be included are preparation, visit and write-up. Travel time is not chargeable to FBOs subject to UAI; this time should be allocated to corporate activity with a comment being written in the comments box in OWS.

The time for any necessary enforcement action during the course of the inspection or immediately after, should also be coded to unannounced inspection.
Note: If the inspection is carried out by the VM/OM, then this time will form part of their management controls (with the exception of enforcement action being taken and coded to unannounced inspection, as above).

3.7.12 UAI

During UAI inspection, the AO must ensure that evidence is gathered to inform the auditor regarding enforcement action and progress of issues raised at the time of the last audit. Any updates on existing issues should be recorded on the UAI form.

MHIs that are trained to carry out enforcement shall update the enforcement programme with any new non-compliance identified and update existing non-compliances with additional entries, liaising appropriately with the VM.
4. Process overview: FSS approval of establishments

4.1 Background

4.1.1 Approval of meat establishments

EU Member States’ competent authorities must give approval to establishments handling, preparing or producing products of animal origin for which requirements are laid down in Regulation (EC) 853/2004.

Under the food hygiene legislation (see following page), meat plants require approval - unless they benefit from specific exemptions

Link to Approved Premises Register:
http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/approved-premises-register

4.1.2 Approvals operational policy

The Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland (SoCOEHS) and the SFELC Approved Establishment Working Group proposed that a Joint Approval Process Model be implemented identifying the relationship between and respective roles of FSS and LAs in the context of the approval process. The ‘Approved Establishments Scottish National Protocol’. The protocol applies to all approved establishments (both LA and FSS approvals) with FSS having the responsibility of approval and enforcement in establishments approved under Regulation (EC) 853.2004, in Scotland is specified within the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Link to Approved Establishments Scottish National Protocol:
4.1.3 Purpose of this guidance

The information and guidance which follows in this and the subsequent section of this chapter is intended to provide:

- a broad overview of the type of Approvals work undertaken by FSS
- instances where interaction and exchange of information between Field Operations and the FSS Approvals team is required
- instances where Field Operations personnel may be requested to carry out visits to establishments whilst those establishments are operating under Conditional Approval

For more extensive information regarding the FSS’s Approvals Policy, refer to the ‘Operational Policy for the Approval of Meat Establishments Undertaken by the Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland’.

4.2 Legislation

4.2.1 Food Hygiene legislation

The EC Food Hygiene Regulations have been applied in all Member States from 1 January 2006. These regulations are:

- Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 – on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules
- Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 – on the hygiene of foodstuffs
4.3 Requirement for approval: Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004

4.3.1 Article 31(2)

Article 31(2) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 provides that:

- competent authorities shall establish procedures for feed and food business operators to follow when applying for the approval of their establishments in accordance with Regulations (EC) No 852/2004 and 853/2004
- on receipt of an application for approval, the competent authority (in this context, the FSS) shall make an on-site visit
- it (in this context, the FSS) shall approve an establishment for the activities concerned only if the food business operator has demonstrated that it complies with the relevant requirements of food law
- The competent authority may grant conditional approval if it appears that the establishment meets all the infrastructure and equipment requirements. It shall grant full approval only if it appears from a new official control visit to the establishment, carried out within three months of granting conditional approval, that the establishment meets the other relevant requirements of feed or food law. If clear progress has been made but the establishment still does not meet all of the relevant requirements, the competent authority may prolong conditional approval. However, conditional approval shall not exceed a total of six months.
- The competent authority shall keep the approval of establishments under review when carrying out official controls. If the competent authority identifies serious deficiencies or has to stop production at an establishment repeatedly and the FBO is not able to provide adequate guarantees regarding future production, the competent authority shall initiate procedures to withdraw the establishment’s approval. However, the competent authority may suspend an establishment’s approval if the FBO can guarantee that it will resolve deficiencies within a reasonable time.
- The competent authority shall maintain up-to-date lists of approved establishments and make them available to other Member States and to the public in a manner that may be specified in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 62(3) of 882/2004.

Note: The application process for Approval of Meat Establishments is available on the FSS website:

4.4 Meat establishments requiring approval

4.4.1 Establishments requiring approval by FSS

The following types of meat establishment are subject to Regulations (EC) No 852/2004 and 853/2004 and must be approved by FSS in order to operate:

- slaughterhouses
- on farm slaughter facilities
- game handling establishments
- cutting plants
- meat wholesale markets

Official controls at this type of establishment are enforced and executed by FSS.

4.4.2 Co-located meat establishments

The following types of meat establishment, where co-located with an approved slaughterhouse, game handling establishment or cutting plant, must also be approved by FSS in order to operate:

- minced meat establishments
- meat preparations establishments
- mechanically separated meat establishments
- processing plants (meat products, rendered animal fats and greaves, treated stomach, bladders and intestines, gelatine and collagen)
- cold stores
- re-wrapping establishments

Note: In the event of this type of establishment operating in a stand-alone capacity, they are approved by the LA and not by FSS.

4.4.3 Exemptions from approval

Regulation (EC) 853/2004 provides certain exemptions from approval. The exemptions fall into the following basic categories:

- retail establishments
- poultry slaughter and cutting on farm
- slaughter for private domestic consumption
- wild game (some operations)
Full details of the exemptions from approval are provided at Chapter 1 on ‘Introduction’ of the Meat Industry Guide (MIG).

http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/meat/guidehygienemeat

4.5 Separations of functions

4.5.1 Governance arrangements
Responsibility for the policy on approvals is retained by the FSS’s Regulatory Policy Branch.

The process of granting approvals is an operational delivery matter and is the responsibility of FSS’s Operations Group.

There is a complete separation of functions between the officials involved in assessments, recommendations and decisions on approvals and the officials responsible for routine official controls at the establishments concerned.

These arrangements are to make sure that there should be no potential for any conflict of interest if the same official is involved in both day-to-day enforcement and decisions on approvals in relation to the same establishment.

4.6 Approval assessments

4.6.1 Application received
Once a completed application form and relevant supplementary documentation required by the approvals process is received by the Approvals Team. This can be either emailed to Approvals@fss.scot or by post to Food Standards Scotland, 4th Floor, Pilgrim House, Old Ford Road, Aberdeen, AB11 5RL) and then subsequently processed, the necessary on-site visit(s) and approval assessments are carried out by VMs.

4.6.2 Obligation to grant approval
There is no obligation for FSS to grant approval to an establishment. An approval will only be granted where the FBO has demonstrated compliance with the relevant requirements of food law.


4.6.3 Initial on-site visit: conditional approval
Following an on-site visit by a VM conditional approval may be granted if the establishment meets all the structure and equipment requirements.
Conditional approval will be refused if there are structural or equipment deficiencies at the initial approval visit.

The food business not having recognisable documented HACCP based procedures is not a reason for refusing conditional approval, but the planned method of operation must not constitute a risk to public health and there must be adequate provision to control any such risks that have been identified.

The result of the initial on-site visit (granting or refusal of conditional approval) will be notified in writing to the FBO, and copies may be sent to relevant Field Operations managers, the VM, veterinary contractor and LA. Where conditional approval is granted, the notification will include details of relevant requirements of food law which must be met in order for the establishment to gain full approval.

### 4.6.4 Extended conditional approval

Conditional approval is granted for a period of three months. Within that three month period, a new official control visit will be conducted by a VM. Where clear progress has been made but the establishment and food business still does not meet all relevant requirements of food law, the period of conditional approval may be extended. The total period of conditional approval may not exceed six months.

### 4.6.5 Full approval

Full approval will be granted where it appears from a new official control visit undertaken by a VM that the establishment and food business complies with all the relevant requirements of food law and the establishment has been observed in operation.

**Note:** In the event that extended conditional approval is granted, the VM will arrange a further on-site official control visit, within the over-riding 6 month period, in order to assess whether the conditions for the granting of full approval have been met.

### 4.6.6 Approval assessment report

Following each of their announced inspections, the VM will produce an assessment report.

In addition to assessing the adequacy of structure and equipment, the VM will:

- measure levels of compliance
- identify any deficiencies
• record significant areas which may be pertinent to the delivery of Official Controls once the establishment has gained full approval

4.6.7 Significant areas pertinent to the delivery of official controls

Significant areas which may be pertinent include:

• whether there are other FBOs operating within the same building and sharing some facilities (shared facilities)
• time/ area separation of activities
• whether separate authorisations are required (for example, VC removal, warm meat transportation)
• whether there are areas of the establishment covered by another competent authority (for example, retail counter, dairy/ fish processing)

4.6.8 New establishment checklist

On receipt of an application form requesting approval of an establishment, the FSS Approvals team provide a copy to relevant Field Operations managers, the VM and the veterinary contractor. At the point that conditional approval is granted, a copy of the VM assessment report and the Conditional Approval documentation is also sent to the same recipients.

At this point in time, the OM/ VM will consider operational matters which need to be organised before the establishment begins production. A new establishment checklist, primarily for use in new slaughterhouses, game handling establishments and cutting plants authorised for VC removal, has been developed to act as an aide-memoire in these circumstances.

Reference: See Annex 2 for a copy of the new establishment checklist.
5. Field operations involvement: post conditional approval

5.1 Inter-approval visits

5.2 Notification of changes in activities

5.1 Inter-approval visits

During each period of conditional approval (initial conditional approval and where applicable, extended conditional approval), the VM may ask for an unannounced inter-approval inspection to be conducted in establishments with no routine veterinary attendance, such as cutting plants.

The VM may utilise service delivery partners (AVMs or other experienced OVs) to support the approval process by undertaking these unannounced visits between approval assessments.

Inter-approval inspections should normally be undertaken around 4 to 6 weeks after the conditional approval/ extended conditional approval has been granted but may be earlier if the VM has indicated a specific reason that an earlier visit is required.

The purpose of the inter-approval inspection will be to:

- support the VM by providing information regarding the FBO operational hygiene practices at the establishment
- assist the FBO in progressing towards achievement of compliance in advance of the next approval assessment

This is an important opportunity for the VM to observe the establishment in operation

During the visit, the VM/ AVM/ OV should, in particular, review those areas where the approval assessment report contains a column requesting inter-approval comments. The VM/ AVM/ OV may also wish to use the general comments box on the approval assessment report to highlight any other issues which are relevant to the FBO’s progression towards achievement of compliance in advance of the next approval assessment.

Once completed, the VM/ AVM/ OV should return the updated report to the Approvals and Certifications team.

All requests for the SDP to undertake an inspection will be copied to approvals@fss.scot
Note: The VM/ AVM/ OV should take appropriate enforcement action if the need for this is identified during the course of their visit.

5.1.1 Copy of VM approval assessment report
The Approvals team will provide the AVM with a copy of the approval assessment report, which will contain sections for the OV or AVM to complete and provide comment on areas relating to operational hygiene.

The Approvals and Certification team will also advise the AVM of the known operating patterns of the establishment, as provided by the FBO when being assessed for conditional approval.

5.1.2 VM action following receipt of updated report
When the visit was carried out by the SDP, following receipt of the updated report from the AVM/ OV, the VM will consider the information provided and will use it to inform future discussions with the FBO regarding progress towards achievement of compliance.

5.2 Notification of changes in activities

5.2.1 FBO to notify significant changes in activities
Article 6(2) of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 states that the FBO is to ‘ensure that the competent authority always has up-to-date information on establishments, including by notifying any significant change in activities and any closure of an existing establishment’. Not complying with this requirement is an offence under the Food Hygiene Regulations 2006 (as amended).

5.2.2 Amendment to approval documentation
Where the FBO notifies FSS of such changes, consideration needs to be given as to whether a visit should be made to inspect the alterations/ changes to activities and whether amended approval documentation is required.

Amendment to the approval documentation will depend on the extent of the changes. The following sub-paragraphs detail the types of changes which may require such amendment.

Note: Any member of the inspection or FSS Management Team should be alert to the fact that, if they are informed or become aware of any change which has the potential to affect the approval status of an establishment, they must ensure that the Approvals and Certifications team are advised immediately.
5.2.3 Additional activities

The FBO should notify FSS by way of an application form for any additional activities they wish to undertake. Undertaking approvable activities without first gaining approval is a contravention of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 Article 4(3).

On receipt of an application form, the Approvals and Certifications team will arrange for a VM to contact the FBO and arrange an approval assessment.

If any member of the inspection or FSS management team at the establishment becomes aware that the FBO wishes to undertake additional activities, please notify the Approvals and Certifications team immediately, who will provide the FBO with an application form for completion.

5.2.4 Change to approved curtilage/ restructuring

The original approval letter sent to the FBO will be accompanied by a site plan detailing the approved area in which the approved activities may be undertaken. The inspection team at the establishment should be familiar with the detail of the approval letter and site plan.

If any member of the inspection or FSS management team at the establishment becomes aware that the FBO wishes to operate outside of the approved area, please notify the Approvals and Certifications team immediately and provide details.

The FBO will be asked to produce a revised site plan, detailing the new area in which they wish to operate. The VM will then make an assessment. If the new layout is acceptable then the Approvals and Certifications team will acknowledge the establishment’s new curtilage/ layout and provide a copy for the FSS records at the establishment.

The VM may utilise service delivery partners (AVMs or other experienced OVs) to verify compliance with the legal requirements when doing their assessment.

5.2.5 Change of FBO

The approval of an establishment applies to both the premises and the business operating at the premises.

If an approved establishment changes FBO, the food business will need to be assessed and if appropriate, granted a new approval under the new FBO.

Guidance on identifying changes of FBO has been published on the FSS website at

5.2.6 Change of FBO: continuation of operations for a short period

On a change of FBO, an establishment may, in the circumstances detailed below, continue to operate under the existing approval for a short period of time, until an approval assessment is carried out by FSS.

This provision is on condition that:

- the new FBO submits an application for a new approval, which must be received by the FSS Approvals and Certifications team within one calendar week of the change of FBO
- in order to safeguard public health, the new FBO must not change the operation at the premises in any significant way until a new approval is given, for example, the new FBO must not change the type of animals slaughtered, nature of products produced/handled, and the HACCP based controls that have been subject to FSS audit

5.2.7 Change of FBO: notify Approvals and Certifications team

If any member of the inspection or FSS management team at the establishment becomes aware of a change of FBO, they must notify the Approvals and Certifications team immediately by email.

If the change happened more than a week previously, the Approvals and Certifications team will consider whether the approval is regarded as no longer in force, and all approvable activity must cease with immediate effect. FSS management team at the establishment will be notified and the relevant LA or District Council will also be informed and requested to check that the establishment has stopped carrying out any activity subject to approval.

5.2.8 Change of name

The Approval document includes details of the establishment and the identity of the FBO. Where there is a change of name, the Approval document must reflect this.

For example, an incorporated company may register a change of name with Companies House. This change needs to be reflected in the approval documentation.

Note: This is not to be confused with a change of FBO (change of legal entity) which requires a re-assessment for approval – see previous page.

5.2.9 Change of name: notify Approvals and Certifications team

If any member of the inspection or FSS management team at the establishment becomes aware of any discrepancies between the Approval document and the name of the approved FBO, please notify the Approvals and Certifications team immediately by email.
5.2.10 Temporary closure of an approved establishment

FBOs are required to keep FSS informed of periods of closure.

Reference: For further guidance on periods of closure see Chapter 4 on ‘Audit, HACCP based procedures and verifying operator’s own checks’, part 1, section 1.

Once advised of this, the Approvals and Certifications team will update Establishment and People to indicate the temporary or seasonal closure. This information will assist other teams within FSS; for example, FSS Revenue Accounting will be aware that no throughput details will be required for the period in question.

5.2.11 Temporary closure of an approved establishment: notify Approvals and Certifications team

If the FBO informs the inspection team or FSS management team at the establishment of a period of closure, please immediately notify the Approvals and Certifications team of the information by email.

Once an establishment plans to re-open after a period of closure, please follow the guidance found in chapter 4 on ‘Audit, HACCP based procedures and verifying operator’s own checks’, part 1, section 1.

5.2.12 Surrender of Approval

If the establishment is closing permanently, then FSS needs confirmation of surrender of Approval from the FBO, in writing.

Note: If the FBO does not surrender the approval, then the only alternative action available to FSS to remove the approval is to conduct a formal ‘Review of Approval’ which may lead to suspension or withdrawal.

5.2.13 Surrender of approval: FBO to notify Approvals and Certifications in writing

If any member of the inspection or FSS management team at the establishment becomes aware of its intended permanent closure, please request that the FBO contacts the Approvals and Certifications team (by email or letter) to provide confirmation of the surrender of approval.

5.2.14 Transfer of official controls

Where an FBO holding an approval granted by FSS wishes to surrender the slaughterhouse, cutting plant and/ or game handling establishment element(s) of their approval, but wishes to retain stand-alone activities, the establishment and the approval requirement will be transferred to the LA or District Council (DC).
In the case of an FBO electing to limit their activities to meet the exemption criteria and surrendering the approval granted by FSS, the establishment will remain subject to the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 and must therefore register with the LA or DC as a food business prior to surrendering their approval.

For more details on the exemption criteria see MIG Chapter 1 on 'Introduction':

http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/meat/guidehygienemeat

5.2.15 Transfer of official controls: FBO to notify Approvals and Certifications team in writing

If any member of the inspection or FSS management team at the establishment becomes aware of either scenario as detailed above, please ask the FBO to confirm the details to the Approvals and Certifications team (by email or letter).

The Approvals and Certifications team will then liaise with the LA over the transfer of responsibility.
6. Annexes

Annex 2  New Establishment Checklist
Annex 3  Glossary of abbreviations
Annex 4  Approved establishment Scottish national protocol
Annex 5  Guidance for UAI
Annex 6  Communication strategy
Annex 7  SMOC Amendment Log