



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Policy paper

Multi-Annual National Control Plan for Great Britain 2026 to 2030

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Introduction

Post EU exit in January 2020, responsibility for the Great Britain Multi-Annual National Control Plan (MANCP) and its [annual report](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-annual-national-control-plan-mancp-annual-reports) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-annual-national-control-plan-mancp-annual-reports>) formally transferred to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

The Great Britain MANCP, which covers the period 2026 to 2030, has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Articles 109 - 111 of [Regulation \(EU\) 2017/625](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents) (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>), the Official Controls Regulation or OCR. Defra prepares the MANCP with content co-ordinated across all other Great Britain appropriate authorities, competent authorities and delegated bodies responsible for official controls. This ensures that the control plan is coherent, collects information on its implementation, and is reviewed and updated.

The OCR establishes a statutory framework for official controls and other official activities, to ensure compliance with Great Britain's sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) rules on:

- animal health
- animal welfare
- feed safety
- food safety
- plant health

The Great Britain MANCP aligns with OCR Article 110

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/article/110#commentary-key-75d711ecee46ad6e54231823ca39c7d1>), detailing information on:

- the strategic objectives of Great Britain's OCR control activities and how the prioritisation of official controls and allocation of resources reflect these objectives
- the risk categorisation of official controls
- the designation of competent authorities and their tasks at central, regional and local level, and on resources available to those authorities
- where appropriate, the delegation of tasks to delegated bodies
- the general organisation and management of official controls at national, regional and local level, including official controls in individual establishments
- the control systems applied to different sectors, and coordination between the different services of competent authorities responsible for official controls in those sectors
- procedures and arrangements in place to ensure compliance with the obligations of the competent authorities provided for in Article 5(1) (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/article/5>)
- the training of staff of the competent authorities
- the documented procedures provided for in Article 12(1) (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/article/12>)
- the general organisation and operation of contingency plans in accordance with the rules referred to in Article 1(2) (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/article/1>)
- the general organisation of cooperation and mutual assistance between competent authorities in Great Britain

Great Britain follows the principles of good regulation - in the context of official controls and elsewhere. These principles seek to ensure that regulations are proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent and targeted. Competent authorities in England and Wales follow the UK government Regulators' Code

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/300126/14-705-regulators-code.pdf). Scottish competent authorities follow the Scottish Regulators' Strategic Code of Practice (<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/agreement/2015/01/scottish-regulators-strategic-code-of-practice/documents/scottish-regulators-strategic-code-practice-pdf/scottish-regulators-strategic-code-practice-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/Scottish%2Bregulators%2527%2Bstrategic%2Bcode%2Bof%2Bpractice.pdf>).

As announced at the UK-EU Summit on 19 May 2025, the UK Government is currently negotiating a Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement with the EU. The Agreement will be based upon dynamic alignment with EU rules SPS rules. Some content of this report will fall within the scope of this Agreement and will be updated, where necessary, to reflect the final terms of the Agreement once it comes into effect.

MANCP annual reporting

Defra commissions, prepares and publishes an annual report on the implementation of the Great Britain MANCP, as set out in Article 113 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/article/113>). These reports detail statistics and data on the operation of controls in all sectors of the MANCP, with information on significant variances each year in volumes of controls undertaken, incidences of non-compliance, and enforcement activities. The annual reports also summarise audit activities across the Great Britain official controls sector, and areas of improvement in year-on-year controls, including training activities, changes to control processes and delivery, and areas of collaborative working across authorities and agencies. The MANCP annual reports (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-annual-national-control-plan-mancp-annual-reports>) from 2020 onwards are available.

Risk based approach

Authorities responsible for the delivery of biosecurity official controls in Great Britain use risk categorisation as part of a structured approach to determine the frequency, intensity, and type of official controls, for all aspects of animal and plant health and welfare.

Key principles

Prioritisation by risk: controls are focused on areas with higher likelihood or impact of non-compliance on public, animal or plant health or the wider environment.

Dynamic adjustment: control activities are adapted based on emerging threats, surveillance data, and compliance history of exporting countries, individual sectors, commodities and Food Business Operators (FBO).

Sector specific risk profiles: nature of the activity being regulated across food, feed, animal health and welfare and plant health sectors, is assessed independently, with tailored control strategies.

Implementation

At a national level official control delivery is a devolved matter with relevant Ministers in devolved government for each of the GB nations responsible for making statutory changes to relevant official controls legislation. Defra coordinates with national governments and central competent authorities in Scotland and Wales, for example APHA, FSA and FSS to agree common approaches where appropriate.

At a local level, LAs use risk-based inspection models to determine frequency and intensity of controls in individual establishments, supported by national guidance and audit frameworks.

Monitoring and evaluation

Annual MANCP reports set out the key official control compliance data for Great Britain including data on control outcomes, enforcement actions, and adjustments made in response to risk trends. Internal and external audits assess the effectiveness of risk-based controls and inform continuous improvement.

Collaborative working

All Great Britain competent authorities (CAs) undertake collaborative working to improve public service delivery, enabling rapid and coordinated responses to control or eradicate biosecurity issues, in particular in response to potential or confirmed incidences of zoonotic diseases and pests of plants.

The TB hub (<https://tbhub.co.uk/>) is an example of collaborative working, providing Bovine TB advice and tuberculosis information for cattle farmers. This is a joint industry and government initiative, supported by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, APHA, the British Cattle Veterinary Association, Defra, Landex, and the National Farmers Union. In addition, a co-design steering group drawn from the Bovine TB Partnership for England is driving forward the development of a new bovine TB strategy.

UK common frameworks (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-common-frameworks#overview>) are non-statutory arrangements between UK government and devolved governments to establish common approaches to policy areas, in areas within devolved competence which were previously harmonised at EU level. The animal health and welfare framework is one example.

The animal health and welfare framework (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/animal-health-and-welfare-framework-2018/animal-health-and-welfare-framework>) was developed by the Animal Plant and Health Agency working in partnership with local authority officers from the National Animal Health and Welfare Panel (NAHWP), supported by the

Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) and Defra. The framework builds on existing working practices and relationships to improve the delivery of animal health and welfare controls in England.

Other examples of frameworks include:

- food and feed safety hygiene - an agreement (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/food-and-feed-safety-and-hygiene-provisional-common-framework>) between the UK government and devolved governments to work together in developing food and feed safety policy approaches.
- animal health and welfare - a collaborative agreement (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/animal-health-and-welfare-provisional-common-framework>) between the UK government and the devolved governments of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Its primary purpose is to establish collaboration, coordination and co-operation in areas of animal health and welfare policy.
- plant health – sets out how the UK government and devolved governments propose to collaborate (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plant-health-provisional-common-framework>) together on plant health policy, including biosecurity measures, pest and disease control, and compliance with international obligations.

Key control organisations

OCR, Article 4 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/article/4>) and Article 5 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/article/5>) sets out the criteria for designating a body as a competent authority. Competent authorities are formally designated by law, with the legal power to carry out official controls, and with clearly defined responsibilities. Staff of the competent authority must operate independently, with no conflicts of interest. In addition, the competent authorities are expected to meet high operational standards, including consistency and impartiality - and to actively collaborate with other authorities involved in the policy or delivery of SPS official controls.

The competent authority may be the Appropriate Authority, defined in Article 3 as the relevant Secretary of State for the SPS controls in question and the relevant Ministers in Scotland and Wales or another authority which has been designated competent by the Appropriate Authority.

Broadly, the competent authorities define the legal parameters and policy objectives of official controls and deliver the operational controls and enforcements required by these control laws and policies.

Devolved governments

The Scottish Government is responsible for animal health, animal welfare, tree and plant health. These areas are overseen by Scottish Ministers, with official controls delivered through designated delivery partners. APHA are responsible for implementing controls in animal health and welfare. The Scottish Ministers are designated as both the appropriate and competent authority for plant health in Scotland.

Scottish Ministers have entered into arrangements with the Forestry Commissioners for some of those functions relating to plant health (forestry) in Scotland to be exercised by the Forestry Commissioners on behalf of the Scottish Ministers. For aquatic animal health in Scotland, the Fish Health Inspectorate (FHI) are a key component, alongside wider diagnostic laboratories and policy colleagues who contribute to the role on behalf of Scottish Ministers, all based within the Scottish Government Marine Directorate.

The Welsh Government has similar responsibilities to Defra within Wales, covering animal health, animal welfare and plant health controls and elements of feed and food law. The Welsh Government carries out official controls through its own inspectorates, except for plant health, which are carried out by APHA.

Great Britain competent authorities

List of competent authorities in Great Britain:

- Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
- Border Force
- Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
- The Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Food Standards Scotland (FSS)
- The Forestry Commission (FC)
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
- Local Authorities (LA)

- Port Health Authorities (PHA)
- Marine Management Organisation (MMO)
- Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)

Control area - food sector

This section provides an overview of all areas of biosecurity control in Great Britain, by commodity or subject, with links to relevant online content, including legislation, and a summary of the core objective(s) and control(s) for each commodity or subject.

Dairy hygiene in milk production holdings (England and Wales)

The competent authorities are the FSA and LAs.

Core control objectives

The FSA is responsible for policy and legislation. The FSA and LAs are responsible for the delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include that:

- the FSA is responsible for inspections at registered milk production holdings (cows' milk and milk of other species)
- the FSA is responsible for the collection and dispatch of raw cow's drinking milk samples
- LAs are responsible for sampling of raw drinking milk from species other than cows
- the FSA is responsible for Animal Health inspections in line with Official Control Regulations (OCR)

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Dairy hygiene in milk production holdings (Scotland)

The competent authorities are FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

The FSS is responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for the delivery of official controls.

Key controls

Inspections at registered milk production holdings (cows' milk and milk of other species)

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Dairy hygiene in liquid milk establishments (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are the FSA, FSS, and LAs.

Core control objectives

The FSA and FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include:

- responsibility for approvals of and checks at dairy product establishments. LAs are also responsible for sampling
- sampling in relation to raw milk for human consumption (England and Wales only)
- food standards inspections

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Dairy hygiene in dairy products establishments (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are FSA, FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

The FSA and FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include:

- responsibility for approvals of and checks at dairy product establishments
 - LAs are also responsible for sampling
- food standards inspections

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Dairy hygiene in combined milk production holding and dairy products establishments (England and Wales)

The competent authorities are the FSA and LAs.

Core control objectives

The FSA are responsible for policy and legislation. The FSA and LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include that:

- the FSA is responsible for controls in combined milk production / dairy establishments that are registered with the FSA as a production holding
- LAs are responsible for the approval and inspection for dairy processing activities
- LAs are responsible for food standards inspections

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Dairy hygiene in combined milk production holding and dairy products establishments (Scotland)

The competent authorities are FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

The FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include:

- that the holding for combined milk production/dairy establishments is registered with the LA separate from the approved dairy products establishment
- approval and inspection for dairy processing activities
- food standards inspections

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Egg hygiene in egg production units (England and Wales)

The competent authorities are the FSA and APHA.

Core control objectives

FSA is responsible for policy and legislation. APHA is responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

APHA's egg marketing inspectors inspect registered egg production sites.

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Further legislation on salmonella control, egg marketing and labelling
(<https://www.egginfo.co.uk/british-lion-eggs/eggs-in-foodservice/government-legislation>) is available on the egg info website, administered by the (BEIC).

Egg hygiene in egg production units (Scotland)

The competent authorities are FSS and the Scottish Government.

Core control objectives

FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. The Scottish Government is responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

The Scottish Government's Poultry Unit inspect registered egg production sites, on behalf of FSS.

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Further legislation on salmonella control, egg marketing and labelling (<https://www.egginfo.co.uk/british-lion-eggs/eggs-in-foodservice/government-legislation>) is available on the egg info website, administered by the BEIC.

Egg hygiene in processing plants and egg packing stations (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are the FSA, FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

The FSA and FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for the delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include:

- approval of processors and inspections as well as sampling, traceability and labelling
- food standards inspections

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Further legislation on salmonella control, egg marketing and labelling (<https://www.egginfo.co.uk/british-lion-eggs/eggs-in-foodservice/government-legislation>) is available on the egg info website, administered by the BEIC.

Hygiene classification and monitoring of shellfish harvesting areas (Scotland)

The competent authorities are FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. The FSS and LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

FSS is responsible for the classification and monitoring of shellfish (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/industry-specific-advice/fish-and-shellfish/shellfish/ecoli-classification>) and undertaking sanitary surveys in live bivalve molluscs (LBM) harvesting areas.

Official controls in approved establishments (for example LBM purification centres, dispatch centres and processors) and classified harvesting areas are carried out by LAs. This includes sampling for contaminants.

Action is taken to protect public health when results are above permitted levels, for example implementation of temporary harvesting restrictions. This may include reclassification or closure of production areas, and additional sampling.

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/627
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/627/contents>)

Hygiene classification and monitoring of shellfish harvesting areas (England and Wales)

The competent authorities are the FSA and LAs.

Core control objectives

FSA are responsible for policy and legislation. The FSA and LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

In England and Wales, the FSA is responsible for the classification and monitoring of shellfish (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/shellfish-controls-information>) in LBM harvesting areas.

Sanitary surveys (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/shellfish-production-area-assessments>) in LBM harvesting areas are undertaken at minimum 6-year intervals. These are performed by a contractor on behalf of the FSA.

Sampling for official controls is carried out by LAs.

Official controls in approved establishments (for example LBM purification centres, dispatch centres and processors) and classified harvesting areas are carried out by LAs. This includes sampling for (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/shellfish-controls-information#classification-monitoring-and-sampling>) contaminants (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/shellfish-controls-information#classification-monitoring-and-sampling>).

Action is taken to protect public health when results are above permitted levels, for example implementation of temporary harvesting restrictions. This may include reclassification or closure of production areas, and additional sampling.

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/627
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/627/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Fish hygiene at primary production, product establishments and cold stores (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are the FSA, FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

The FSA and FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include:

- approval of and hygiene checks at primary production vessels, fishery products establishments, cold stores
- routine interventions and verification of samples
- incident response actions when test results indicate a risk to public health

Food standards inspections.

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/627

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/627/title/VI>)

Food Safety (Fishery Products and Live Shellfish) (Hygiene) Regulations 1998 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1998/994/contents/made>)

Fish labelling (Scotland)

The competent authorities are FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

FSS is responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include that LAs:

- are responsible for checks at retail sale
- make checks at landing and taken into the market
- check traceability procedures in processing plants - labels on the fish are checked to ensure that the necessary information is contained, including catch area, species name, name of processor, weight, batch and other data

Fish labelling (England and Wales)

The competent authorities are Defra, the Welsh Government, LAs and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

Core control objectives

Defra is responsible for policy and legislation in England. The Welsh Government is responsible in Wales. LAs and the MMO are responsible for official controls.

Key controls

These are that:

- LAs are responsible for checks at retail sale
- the MMO, on Defra's behalf, may also make checks at landing, in the wholesale chain and in transit up to the point of retail sale

Related legislation

The Fish Labelling (Wales) Regulations 2013

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2013/2139/contents>)

The Fish Labelling Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/1768)

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2013/1768/contents>)

Meat hygiene in approved slaughterhouses, cutting plants and wild game handling establishments, and co-located minced meat, meat preparations and meat products operations (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are the FSA and FSS.

Core control objectives

FSA and FSS are responsible for policy, legislation and delivery of official controls.

Key controls

Approval, hygiene checks and enforcement at establishments where official control falls to an Official Veterinarian (OV).

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/627

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/627/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 2073/2005

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2005/2073/contents>)

Stand-alone minced meat, meat preparations and meat products establishments, and cold stores (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are FSA and FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

FSA and FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

Approval, hygiene checks and enforcement.

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/624

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/624/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/627

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/627/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 2073/2005

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2005/2073/contents>)

Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) controls (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are Defra, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government, FSA and FSS.

Core control objectives

Defra (England), the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government are responsible for policy and legislation.

Defra, the Welsh Government and Scottish Government have policy responsibility for animal welfare laws in England, Wales and Scotland for animals destined for slaughter covering farms, transport, and slaughterhouses.

FSA on behalf of Defra and the Welsh Government, FSS on behalf of the Scottish Government are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

Supervision of the collection and dispatch of samples from bovines for BSE examination and testing.

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 999/2001

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2001/999/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/627

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/627/contents>)

Specified risk material (SRM) and other animal by-products (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are Defra, the Welsh Government, the Scottish Government, the FSA and FSS.

Core control objectives

Defra, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government are responsible for policy and legislation. FSA and FSS are responsible for the delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include:

- inspection of carcasses
- collection and dispatch of samples from cattle, sheep and goats for Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) examination and testing
- verification that the FBO carries out their duties

- audit of good hygiene practice (GHP), FBOs own procedures for handling and disposal of SRM and FBO's hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP) based procedures for ensuring the meat does not contain SRM
- enforcement action in cases on non-compliance

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/1069/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 999/2001

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2001/999/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) No 142/2011

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2011/142/contents>)

Transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE) controls in approved meat establishments (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are Defra, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government, FSA and FSS.

Core control objectives

Defra (England), the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government are responsible for policy and legislation.

FSA on behalf of Defra and the Welsh Government, FSS on behalf of the Scottish Government are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include OV's:

- checking and signing off sampling protocols and conduct audits to ensure sampling integrity and traceability from ear tag to sample submission
- and Authorised Officers (AOs) conducting daily inspections in approved slaughterhouses and cutting plants to verify SRM removal, segregation, storage, staining, and disposal procedures

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 999/2001

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2001/999/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/627

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/627/contents>)

Trichinella controls (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are the FSA and FSS.

Core control objectives

FSA and FSS are responsible for policy, legislation and delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include:

- Trichinella testing of pigs, solipeds and wild boar (farmed and feral) before entering the food chain
- samples taken, appropriately identified, handled, and sent for testing to an accredited laboratory - alternatively, meat is subjected to cold treatment for pigs (freezing)

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/624

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/624/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/627

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/627/contents>)

Beef labelling (Scotland)

The competent authorities are FSS, the Scottish Government and LAs.

Core control objectives

The Scottish Government is responsible for policy and legislation. The Scottish Government and LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include that:

- the Scottish government perform checks on the compulsory requirements are made in slaughterhouses and most cutting plants and cold stores

- checks in other establishments, as well checks on voluntary labelling are undertaken by LAs

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2000/1760/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1825/2000

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2000/1825/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2013/1308/contents>)

Beef labelling (England and Wales)

The competent authorities are Defra, the Welsh Government, Rural Payments Agency (RPA) and LAs.

Core control objectives

Defra (in England) and the Welsh Government (in Wales) are responsible for policy and legislation. The RPA and LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include that:

- the RPA perform checks on the compulsory requirements are made in slaughterhouses and most cutting plants and cold stores.
- checks in other establishments, as well checks on voluntary labelling are undertaken by LAs

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2000/1760/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1825/2000

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2000/1825/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2013/1308/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2015/1375

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2015/1375/article/3>)

Food contact materials – recycled plastics (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are the FSA and FSS.

Core control objectives

The FSA and FSS are responsible for policy, legislation and the delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include:

- a review of the producers' technical documentation (for example the compliance monitoring summary sheet)
- an audit of operational UK-based plastic recycling installations that have applied to the EU

Related legislation

Commission Regulation (EU) 2022/1616 (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02022R1616-20251203>) (sets out the requirements for all competent authorities)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 282/2008 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2008/282/contents>) (applicable in Great Britain)

Food contact materials – all packaging materials (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are the FSA, FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

The FSA and FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for the delivery of official controls.

Key controls

LAs are responsible for enforcing food contact material (FCM) legislation across Great Britain. Their role includes ensuring that businesses comply with the requirements of assimilated Regulation 1935/2004 and associated national regulations.

Related legislation

Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (England) Regulations 2012
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/2619/contents>)

Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Wales) Regulations 2012
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2012/2705/contents>)

The Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Scotland) Regulations 2012
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2012/318/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 1935/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/1935/contents>)

Food hygiene and food standards controls including at catering and retail establishments - food hygiene ratings scheme (FHRS) and food hygiene information scheme (FHIS) (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are the FSA, the Welsh Government, FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

FSA, the Welsh Government and FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for the delivery of official controls.

Key controls

Food enforcement officers, which includes environmental health officers (EHOs) and food safety officers, check and enforce food hygiene and standards in restaurants, cafés, pubs, supermarkets and other places where food is manufactured supplied, sold or consumed, such as hospitals, schools and care homes.

In England and Wales, Trading Standards Officers (TSOs) and sometimes EHOs also check and enforce food standards, with a focus on food composition, labelling and allergens.

In Scotland, environmental health and food safety officers carry out food hygiene and food standards as a single inspection.

In England and Wales, food hygiene standards (<https://ratings.food.gov.uk/>) are published via the FHRS, which applies a rating of 0 to 5.

In Scotland, food hygiene ratings (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/consumer-advice/fhis>) are published via the FHIS, which applies a rating of either a pass, improvement required or exempt premises.

Related legislation

Food Safety Act 1990 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/16/contents>)

Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2013/2/contents/enacted>)

The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/3/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) No 178/2002
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2002/178/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 852/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/852/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 853/2004
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/853/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Food Law Code of Practice and Food Law Practice Guidance
(<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>)

Import controls – high risk food and feed of non-animal origin (HRFNAO) (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are the FSA, FSS, LAs and PHAs.

Core control objectives

The FSA and FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

FSA and FSS are responsible for undertaking core risk management functions in the delivery of the reviews of Regulation (EU) 2019/1793 in line with frequency set in the legislation, including public consultations, stakeholder engagement, the provision of evidence-based advice to Ministers & the development of Statutory Instruments.

FSA and FSS are responsible for the designation of high-risk food and feed of non-animal origin (HRFNAO) Border Control Posts (BCPs).

LAs deliver OCs at the port and inland checks (physical, documentary, identity checks).

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/1793

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/1793/contents>) (as amended)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 178/2002

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2002/178/contents>)

Import controls – polyamide and melamine kitchenware (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are the FSA, FSS, PHA (at designated BCPs).

Core control objectives

The FSA and FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. PHAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

Port Health Authority (PHA) inspectors undertake checks and sampling at designated Border Control Posts.

Related legislation

Plastic Kitchenware (Conditions on Imports from China) (England)

Regulations 2011 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1517/contents>)

The Plastic Kitchenware (Conditions on Imports from China) (Wales)

Regulations 2011 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2011/1605/contents>)

The Plastic Kitchenware (Conditions on Imports from China) (Scotland)

Regulations 2011 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2011/282/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation 284/2011

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2011/284/contents>)

Recognition of natural mineral waters (NMW), both domestic and extracted from outside of the UK (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are Defra, FSA, FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

Defra (in England), FSA (in Wales) and FSS (in Scotland) are responsible for policy, legislation and LAs deliver official controls to ensure these waters are safe, correctly labelled, and meet strict quality standards before being sold in Great Britain.

Key controls

A producer of natural mineral water extracted from outside of the UK must apply for recognition to sell it in Great Britain. This includes natural mineral waters from the EU and European Economic Area (EEA) because Great Britain no longer automatically recognises them. A producer only needs to apply in one Great Britain country to get recognition in all three.

Defra is responsible for processing non-UK natural mineral water applications in England and for any appeals against decisions made by LAs in respect of applications made for sources in their areas. The FSA undertakes these reviews in Wales. FSS carries out reviews in Scotland.

Recognition of natural mineral water from sources in England, Wales and Scotland is granted by the relevant local authority.

If the source meets the requirements, it is granted recognition and details are published in the Edinburgh, Belfast and London Gazettes. Subsequently the information held on Gov.uk

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/natural-mineral-waters-lists-of-recognised-products/uk-natural-mineral-waters-recognised-in-the-uk-list-of-products>)
of recognised natural mineral waters is updated.

Related legislation

Natural mineral water: how to get recognition - GOV.UK

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/recognition-of-natural-mineral-water-inside-and-outside-the-uk>)

Guidance on natural mineral water, spring water and bottled drinking water regulations in Wales and Northern Ireland

(<https://www.food.gov.uk/document/guidance-on-natural-mineral-water-spring-water-and-bottled-drinking-water-regulations-in-wales-and-northern-ireland>)

The Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2018

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2018/352/contents/made>)

The Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2017

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/935/contents/made>)

The Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water (Scotland) (No. 2) Regulations 2007

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2007/483/contents>)

Radioactivity in food controls

The competent authorities are the FSA and FSS.

Core control objectives

The FSA is responsible for policy, legislation and delivery of official controls in Great Britain.

Key controls

The FSA is responsible for monitoring of radioactivity in food and is involved in two projects in collaboration with FSS, Natural Resources Wales and Great Britain's environment agencies.

Related legislation

Council Regulation (Euratom) 2016/52
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2016/52>)

Food irradiation facilities controls

The competent authority is the FSA.

Core control objectives

The FSA and FSS is responsible for policy, legislation and delivery of Official Controls.

Key controls

The FSA has direct responsibility for the inspection and approval of food irradiation facilities in England and Wales.

FSS has responsibility in Scotland, although there are currently no facilities in Scotland.

Related legislation

The Food Irradiation (England) Regulations 2009
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/1584>)

The Food Irradiation (Wales) Regulations 2009
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2009/1795/contents>)

The Food Irradiation (Scotland) Regulations 2009
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2009/261>)

First sale fish

The lead competent authorities are the MMO, Marine Directorate Scotland and the Welsh Government.

Core control objectives

The MMO uses traceability systems to verify that fish are legally caught, accurately recorded and compliant with fisheries regulations as they enter into the food chain. Traceability is required under retained EU law and that are various UK Statutory Instruments that support the enforceability and requirements of data submission.

MMO provides and enforces guidance of what information must accompany fishery products for first sale fish. All operators including fishers, buyers, sellers, exporters, transporters, are responsible for ensuring fishery products are fully traceable except for small direct sales to public.

The MMO is also responsible for enforcing and monitoring the export of wild caught fish from the UK, this includes the control of catch certificates, processing statements, non-manipulation documents as well as validating export data.

Key controls

Undertake enforcement of traceability through inspections of fishing vessels, transportation, merchants and auction sites as well as food processors.

Promote labelling of fishery products under the Common Marketing Standards and Control Regulations, to ensure downstream information exchange for lots of fish placed for sale through the operator chain.

Shared management of Fish Export Service with other devolved governments and Defra, to support the enforcement and monitoring of the export of wild caught fish from the UK. Food traceability requirements feed into the export verification process to ensure full traceability and deter illegal, unreported and unregulated fish from entering the food chain.

Related legislation

Council Regulation EU (1224/2009) Articles 56-58
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/1224/title/V/chapter/I>) (general provisions)

Council Regulation EU (1244/2009) Articles 59-68
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/1224/title/V/chapter/II>) (post-landing

activity requirements)

Council Regulation EU (404/2011) Articles 97-117

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2011/404/title/VI>) (inspections)

Council Regulation EU (1005/2008)

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2008/1005/contents>) (Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) regulations - catch certification)

Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 Section 245 – 261

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/23/part/8/chapter/2>) (enforcement powers – including power to undertake inspections)

The Registration of Fish Buyers and Sellers and Designation of Fish Auction Sites Regulations 2005 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/1605/contents>) (registration and requirements for buyers/sellers of First Sale Fish), there is separate legislation for Scotland

Organic products

Defra is the competent authority for organic production in Great Britain.

Core control objectives

To ensure organic food, feed, seed and other agricultural products are produced, certified, labelled, and traded in line with strict standards that protect consumers and ensure the integrity of the organic production system.

Key controls

Certification requirements - organic operators, for example farmers, processors, importers must be certified by an approved Great Britain control body and undergo regular inspections.

Import controls - imports of organic products must be from a recognised Third Country or certified by a recognised Third Country Control Bodies.

Traceability and labelling - products must be properly labelled in line with the organic regulations, and traceable throughout the production and supply chain.

Monitoring and enforcement – compliance is overseen through inspections, documentation checks, and coordination with organic control bodies and devolved governments.

Enforcement authorities such as local Trading Standards enforce the organic regulations in the marketplace. Enforcement at Great Britain points

of entry is undertaken by PHA officers and specialist officers at airports.

Collaboration - work with Great Britain organic sector, control bodies, and devolved governments to maintain standards and consistent interpretation and application of organic regulations.

Related legislation

Organic food: labelling and advertising rules

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/organic-food-labelling-rules>)

Organic products: approved UK control bodies

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/organic-food-uk-approved-control-bodies>)

Importing organic food, feed and seed to the UK

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-organic-food-to-the-uk>)

Assimilated Council Regulation (EC) 834/2007

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2007/834/contents>)

Assimilated Commission Regulation (EC) 889/2008

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2008/889/contents>)

Assimilated Commission Regulation (EC) 1235/2008

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2008/1235/contents>)

The Organic Products Regulation 2009

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2009/842/contents/made>)

Wine standards controls (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are Defra, FSA, FSS and LAs.

Core control objectives

Defra, FSA and FSS are responsible for policy and legislation. FSA, FSS and LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

FSA and FSS are responsible for the enforcement of wine regulations. This covers all premises and traders within the production and marketing chain, including wholesalers, warehouses and vineyards.

LAs cover retail premises in their geographical area.

Related legislation

Wine Regulations 2011 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/2936/contents>)

The Wine (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2024
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/115/contents/made>)

The Wine (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2024
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2024/83/contents/made>)

The Wine (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2024
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2024/11/contents/made>)

Geographical indications (GIs)

The competent authority is Defra.

Please note that while the Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625 does cover official controls for GIs in the food and spirits sectors, it does not extend to the wine sector, as controls under Regulation 1308/2013 are explicitly excluded under Article 1(4)(a).

Wine-related controls have been included in the overview to provide a complete picture of the verification, controls and enforcement landscape across agri-food, spirits, and wine GIs.

Core control objectives

Ensure food and drink products with a recognised link to a specific region or traditional method are properly protected and verified, both in the United Kingdom and internationally.

Key controls

GIs verification and controls - Defra is the Competent Authority for the recognition and control of food and drink names protected as GIs across the UK. Defra delegates responsibilities to other organisations to deliver the controls:

Agri-food GIs - the UK producer chooses a Control Body to carry out compliance checks, which is either an inspection service with a local authority or a commercial Control Body accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). Someone producing or marketing an agri-food GI is advised by their Control Body on the frequency of periodic inspection. The frequency is based on product type and risk. Three years is a general guide. This is to ensure that producers continue producing the GI legitimately.

Spirits GIs - HMRC is delegated the responsibility for verifying those who produce or market spirit GIs. Once the verification process is completed, production processes will continue to be verified as part of the 2-year cycle of verification, as long as there are no breaches of the regulations or

Undertakings. As regulation owners Defra provide a policy steer to enforcement agents when required.

Wine GIs - the delegated authorities for verifying wine producers are the FSA and FSS. Legislation requires that an inspection is conducted at least once a year after the initial verification.

GI Enforcement - Defra is the Competent Authority responsible for the enforcement of protection for food and drink names protected as Geographical Indications across the UK. Defra delegates responsibilities to other organisations to deliver effective enforcement.

Local Authorities (Trading Standards) have a duty to enforce against misuse of protected names on products retailed in the place. The UK government is responsible for enforcing through customs searches at the border. Enforcement is typically reactive and based on evidence and information received. As regulation owners Defra provide a policy steer to enforcement agents when required.

Collaboration - Defra work with HMRC, FSA, FSS, LAs, control bodies, and devolved governments to maintain standards and consistent interpretation and application of GI regulations

Related legislation

Official controls:

Assimilated Reg 2017/625 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/article/26>)

Assimilated Reg 608/2013 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2013/608/data.pdf>)

Agri-foods GI legislation:

Using a protected geographical food or drink name: UK GI scheme rules - GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/using-a-protected-geographical-food-or-drink-name-in-the-uk-gi-scheme-rules>)

Assimilated Reg 1151/2012 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2012/1151>) (art 36 and 37)

The Quality Schemes (Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs) Regulations 2018 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2018/1275/data.pdf>) (SI 1275/2018)

Spirit drinks GIs legislation:

Protect a geographical spirit drink name - GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protect-a-geographical-spirit-drink-name-in-the-uk>)

Spirit Drinks Verification Scheme - GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/spirit-drinks-verification-scheme>)

Spirit Drinks Regulations 2008 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2008/3206>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/787

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/787/article/38>)

Wines GIs legislation:

Protect a geographical wine name – GOV.UK

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protect-a-geographical-wine-name-in-the-uk>)

The Wine Regulations 2011

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/2936/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 1308/2013

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2013/1308/article/103>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 251/2014

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2014/251/article/23>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/34

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/34/chapter/II/section/7>)

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/33

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/33/contents>)

Veterinary residues surveillance

The competent authority is the VMD.

Core control objectives

Ensure food from animals is free from harmful residues of veterinary medicines, protecting public health and maintaining consumer confidence.

Key controls

Implementation of residue control programme in Great Britain to test for residues of prohibited substances, veterinary medicines and contaminants in domestically produced foodstuffs of animal origin.

Testing of samples in accordance with legislative requirements by designated the National Reference Laboratory (NRL) for veterinary residues, Fera Science Ltd (FERA).

Use of enforcement tools to prevent onward movement of animals either from farm, or from the slaughterhouse house, when food safety risks are identified.

Conducting investigations into causes of all residue violations to establish the causes of non-compliance and mitigate recurrence.

Collecting of suspect/target samples is employed in response to findings of residues.

Related legislation

The Annexes of 1996/23/EC

(https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudr/1996/23/pdfs/eudr_19960023_2013-07-01_en.pdf)

The Animals and Animal Products (Examination for Residues and Maximum Residue Limits) (England and Scotland) Regulations 2015.

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2015/787/contents/made>)

The Animals and Animal Products (Examination for Residues and Maximum Residue Limits) (Wales) Regulations 2019.

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2019/569/made>)

Pesticides monitoring

The competent authority is the HSE.

Core control objectives

To monitor and enforce compliance with pesticide regulations through inspections, coordinated sampling, testing, and reporting to ensure consumer safety, environmental protection, and alignment with Great Britain and international legal standards.

Key controls

Sampling and Monitoring - regular sampling of food for pesticide residues and risk assessments are carried out to ensure safety. Samples are tested for an extensive range of pesticides and reported on a quarterly and yearly basis. Monitor results and ensure compliance with pesticide Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) and adapt sampling plans to take into consideration any issues.

Interventions - enforce compliance with pesticide regulations to ensure food safety and environmental protection. Non-compliance may result in enforcement actions. Enforcement – reactive approach via investigations through complaints or alerts and proactive with a Pesticide Enforcement Officer (PEO) intelligence led risk based approach.

Collaboration - work with other government departments (including Defra, FSA, APHA and VMD), the Great Britain and NI organic sectors, food

associations and devolved governments to maintain standards and consistent interpretation and application of pesticide regulations.

Related legislation

Food and Environment Protection Act 1985

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/48/data.pdf>)

Assimilated Council Regulation (EC) 396/2005

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2005/396/data.pdf>)

Pesticides (Maximum Residue Levels) (England and Wales) Regulations 2008 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2008/2570/data.pdf>)

Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/552/contents>)

Import controls – products of animal origin (POAO) and live animals (Great Britain)

The competent authorities are Defra, the Welsh Government, the Scottish Government, APHA, FSA, FSS, LAs and PHAs.

Core control objectives

Defra, the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government are responsible for policy and legislation. FSA, FSS and LAs are responsible for delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include that:

- the FSA and FSS deliver OCs at slaughterhouses, cutting plants and game handling establishments
- the FSA and FSS develop guidance on POAO food imports for LAs
- LAs deliver OCs at the port and inland checks (physical, documentary, identity checks)
- APHA is responsible for the designation of POAO BCPs

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 178/2002

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2002/178/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 183/2005
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2005/183/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 767/2009
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/767/contents>)

Control area – animal feed sector

This section provides an overview of all areas of biosecurity control in Great Britain, by commodity or subject - with links to relevant online content, including legislation, and a summary of the core objective(s) and control(s) for each commodity or subject.

Animal feed hygiene and standards controls (Scotland)

The competent authority is FSS.

Core control objectives

FSS is responsible for policy, legislation and delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include that:

- the FSS responds to feed incidents, delivering risk-management advice following contamination events
- the FSS deliver official controls and enforcement at feed businesses - in some areas of Scotland, LAs deliver official controls at feed businesses on behalf of FSS under Delegated Service Level Agreement (DSLAs), including farms, and points of entry - covering inspections, sampling, audits, document reviews, and compliance checks
- where required under the DSLA, FSS works with and monitors LAs to ensure compliance with official control requirements for feed hygiene, compositional standards, labelling, traceability, and imports
- the Scottish Government Poultry Unit carry out feed inspections at the same time as egg marketing inspections

Related legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 178/2002
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2002/178/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 183/2005
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2005/183/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 767/2009
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/767/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 1831/2003
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2003/1831/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Animal feed FSS (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/industry-specific-advice/animal-feed>)

Animal feed hygiene and standards controls (England and Wales)

The competent authorities are the FSA and LAs.

Core control objectives

FSA is responsible for policy and legislation. FSA and LAs are responsible for the delivery of official controls.

Key controls

These include that:

- the FSA responds to feed incidents, delivering risk-management advice following contamination events
- the FSA works with LAs to ensure compliance with feed hygiene, compositional standards, labelling, traceability, and imports
- LAs perform checks and enforcement at feed businesses, farms, and points of entry covering inspections, sampling, audits, document reviews, and compliance checks

Related legislation

Feed Law Codes of Practice (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 178/2002
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2002/178/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 183/2005
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2005/183/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 767/2009

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/767/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EC) 1831/2003

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2003/1831/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

Food business organisation inspections

The competent authority is the Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

Core control objectives

To ensure veterinary medicines are used responsibly and that food from treated animals is safe for consumers.

Key controls

These include:

- risk based inspections - VMD inspectors carry out inspections of feed businesses based on risk level to ensure hygiene and safety compliance
- a register of authorised Feed Business Operators - publicly display a register of authorised feed businesses for the manufacture or distribution of medicated intermediate products and feedingstuffs
- auditing of authorised establishments - regular audits of feed businesses to ensure legal compliance
- incident management - manage medicated feed safety incidents, including recalls and traceability
- training and capacity building - all inspectors receive ongoing training to maintain high standards of control delivery
- coordination with other authorities - works with Defra, devolved governments, and other bodies to deliver consistent medicated feed safety controls across Great Britain

Related legislation

The Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013 (as amended)

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/2033/schedule/5>)

Protein in animal feed

The competent authority is APHA.

Core control objectives

Ensure compliance with feed ban regulations, through the implementation of official controls across the feed chain, to prevent the occurrence and spread of TSEs and other notifiable diseases

Key controls

These include:

- a feed ban - the ban prohibits the use of animal protein in feed for ruminant and non-ruminant farmed animals (with certain exceptions)
- an inspection and sampling programme - APHA runs the National Feed Audit (NFA), a risk-based annual programme that inspects and samples feed businesses across the feed chain to ensure compliance with the feed ban
- approval and registration - feed businesses using restricted proteins must be registered or approved with APHA
- separation requirements - APHA monitors for compliance with separation requirements that prevent cross contamination of ruminant feed and farmed non-ruminant feed with prohibited proteins at any stage of the feed chain
- record keeping - feed businesses must maintain detailed records of feed ingredients and production and use of restricted proteins
- enforcement - APHA investigates non-compliance, restricts affected premises and operations, and oversees destruction of contaminated feed and exposed animals - LAs may prosecute offenders
- co-ordination with other authorities - APHA works closely with LAs on feed ban enforcement across Great Britain - APHA also works with Defra and devolved governments to deliver consistent feed controls across Great Britain

Related legislation

Guidance note on feed controls in the TSE Regulations

(<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f58a5ded3bf7f7239aa1324/tse-feed-controls.pdf>)

Animal feed testing - APHA Scientific

(<https://www.aphascientific.com/services/laboratory-testing/animal-feed-testing/#:~:text=APHA%20Scientific%20offers%20a%20comprehensive,for%20Defra%27s%20National%20Feed%20Audit.>)

Regulation (EC) 999/2001 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2001/999/contents>)

Regulation (EC) 1069/2009

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/1069/contents>)

Control area - plants, plant products, other objects, products of animal origin, live animals

This section provides an overview of Border control posts and control points in Great Britain with links to relevant online content, including legislation, and a summary of the core objective(s) and control(s).

Border control posts and control points

The competent authority in England and Wales is APHA, Quality Services.

The competent authority in Scotland is the Scottish Government, except for wood and wood products, which is the responsibility of the Forestry Commission.

Core control objectives

Note that for plant health, official controls are only undertaken on regulated plants, plant products, other objects, wood and wood products.

Ensure competent authorities are undertaking official controls in compliance with (EU) 2017/625, in infrastructure that meets minimum requirements for designated border control posts and control points, to ensure biosecurity is maintained.

Key controls

Note that these apply to facilities in England, Wales and Scotland, but excludes procedures which are audited as part of the APHA quality management system. These include:

- an annual audit - facilities designated for plants, plant products, other objects, products of animal origin and live animals will be subject to audits, covering facilities and procedures - findings will be added to the agency's electronic quality management system to enable trends to be identified (a)
- monitoring of verification checks - undertaken by local competent authorities, escalating risks identified through the appropriate APHA and central competent authority (CCA) governance channels (a)
- non-conformance monitoring - to ensure the local competent authorities are taking appropriate measures to address non-conformance, in suitable

timeframes (a)

- escalation of critical non-conformance - where there is risk to human health, plant health, animal health or animal welfare - this may result in the suspension and withdrawal of facilities designation by the CCA (a)
- assurance activity associated to the designation of new facilities - including modifications, expansions, changes to the scope of categories designated for, new border control posts, inspection centres and control points (a)

(a) The Scottish Government has its own built-in procedures to capture these.

Working in co-ordination with the FC, FSA, FSS and Scottish Government to ensure a consistent approach.

Related legislation

Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/article/6>) – audits of the competent authorities

Control area – animal health sector

This section provides an overview of all areas of biosecurity control in Great Britain, by commodity or subject - with links to relevant online content, including legislation, and a summary of the core objective(s) and control(s) for each commodity or subject.

Exotic diseases

The competent authority is APHA.

Core control objectives

Prevent, detect, and respond rapidly in order to contain outbreaks of animal diseases, protecting public health, animal welfare, the environment, and the economy.

Key controls

In England, as part of Defra's emergency preparedness for exotic notifiable diseases of animals, APHA and Defra prepare and maintain the Defra Contingency Plan for Exotic Notifiable Diseases of Animals

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/contingency-plan-for-exotic-notifiable-diseases-of-animals-in-england>). Scotland

(<https://www.gov.scot/publications/exotic-animal-disease-contingency-framework-plan-august-2022/>) and Wales (<https://www.gov.wales/exotic-animal-diseases-contingency-plan>) have complementary plans.

Related legislation

Animal Health Act 1981 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/22/section/88>) (or an Order made under that act)

Animal by-products (ABP)

The competent authorities are Defra, APHA, FSS, FSA, the Welsh Government, the Scottish Government and LAs.

Core control objectives

Controls are risk-based and aligned with UK and retained EU legislation to prevent disease spread and safeguard the environment.

FSA - ensure that in food hygiene establishments, ABPs are safely handled, processed, and disposed of to protect public and animal health, prevent disease spread, and support environmental safety.

APHA – ensure that in other establishments ABPs are safely handled, processed, and disposed of to protect public and animal health, prevent disease spread, and support environmental safety.

Scottish and Welsh Government - ensure ABPs are managed in a way that protects public and animal health, supports biosecurity, and complies with retained EU legislation.

Key controls

ABPs are classified into three risk-based categories:

- category 1: High risk (for example diseased animals)
- category 2: High risk (for example manure)
- category 3: Low risk (for example parts from healthy animals)

APHA (operational) controls are:

- registration and approval - businesses handling ABPs must be registered or approved depending on their activities (for example collection, processing, disposal)
- collection, transport, and identification - ABPs must be properly identified, transported safely, and documented to ensure traceability and prevent contamination

- disposal and use controls - ABPs must be disposed of or used in approved ways (for example rendering, composting, incineration) - feeding catering waste to livestock is prohibited
- import controls - imports of ABPs require health certificates or import authorisations and must enter through designated UK border control posts (BCPs)

FSA and FSS (operational) controls are:

- registration and approval - businesses handling ABPs must be registered or approved depending on their activities (for example collection, processing, disposal)
- collection, transport, and identification - ABPs must be properly identified, transported safely, and documented to ensure traceability and prevent contamination
- disposal and use controls - ABPs must be disposed of or used in approved ways (for example rendering, composting, incineration) - feeding catering waste to livestock is prohibited
- enforcement and penalties - non-compliance in relation to marking ABP can result in enforcement actions, including fines and restrictions on operations

Defra, Scottish and Welsh Governments (policy) controls are:

- registration and approval - businesses handling ABPs must be registered or approved depending on their activities, for example collection, processing and disposal
- collection, transport, and identification - ABPs must be properly identified, transported safely, and documented to ensure traceability and prevent contamination
- disposal and use controls - ABPs must be disposed of or used in approved ways (for example rendering, composting, incineration) - feeding catering waste to livestock is prohibited
- import controls - imports of ABPs require health certificates or import authorisations and must enter through designated UK border control posts (BCPs)
- enforcement and penalties - non-compliance in relation to food hygiene establishments (except in relation to the marking of ABP) can result in enforcement actions, including fines and restrictions on operations. Enforcement in other ABP establishments is undertaken by LAs

Related legislation

Controls on animal by-products - GOV.UK

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/controls-on-animal-by-products>)

Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/1069/contents>)

Commission Regulation (EU) 142/2011

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2011/142/contents>)

The Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/2952/contents>)

The Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/307/contents/made>)

The Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Wales) Regulations 2014

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/517/contents>)

The Animal By-Products (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland)

Regulations 2015 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2015/393/contents/made>)

Bovine tuberculosis

In England, Defra is the competent authority. APHA has operational responsibility.

In Wales, the competent authority is the Welsh Government.

In Scotland, the competent authority is the Scottish Government.

Core control objectives

In England and Wales - support surveillance, diagnosis, and eradication of bTB through science-led approaches and coordinated policy implementation. Target in England for officially TB Free status by 2038. Target in Wales to be officially TB free by 2041.

In Scotland – protect the country's official tuberculosis free (OTF) status attained in 2009 by preventing disease spread through strict testing, movement controls, and biosecurity.

Key controls

Mandatory TB controls are based on the regular testing of cattle herds, slaughter of positive animals and the imposition of movement restrictions following a non-negative test result. Defra, APHA and the Welsh Government's controls are:

- risk based inspections – countries split into TB risk areas and routine tuberculin skin testing of cattle herds at intervals determined by risk

- additional enhanced targeted surveillance of certain herds or in specific problem areas
- slaughterhouse surveillance
- mandatory pre and post-movement skin testing of cattle moved between certain herds
- movement restrictions on infected herds and enhanced TB testing regimens to regain OTF status
- targeted TB testing of certain non-bovine farmed species
- incident (TB herd breakdown) management and investigation
- accreditation, training and quality control of TB testers
- epidemiological analysis at local, regional and national levels
- import controls
- training and capacity building
- coordination with other authorities such as FSA (meat inspection) and LAs (enforcement)
- registration of cattle herds and tracings of movements
- monitoring and regular publication of official accredited statistics on TB in cattle in GB and annual TB epidemiology reports
- collaboration with the industry, farmers, private vets, auctioneers, academics.
- sampling and analysis. Different TB tests in cattle.
- record keeping
- TB surveillance in wildlife reservoirs and targeted badger TB vaccination projects

Mandatory TB controls in Scotland are based on routine testing of cattle herds (unless identified as low risk), slaughter of positive animals and restrictions on movement following a non-negative test result. Details of controls in Scotland are:

- exempt herds that comply with at least one of the low risk criteria as outlined at Testing and surveillance - Bovine TB - gov.scot (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/bovine-tb/pages/testing-surveillance/>).
- slaughterhouse surveillance
- pre-movement testing with a clear test within 30 days prior to the movement of animals from high incidence areas, or which have at any point lived in a high incidence area.
- post-movement testing for cattle moving to Scotland from a high incidence area 60-120 days after their arrival.

- gamma interferon blood tests to improve the detection of infected animals.
- epidemiological analysis
- registration of cattle herds and movements

Related legislation

The Tuberculosis in Animals (England) Order 2021 SI 2021/1001 as amended by SI 2023/867 and SI 2025/748
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2021/1001>

The Tuberculosis (Scotland) Order 2023
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2023/93/contents/made>

Animal Health Act 1981 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/22>)

The Cattle Compensation (England) Order 2019 SI 2019/945
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/945/contents>

The Veterinary Surgery (Testing for Tuberculosis in Bovines) Order 2005 SI 2005/2015 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/2015>)

Bovine TB – gov.scot (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/bovine-tb/>)

Bovine tuberculosis (bovine TB) - GOV.UK
<https://www.gov.uk/environment/bovine-tuberculosis>

The Tuberculosis (Wales) Order 2010 as amended
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2023/1423/contents/made>

Transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE)

Defra is the competent authority in England. APHA (APHA) has operational responsibility.

In Wales, the competent authority is the Welsh Government.

In Scotland, the competent authority is the Scottish Government.

Core control objectives

Defra - protect public and animal health by ensuring early detection, effective control, and eradication of diseases such as BSE and scrapie, while fulfilling statutory obligations and supporting safe trade and food production.

APHA - detect, monitor, and control TSE including BSE and scrapie, through active and passive surveillance, diagnostics, and the enforcement of regulatory control measures.

Key controls

BSE (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bse>), scrapie (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/scrapie>) and chronic wasting disease (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/chronic-wasting-disease>) are notifiable diseases which must be immediately reported on suspicion.

Surveillance key controls are:

- BSE and scrapie are continually monitored through active and passive surveillance programmes by delivery partners APHA and FSA
- all animals suspected of being infected with BSE or scrapie are killed and tested for the disease and their carcasses are destroyed and removed from the food chain as category 1 ABP
- for BSE and scrapie, SRM must be removed when an animal is slaughtered - it must be disposed of by incineration or by rendering as category one animal by product

Related legislation

Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 laying down rules for the prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2001/999/body>)

The Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (Scotland) Regulations 2010
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2010/177/contents/made>)

The Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (England) Regulations 2018
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/731>) [as amended]

The Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (Wales) Regulations 2018
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2018/968/contents/made>)

Artificial breeding controls

The competent authority is APHA.

Core control objectives

Ensure that artificial breeding practices, for example semen, ova, and embryo collection and use, are carried out safely and in compliance with animal health legislation. To prevent the spread of disease and supporting genetic improvement in livestock.

Key controls

These include:

- approval, licensing and regular inspection of germplasm premises
- approval, licensing and regular inspection of embryo teams
- approval of donor animals prior to collection being permitted

Non-compliances or disease outbreaks dealt with by written warnings, suspension or revocation of approval.

Related legislation

Domestic legislation and legislation applicable for internal movements:

Directive 88/407 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudr/1988/407/contents>)

Directive 89/556 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudr/1989/556/contents>)

Directive 90/429 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudr/1990/429/contents>)

Directive 92/65 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudr/1992/65/contents>)

The Artificial Insemination of Pigs Regulations 1992
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1992/3161>)

The Bovine Embryo (Collection, Production and Transfer) Regulations 1995
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1995/2478/contents>)

The Bovine Semen (England) Regulations 2007
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/1319/contents>)

Legislation applicable for the purposes of imports into Great Britain:

The Official Controls Regulations 2017/625
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)

The Trade in Animals and Related Products (Amendment and Legislative Functions) Regulation 2022
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2022/1322/regulation/4/made>)

Legislation applicable for the purposes of exports to EU:

Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council
(<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02016R0429->

Commission delegated regulation (EU) 2020/692 (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02020R0692-20230207&qid=1643712502892>)

Sheep and goat identification and tracing

The competent authority is Defra.

Core control objectives

Ensure accurate, electronic traceability of sheep and goats to prevent and contain disease outbreaks, support biosecurity, and comply with domestic and retained EU legislation.

Key controls

Assimilated Commission Regulation (EC) No 1505/2006 requires at least 3 per cent of UK holdings comprising at least 5 per cent of animals must be inspected each year by the competent authority.

Each authority's inspections check whether keepers have identified and recorded their sheep and goats in accordance with Articles 2 to 5 of assimilated Council Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/21/contents>)).

These inspections ensure that keepers in Great Britain:

- identify all animals correctly with an approved means of identification, by a specified age and before they leave the holding of birth
- keep an up-to-date holding register to record information on the identification of all sheep/goats, all movements on and off the holding, animal birth, animal deaths and an annual inventory figure. Records must be kept for a minimum of three years
- complete movement documents for all moves off the holding and retain a copy of the movement document for all moves onto the holding, for a minimum of three years
- report movements to the competent authorities' central movements databases

Related legislation

Assimilated Commission Regulation (EC) 1505/2006 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2006/1505/introduction>)

Cattle identification and registration

For England the competent authority is Defra.

For Scotland the competent authority are the Scottish Ministers.

For Wales, the competent authority are the Welsh Ministers.

Core control objectives

Ensure accurate, traceability of cattle to improve disease prevention, control, eradication, and the protection of public health supporting biosecurity measures, and trade.

Key controls in England

The Cattle Identification Regulations 2007 underpinned by retained EU Directive 1760/2000 and other retained EU legislation, set out requirements for cattle keepers to identify their beasts by ear tag and cattle passport within set time limits and set out recording and movement requirement.

On farm holding registers of beasts must be maintained and movements must be reported to the central database. The regulations also set out offences that keepers must avoid committing.

On behalf of Defra, RPA is responsible for the cattle identification statutory inspection regime in England. RPA is the Competent Control Authority for the cross-compliance rules covering public health, animal health and plant health. It carries out statutory cross compliance inspections in these areas. The overall policy and financial framework within which RPA operates is determined by the Secretary of State for Defra. The Chief Executive is responsible for the day-to-day management of RPA supported by senior managers.

The RPA carries out standalone statutory inspections under the bovine identification and movement orders to ensure farmers and traders maintain appropriate records and conform to the animal identification and movement requirements.

Inspectors check compliance by undertaking physical inspection and examination of the livestock, records and supporting documentation to ensure a comprehensive traceability system is in place and verify in the case of cattle the validity of the Cattle Tracing System (CTS).

Inspectors have powers to seize or amend cattle passports, take copies of records, place whole herd or individual restrictions on non-compliant animals and if necessary, serve a notice to slaughter unidentified animals.

Key controls in Scotland

The Cattle Identification (Scotland) Regulations 2007, underpinned by EU Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 (assimilated law) and other EU legislation (assimilated law), set out requirements for cattle keepers to identify their cattle by ear tag and cattle passport within set time limits and set out recording and movement requirement.

On farm holding registers of cattle must be maintained and all birth, movement and death data must be reported to the ScotEID multispecies database. This data is also shared with the CTS who at this time hold an overall GB dataset of statutory cattle identification information. The regulations also set out offences that keepers must avoid committing.

On behalf of Scottish Ministers, Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division (SGRPID) are responsible for the cattle identification statutory inspection regime in Scotland. SGRPID are the Competent Control Authority for the cross-compliance rules covering public health, animal health and plant health. They carry out statutory cross compliance inspections in these areas. The overall policy and financial framework within which SGRPID operates is determined by the Scottish Ministers.

SGRPID carry out standalone statutory inspections under the applicable EU legislation (assimilated law) to ensure keepers maintain appropriate records and conform to the animal identification and registration requirements.

Inspectors check compliance by undertaking physical inspection and examination of the livestock, records and supporting documentation to ensure a comprehensive traceability system is in place and verify in the case of cattle the validity of the ScotEID multispecies database.

Inspectors have powers to seize or amend cattle passports, take copies of records, place whole herd or individual restrictions on non-compliant animals and if necessary, serve a notice to slaughter unidentified animals.

Key controls in Wales

The Cattle Identification (Wales) Regulations 2007, as amended, is underpinned by retained EU Directive 1760/2000 and other retained EU legislation, and sets out requirements for cattle keepers to identify their cattle by ear tag and cattle passport within set time limits and set out recording and movement requirement.

On farm holding registers of cattle must be maintained and births, movements and deaths must be reported to the central database. The regulations also set out offences that keepers must avoid committing.

On behalf of Welsh Ministers, the Rural Inspectorate Wales (RIW) is responsible for the cattle identification statutory inspection regime in Wales. RIW is the Competent Control Authority for the cross-compliance rules

covering public health, animal health and plant health. It carries out statutory cross compliance inspections in these areas. The overall policy and financial framework within which Rural Payments Wales (RPW) operates is determined by the Welsh Ministers.

The RIW carries out standalone statutory inspections under the bovine identification and movement orders to ensure keepers and operators maintain appropriate records and conform to the bovine identification and movement requirements.

Inspectors check compliance by undertaking physical inspection and examination of the livestock, records and supporting documentation to ensure a comprehensive traceability system is in place and verify in the case of cattle the validity of the CTS.

Related legislation

The Cattle Identification Regulations 2007

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/529/contents>)

Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 of the European Parliament

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2000/1760/contents>)

Commission Regulation (EC) No 911/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/911/contents>)

Commission Regulation (EC) No 1082/2003

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2003/1082/contents>)

Commission Regulation (EC) No 494/98

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/1998/494>)

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/949

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/949/contents>)

Commission Regulation (EC) No 644/2005

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2005/644/contents>)

Commission Regulation (EC) No 653/2004

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2004/653/adopted>)

The Cattle Identification (Scotland) Regulations 2007

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2007/174/contents/made>)

The Cattle Identification (Wales) Regulations 2007

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2007/842/contents>)

The Cattle Identification (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2013/821/contents/made>)

Zoonoses

The competent authorities are Defra, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government.

Core control objectives

Defra (in England), the Welsh Government (in Wales) and the Scottish Government (in Scotland) prevent and manage specific diseases in specific animal species (and management systems) that can pass between animals and humans through surveillance, contingency planning, biosecurity and public guidance.

Key controls

Salmonella National Control Programmes (NCPs) include:

- surveillance through sampling and testing of poultry flocks (chickens and turkeys) at key production stages for each poultry sector
- risk-based sampling and testing when required
- incident management, including on-farm controls, depopulation and disposal when required for salmonella serovars regulated under this legislation
- biosecurity advice following incidents
- approval, monitoring and auditing of designated laboratories undertaking testing for NCPs (and Poultry Health Scheme)
- production of guidance for industry
- liaison with other government agencies for public health, animal health, food safety or environmental safety

Control of other zoonoses (statutory and non-statutory) include that:

- Defra maintains detailed contingency plans for both endemic and exotic zoonotic diseases
- the contingency plan for managing certain animal related endemic zoonotic disease incidents in England
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/contingency-plan-for-managing-certain-animal-related-endemic-zoonotic-disease-incidents/contingency-plan-for-managing-certain-animal-related-endemic-zoonotic-disease-incidents-in-england>),

outlines how Defra responds to endemic zoonotic disease incidents in England

- plans are reviewed every 2 years or after significant incidents to incorporate lessons learned
- guidance is available for farms, veterinary professionals, and the public on zoonotic risks

Related legislation

Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2003/2160/contents>)

Commission Regulation (EU) No 200/2010 - implements Reg 2160/2003 - Sets Prevalence target in chicken breeders (and references appeals process for chicken/turkey breeders).

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2010/200>)

Commission Regulation (EU) No 517/2011 - implements Reg 2160/2003 - Sets Prevalence target in chicken layers

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2011/517>)

Commission Regulation (EU) No 200/2012 - Implements Reg 2160/2003 - Sets Prevalence target in chicken broilers

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2012/200>)

Commission Regulation (EU) No 1190/2012 - Sets Prevalence target in turkey fatteners/breeders. (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2012/1190>)

The Control of Salmonella in Poultry (Wales) Order 2008

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2008/524/contents/made>)

The Control of Salmonella in Broiler Flocks (Wales) Order 2009

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2009/441/contents/made>)

The Control of Salmonella in Turkey Flocks (Wales) Order 2010

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2010/65/body/made>)

The Control of Salmonella in Turkey Flocks (Scotland) Order 2009

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2009/417/contents>)

The Control of Salmonella in Poultry (Breeding, Laying and Broiler Flocks) (Scotland) Order 2009 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2009/229/contents>)

Border controls – animals and animal products, germinal products, products of animal origin (POAO)

intended for human consumption and animal by-products (ABP) not intended for human consumption

The competent authority is Defra.

Core control objectives

Ensure imported animal and animal products meet Great Britain biosecurity and public health standards, preventing the introduction of animal diseases and protecting food safety through robust, risk-based checks at designated border control posts or in land.

Key controls

These include that:

- imported animals and animal products must come from a country or region approved to export that commodity to Great Britain
- germinal products, POAOs, and ABPs must come from an approved establishment (certain exceptions to this requirement apply in the case of ABPs - for example those from educational institutions)
- POAOs must come from a country with an approved residue control plan (public health)

For countries to be approved to export to Great Britain particular account is taken, amongst other things, of:

- its disease status and the health status of livestock and other domestic animals and wildlife
- its rules on prevention and control of diseases, including its rules on its imports from other countries
- the organisation of the competent veterinary authorities and inspection services

Documentary requirement key controls are that:

- live animals and germinal products are categorised under the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM) as 'high risk'
- they must be accompanied by a health certificate signed by an OV in the exporting country

POAOs and ABPs are categorised under BTOM as medium or low risk.

Medium risk POAOs and ABPs must be:

- accompanied by a health certificate
- signed by an OV in the exporting country

Some medium risk ABPs might require an importer's declaration.

Low risk POAOs and ABPs:

- do not need a health certificate
- should be accompanied by a commercial document from the supplier

Some low risk ABPs might require an importer's declaration.

Import controls are consignments of animals and animal products categorised under BTOM as high, medium or low risk must:

- be notified to the authorities before arrival
- enter Great Britain through a point of entry with a BCP (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-border-control-posts-animal-and-animal-product-imports>) that is designated for that type of commodity

There are two sections for BTOM categorisation:

- EU (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/risk-categories-for-animal-and-animal-product-imports-to-great-britain>)
- non-EU (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/risk-categories-for-animal-and-animal-product-imports-from-non-eu-countries-to-great-britain>) countries

Some verified low risk commodities may proceed to destination and not have to enter Great Britain via a BCP.

Imported consignments of animals and animal products are subjected to documentary, identity and physical checks:

- documentary check – to ensure compliance with relevant Great Britain rules
- identity check – to verify that the consignment is as described in the certificate/document
- physical check – to verify compliance, for example in relation to fitness to travel and clinical examination (animals) and transport and temperature requirements and may include sensory and laboratory tests (products)

Some animal products, for example certain composite products (products intended for human consumption that contain both processed POAO and products of plant origin) are exempt from checks at the border but must be accompanied by a commercial document.

Licences and authorisations key controls include that:

- where there are no harmonised import conditions for specific commodities, Great Britain legislation allows Defra and the FSA to issue

an import authorisation to permit imports provided they comply with the conditions in the authorisation - imports would only be permitted using the basic principles referred to earlier

- a licence or authorisation may also be necessary where there are no regulatory requirements for a commodity/consignment to be accompanied by an Export Health Certificate (EHC) (for example research and diagnostic samples, trade samples and display items)

In these cases, the licence or authorisation sets out the conditions that must be met to import the commodity into Great Britain. There are different types of import licences/authorisations.

General licences/authorisations:

- can be used freely by importers if they comply with the conditions
- do not need an application form

Specific licences/authorisations are required when no appropriate general licence/authorisation exists - the importer must submit an application to APHA. These will be:

- assessed by senior APHA veterinary inspectors and/or Defra/FSA policy officials as appropriate
- issued for a defined period and imports can take place provided that conditions controlling animal and public health risks are met

Disease outbreaks

In the event of a disease outbreak in a third country, an assessment is made of the risk of importing animals and animal products from that country. This will take into account the disease situation in the country, the list of commodities that represent a transmission risk for the disease concerned, which of these commodities the affected country is approved to import into Great Britain, any existing risk mitigations (for example disease freedom requirements or necessary risk-mitigating treatments in import conditions and/or relevant certificates), and whether the trading partner has any establishments approved to export affected commodities to Great Britain.

If any action needs to be taken, Defra officials work with officials in the devolved governments to put in place relevant safeguard measures to ban or restrict imports of relevant commodities into Great Britain. These restrictions can be implemented through administrative amendment to approved country lists (which set out country-specific import approvals for imports of specific commodities), emergency safeguard declarations published under regulation 29(1) of the Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011 (and equivalent legislation in Scotland and Wales), or secondary legislation.

Border control posts (BCP)

Official controls on imports of animal products, high-risk food not of animal origin, hay and straw, and certain plastic kitchenware are conducted by PHA (England and Wales) and LAs (Scotland) where they act as the local competent authority. PHAs may be independent bodies or form part of a local authority function. The operation of the BCP is distinct from the control function. The BCP infrastructure may be owned and operated by a commercial body or in some cases a local authority.

Related legislation

Rabies (Importation of Dogs, Cats and Other Mammals) Order 1974 (RIO)
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/1974/2211>)

Assimilated Decision 2000/572

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudn/2000/572/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for meat preparations)

Assimilated Decision 2006/168

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudn/2006/168/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for bovine embryos)

Assimilated Decision 2007/275

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudn/2007/275/contents>) (composite products)

Assimilated Decision 2007/777

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudn/2007/777/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for meat products)

Assimilated Regulation 798/2008

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2008/798/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for live poultry and poultry products)

Assimilated Regulation 119/2009

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/119/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for meat of rabbits, leporidae and wild game)

Assimilated Regulation 1069/2009

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/1069>) (animal by-products control regulation)

Assimilated Regulation 206/2010

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2010/206/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for certain live animals and fresh meat)

Assimilated Regulation 2010/605

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2010/605/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for dairy products)

Assimilated Regulation 142/2011

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2011/142/contents>) (import conditions, reference to lists of third countries and certification requirements for animal by-products)

Assimilated Decision 2010/472

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudn/2010/472/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for ovine and caprine semen and embryos)

Assimilated Decision 2011/630

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudn/2011/630/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for bovine semen)

The Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1197/contents>)

Assimilated Regulation 28/2012

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2012/28/contents>) (certification requirements for composite products)

Assimilated Decision 2012/137

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudn/2012/137/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for porcine semen)

Assimilated Regulation 139/2013

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2013/139/contents>) (health conditions, approved third countries and certification requirements for captive birds)

Assimilated Regulation 577/2013 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2013/577>) (documentation and lists of countries for imports of dogs, cats and ferret)

Assimilated Regulation 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>) (Official Controls Regulations – OCR) (detailed rules during and after documentary, identity and physical checks)

Assimilated Regulation 2018/659

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2018/659/contents>) (third country lists and certification requirements for equine animals and their germinal products)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/626

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/626/contents>) (lists of third countries/regions approved to export to Great Britain)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/628

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/628/contents>) (certification requirements for certain products of animal origin)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/1013

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/1013/contents>) (prior notification)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/1602

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/1602/contents>) (Common Health Entry Document – CHED)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/1666

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/1666/contents>) (monitoring of consignments from the BCP to destination)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/2007

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/2007/contents>) (list of animals and goods subject to checks at the border)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/2074

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/2074/contents>) (animals and goods originating from and returning to Great Britain following rejection by a third country)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/2122

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/2122/contents>) (goods exempt from checks at the border)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/2124

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/2124/contents>) (animals and goods in transit, transhipment and onward transportation)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/2128

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/2128/contents>) (goods delivered to vessels leaving Great Britain territory intended for ships supplies or NATO bases)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/2129

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/2129/contents>) (Frequency rate for identity and physical checks)

Assimilated Regulation 2019/2130

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/2130/contents>)

The Trade in Animals and Related Products (Amendment and Legislative Functions) Regulations 2022

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2022/1322/contents>)

Bee health

The competent authorities are Defra, the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government.

Core control objectives

In England and Wales - working together via a joint bee health plan to improve honey bee health and husbandry in England and Wales.

In Scotland - working in partnership to achieve a healthy and sustainable population of honeybees in Scotland.

Key controls

In England and Wales, key controls are:

- risk-based inspections - the APHA's National Bee Unit carry out inspections of apiaries to check for signs of notifiable pests and diseases
- incident management - manage bee health incidents, including outbreaks of notifiable pests and diseases of bees
- sampling and analysis of colonies for the presence of pests and disease, in conjunction with FERA
- import controls - undertake risk-based checks of imported bees to ensure they meet the UK import standards which require that the bees originate in an approved third country and have a health certificate
- training and capacity building - ongoing training for beekeepers to maintain high standards of bee husbandry, biosecurity and recognition of pests and disease
- coordination with other authorities and stakeholders to provide consistent quality advice on bee health matters.

In Scotland, the Honey Bee Health Strategy 2022 to 2032 Implementation plan (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/honey-bee-health-strategy-2022-2032/pages/4/>), provides information on specific actions based on five pillars.

Related legislation

1980 The Bees Act (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/12/contents>)

The Bee Diseases and Pests Control (England) Order 2006
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/342/contents/made>)

The Bee Diseases and Pests Control (Wales) Order 2006
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2006/1710/contents/made>)

The Bee Diseases and Pests Control (England) (Amendment) Order 2021
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/420/made>)

The Bee Diseases and Pests Control (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2021
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2021/351/made>)

Honey Bee Health Strategy 2022-2032

(<https://www.gov.scot/publications/honey-bee-health-strategy-2022-2032/>)

(Scotland)

Honey Bee Health Implementation Plan

(<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-honey-bee-health-strategy-implementation-plan/>) (Scotland)

Healthy Bees Plan 2030

(https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/assets/PDFs/4_Science_and_engagement/HBP_2030/HBP2030_English_language_version.pdf) (Scotland)

Aquatic animal health

In England and Wales the competent authority is Cefas. The Scottish Government's Marine Directorate is the competent authority in Scotland.

Core control objectives

Cefas - prevent, detect, and control serious (listed) infectious aquatic animal diseases and facilitate safe trade in live fish and shellfish through import checks, inspections and export certification

Scottish Government - ensure the prevention, detection and control of serious aquatic animal diseases in fish and shellfish within Scotland. Achieved through implementing surveillance programmes, ensuring adequate biosecurity, and implementing regulation in relation to aquatic animals' health.

Key controls

Cefas key controls are:

- authorisation and registration of aquaculture businesses, shellfish purification centres, importers, dealers, transporters and recreational fisheries
- inspection and surveillance through risk-based programmes, routine monitoring, and site visits to check compliance with authorisation and biosecurity requirements
- disease control and investigation, including rapid response to listed and emerging diseases, unexplained mortalities, and implementation of mitigation and eradication measures
- live aquatic animal import and export controls, covering checks, certification, sampling and inspections of live aquatic animals to safeguard against disease introduction and spread

- enforcement and collaboration, using intelligence-led approaches to address non-compliance and working closely with partner agencies to strengthen biosecurity

Scottish Government controls include:

- authorisation and registration – aquaculture production businesses and certain processing establishments are required to be authorised and following specified authorisation conditions, lower risk and non-commercial installations, as well as specialist transporters are required to be registered
- aquatic animal health surveillance – risk based, targeted and passive surveillance initiatives aimed at preventing the introduction and spread of listed and emerging diseases
- trade control measures - controls over imports and exports to reduce the risk of disease spread through trade ensuring appropriate health attestations and health certification is met
- movement restrictions – statutory restrictions placed on suspicion and confirmation of listed or emerging diseases/pathogens to limit their spread and impact
- biosecurity – encouraging good biosecurity practice and the implementation of biosecurity measures plans to help prevent the introduction and spread of disease

Related legislation

The Aquatic Animal Health (England and Wales) Regulations 2009
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2009/463/contents>)

The Aquatic Animal Health (Scotland) Regulations 2009
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2009/85/contents/made>)

Control area – animal welfare sector

This section provides an overview of all areas of animal welfare in Great Britain, by species or subject - with links to relevant online content, including legislation, and a summary of the core objective(s) and control(s) for each species or subject.

On-farm animal welfare

The competent authorities are Defra, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government. APHA has operational responsibility.

Core control objectives

To ensure farm animals are kept in conditions that meet legal welfare requirements, and that any disclosed or reported potential breaches are quickly investigated and addressed to protect animal health and welfare.

This includes ensuring meat chickens and breeding chickens are raised in conditions that meet legal welfare requirements, safeguarding their health and well-being while supporting compliance and enforcement.

And this also includes ensuring gamebirds bred and reared for sporting purposes are treated humanely and in accordance with animal welfare legislation, up to the point of their release into the wild.

Key controls

These include:

- on-farm animal welfare inspections to assess compliance with legislation and the codes of practice carried out by APHA and LAs, for example stocking density limits - maximum stocking density is regulated to prevent overcrowding
- monitoring and data collection - data from slaughterhouses and inspections used to identify farms with potential welfare issues
- training and competence – for all farmed species, persons responsible for a farmed animals must be trained or experienced in animal welfare and husbandry and be competent and aware of the animals' needs in accordance with the legislative requirements
- enforcement - working with local authority enforcement partners to support enforcement action and prosecution of those involved in breaches of the on-farm animal welfare legislation - actions include but are not limited to formal notices or prosecution and compliance with the code can be used in legal proceedings to establish liability

Related legislation

Animal Welfare Act 2006 (England and Wales)

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/45/contents>)

Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2006/11/contents>)

The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/2078/contents>)

The Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2007/3070/contents>)

Fish welfare

In England and Wales, Defra is the competent authority. APHA has operational responsibility.

Where policy is applicable to Scotland, the competent authority is the Scottish Government Agricultural and Rural Economy Directorate.

Core control objectives

APHA are responsible for ensuring that farming practices meet regulatory standards and that appropriate investigations are conducted when required.

Scottish Government - through the Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate ensures appropriate legislation, guidance and standards exist, where they are relevant to Scotland.

Key controls

These include:

- APHA carrying out welfare inspections to assess compliance with legislation
- maintaining, reviewing and developing appropriate policy through legislation, codes of practice and guidance in Scotland as appropriate to the operation of the farmed fish sector within Scotland

Related legislation

Animal Welfare Act 2006 (England and Wales)
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/45/contents>)

Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2006/11/contents>)

Animal welfare during transport

The competent authorities are Defra, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government, APHA and LAs.

Defra (in England), the Welsh Government (in Wales) and the Scottish Government (in Scotland) have policy responsibility for animal welfare laws in England, Wales and Scotland for animals during transport. APHA acts as

the national regulator for the welfare of animals in transport and is able to take regulatory action following non-compliance. This can include suspension or revocation of transporter authorisations. The local authority, which holds primary responsibility for the enforcement of the welfare in transport legislation, will consider any appropriate enforcement action. APHA works closely with its local authority enforcement partners to share information, support enforcement action and prosecution of those involved in breaches of the welfare in transport legislation.

Core control objectives

To ensure animals are transported in conditions that meet legal welfare requirements, and that any potential breaches are quickly investigated and addressed to protect animal welfare.

Key controls

These include:

- providing effective authorisation services for animal transporters by reviewing and approving applications
- reviewing and approving journey logs including associated controls in relation to the live export ban as set out in Article 21(2)(b)(ii) of the assimilated version of the OCR (which would include the associated evidence provision requirement in Annex 2, paragraph 4(e)(iii) of assimilated Regulation 1/2005) - audit returned journey logs for compliance
- carrying out supervised loadings and port mid-journey inspections on an agreed risk basis
- taking regulatory action as necessary against animal transporters who breach the regulations, including provision of advice and guidance, suspending or revoking authorisations
- working with local authority enforcement partners to support enforcement action and prosecution of those involved in breaches of the welfare in transport legislation

Related legislation

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2005/1/contents>)

The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2006/3260/contents>)

The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/cy/wsi/2007/1047/contents>)

Welfare of animals at the time of killing (WATOK)

The competent authorities are Defra, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government, APHA, FSA and FSS.

Defra (in England), the Welsh government (in Wales) and the Scottish government (in Scotland) have policy responsibility for animal welfare laws in England, Wales and Scotland for animals destined for slaughter or that need to be killed elsewhere than in a slaughterhouse.

FSA, FSS and APHA are responsible for the delivery of official controls.

Core control objectives

To ensure animals are slaughtered or killed in conditions that meet legal welfare requirements, and that any potential breaches are quickly investigated and addressed to protect animal welfare.

Key controls

These include that:

- welfare inspections are carried out on farms by APHA and LAs to assess compliance with legislation
- persons responsible for carrying out WATOK licence assessment are to be trained and experienced in animal welfare and husbandry and, for all farmed species, be competent and aware of the animals' needs in accordance with the legislative requirements including that related to on farm killing and slaughter
- an assessment for a WATOK license covering
- an assessment for a WATOK license, covering killing, slaughter and relation operations requires such authorisation
- an assessment for a WATOK licence covering killing, slaughter, and related operations requires such authorisation
- at slaughter the FSA (on behalf of Defra and the Welsh Government) and FSS (on behalf of the Scottish Government) monitor and enforce animal welfare compliance in approved slaughterhouses on behalf of the Defra, Welsh Government and Scottish Government through Service Level Agreements (SLA), with OV's carrying out checks to ensure there have been no issues concerning the welfare of animals presented for slaughter
- if not in a slaughterhouse, APHA carry out checks to make sure that there have been no issues concerning the welfare of animals that need to be

killed

- regulatory action is taken as necessary against operators who breach the welfare of animals at the time of killing regulations, using established enforcement hierarchies

Humane killing during notifiable disease outbreak (depopulation) controls include that:

- all depopulations carried out following the handing of a statutory compulsory slaughter notice for animal disease control purposes are directly supervised by suitably trained APHA officers, and any welfare issues are addressed immediately
- collected data is reviewed to identify broader operational welfare issues arising during depopulation activities for disease control
- an annual report is published detailing depopulation activities undertaken in the previous year, including any welfare issues identified or derogations permitted

Related legislation

Retained EU regulation 1099/2009

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/1099/contents>)

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/1782/contents>)

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/951/regulation/3>)

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Scotland) Regulations 2012

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2012/321/contents>)

Welfare forensic pathology

The competent authority is APHA.

Core control objectives

Support the investigation and enforcement of animal welfare standards through expert post-mortem analysis and evidence-based reporting.

Key controls

These include:

- undertaking post mortem examination of animals and body parts following identification of potential welfare issues on farm (by APHA) and at abattoirs (by FSA OVs)

- providing reports and statements to support enforcement actions by LA

Related legislation

Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2005/1>)

Animal Welfare Act 2006 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/45>)

The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/3260/contents>)

The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Scotland) Regulations 2006
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/606/contents/made>)

The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/2078/contents>)

The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2007/1047/contents>)

The Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2007/3070/contents>)

The Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Regulations 2010
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2010/388/contents>)

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/951/regulation/3>)

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/1782/contents>)

Control area – plant health

This section provides an overview of all areas of biosecurity control in Great Britain, by commodity or subject - with links to relevant online content, including legislation, and a summary of the core objective(s) and control(s) for each commodity or subject.

Controls on imported plants, plant products and other objects

The competent authorities are Defra, the FC, Scottish Government and the Welsh Government. Official control tasks are delegated to:

- APHA for plant health in Wales
- Scottish Government for Plant health in Scotland

Core control objectives

Ensure imports are compliant with Great Britain biosecurity standards - protecting plant health, agriculture, and the environment.

Key controls

Import controls include that they:

- are subject to phytosanitary checks at border control posts (BCPs) and control points
- include physical, identity and documentary checks

Risk-based inspections include:

- around 50,000 physical checks annually at borders to detect pests and diseases
- that suspect material is sent to official laboratories for analysis

Quarantine and biosecurity control measures include that:

- quarantine measures may apply to high-risk species
- businesses must comply with biosecurity protocols to prevent pest introduction

Controls on imported wood, wood products, and isolated bark

The competent authorities are Defra, the FC, Scottish Government and the Welsh Government. Official control tasks are delegated to the FC for Scotland and Wales.

Core control objectives

Ensure imports are compliant with Great Britain biosecurity standards - protecting plant health, agriculture, and the environment.

Key controls

Import controls include that:

- wood, wood products, and isolated bark are subject to phytosanitary checks at border control posts (BCPs)
- wood packaging material must meet ISPM 15 standards
(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-or-export-wood-packaging-material>)

Risk-based inspections include that:

- there are up to 5,000 physical checks annually at borders to monitor compliance with landing requirements
- suspect material may be sent to Forest Research for lab analysis or diagnostic tests

Quarantine and biosecurity control measures include that:

- quarantine measures may apply to high-risk forestry material
- businesses must comply with biosecurity protocols to prevent pest introduction

Related legislation - plant and wood products

Plant Health Regulation (2016/2031)

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2016/2031/contents>) and all legislation made under this, including the Phytosanitary Conditions Regulation (2019/2072)
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/2072>)

Domestic enforcement legislation for:

- England - The Official Controls (Plant Health and Genetically Modified Organisms) (England) Regulations 2019
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/1517/contents>)
- Scotland - The Plant Health (Official Controls and Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Regulations 2019
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2019/421/contents>)
- Wales - The Official Controls (Plant Health and Genetically Modified Organisms) (Wales) Regulations 2020
(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2020/206/contents/made>)

Plant health surveillance and outbreak management

The competent authorities are Defra, the FC, Scottish Government and the Welsh Government. Official control tasks are delegated to:

- APHA for plant health in Wales
- FC for forestry in England
- Scottish Government for plant health (including Forestry) in Scotland
- Natural Resources Wales for forestry in Wales

Core control objectives

Detect, manage, and mitigate plant health threats through coordinated surveillance, rapid response, and effective outbreak management - ensure the protection of Great Britain's plant biosecurity and compliance with international obligations.

Key controls

These include that there:

- are annual and multi-annual surveys for quarantine pests to ensure early detection of outbreaks and to evidence country freedom
- are published general contingency plan and response plans for all priority pests and many other pests
- is Horizon scanning with over 1400 pests now included on the Plant Health Risk Register

Internal movement controls

The competent authorities are Defra, the FC, Scottish Government and the Welsh Government. Official control tasks are delegated to:

- APHA for plant health in Wales
- FC for all timber products
- Scottish Government for plant health in Scotland
- Natural Resources Wales for forestry in Wales

Core control objectives

Ensure material moving within Great Britain is compliant with plant health requirements - protecting the biosecurity of Great Britain and supporting traceability in the case of outbreaks.

Key controls

These include that:

- regulated plants for planting, certain seeds, certain wood, and seed potatoes must move within Great Britain with a plant passport
- approximately 2,500 professional operators are registered and authorised to issue plant passports
- approximately 700 authorisations to apply the ISPM15 mark to wood packaging
- authorisations are issued for import, holding and movement of certain high-risk material for scientific purposes

Includes controls for pests like *Bemisia tabacci* and *Phytophthora ramorum*.

List of competent authorities

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Roles and responsibilities

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural affairs (Defra) is the UK government department responsible for:

- improving and protecting the environment
- growing a green economy and sustaining thriving rural communities
- supporting world-leading food, farming and fishing industries

Further information about Defra

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs/about>) is available.

Under the official controls regulation (OCR EU 2017/625

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>)), Great Britain is required to publish and maintain a multi-annual national control plan (MANCP) and associated annual reports. Defra is the designated authority responsible for publishing data and analysis related to control activities and enforcement as part of the MANCP reporting cycle. The plan outlines the systems of official controls in areas such as feed and food law, animal health and welfare, and plant health and identifies the public bodies and processes responsible for delivering them. The FSA and FSS also publish separate data under OCR Article 11.

The department works closely with devolved governments in Scotland and Wales. Defra is supported by a network of agencies and public bodies,

including APHA, FSA, FSS and Cefas.

Defra and its partner bodies deploy a range of skilled personnel across the UK:

- veterinary professionals, plant health inspectors, and food safety officers
- specialist teams in APHA, VMD, and HSE for areas like aquatic health, veterinary residues, and pesticide regulation
- Local Authority officers trained in enforcement, sampling, and incident management, supported by national competency frameworks

Resources are distributed across:

- central offices (for example Defra HQ in London, APHA centres)
- regional hubs in devolved governments
- Local Authority offices, ensuring proximity to establishments and communities

Official controls – organisation and management

Defra works in collaborative partnership with the devolved governments, who retain their devolved autonomy in most areas of OCR. The three respective governments are the 'Appropriate Authorities' (AAs) for England, Scotland, and Wales. The AAs are ultimately responsible for delivering all legal requirements of OCR.

Most OCR functions in practice are delegated to Competent Authorities (CAs) in Great Britain, including:

- The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
- Forestry Commission (FC)
- Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Food Standards Scotland (FSS)
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- Port Health Authorities (PHA)
- Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)

The CAs are responsible for delivering the specific controls of OCR, either directly, or by delegation to other bodies (for example LAs). OCR also allows AAs (like Defra) to act as their own CAs if needed – that is, they can both oversee control functions, and deliver them, in certain regulatory areas.

The competent authorities for plant health in Great Britain are:

- Defra and the FC – England

- Scottish Government – Scotland
- Welsh Government – Wales

Plant health official control tasks have been delegated to APHA by the competent authority of Wales.

Co-ordination and collaboration

Defra collaborates with devolved governments, LAs, and other government departments on the delivery of official controls (excluding food and feed). The department participates in strategic coordination meetings, including monthly and quarterly meetings of Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) and Chief Plant Health Officers respectively, and biosecurity risk assessments. Defra liaises with the FSA, APHA, and other partners through formal agreements such as SLAs and MoUs.

The MANCP and annual reports for Great Britain are produced by Defra with contributions from:

- APHA
- FSA
- FSS
- Scottish Government
- Welsh Government

Audit assurance

Defra's internal audit, part of the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA), will undertake audits to ensure that official controls meet required standards. These are agreed as part of the overall Defra internal audit programme which is risk-based and developed annually in conjunction with Defra management. Agencies such as APHA and VMD maintain their own internal audit programmes, with performance monitored through key performance indicators (KPIs), databases, and regular reporting.

Training of staff

Defra and its arm's-length bodies follow the civil service learning and development framework, which provides a centralised curriculum, alongside department-specific and role-based training. Key protocols include continuous professional development, mandatory training, and specialised programs for specific roles.

Documented controls procedures

Defra and its agencies maintain documented procedures for all official control activities. These include SOPs, operational manuals, and quality assurance (QA) systems. For example APHA uses an operations manual for animal health and welfare controls, and the VMD has SOPs for inspections

and sampling. These documents are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current legislation and policy.

Defra regularly reviews the Great Britain MANCP to take account of the emergence of new diseases, pests of plants, or other risks to human, animal or plant health and animal welfare, changes in legislation and the structure of competent authorities, scientific findings and other factors.

The process for review and reporting against the plan is managed by a cross-departmental project. Defra co-ordinates the overall project and works closely with all relevant departments including devolved governments. The annual reports on the implementation of the Great Britain MANCP (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-annual-national-control-plan-man-cp-annual-reports>) are available.

Contingency planning

Defra's contingency planning framework is designed to protect public health, animal and plant health and welfare, food security, and the agricultural economy of Great Britain by ensuring a rapid, co-ordinated, and science-based response to disease outbreaks.

Defra maintains a [contingency plan](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6731ea245364e7efcec41910/Defra_Contingency_Plan_for_Exotic_Notifiable_Diseases_of_Animals_in_England_2024_final_print_approved_version_1.pdf) ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6731ea245364e7efcec41910/Defra Contingency Plan for Exotic Notifiable Diseases of Animals in England 2024 final print approved version 1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6731ea245364e7efcec41910/Defra_Contingency_Plan_for_Exotic_Notifiable_Diseases_of_Animals_in_England_2024_final_print_approved_version_1.pdf)) to respond effectively to exotic notifiable diseases of animals, including poultry, in England. This is developed in close collaboration with the APHA and other operational partners, including devolved governments, LAs, and industry stakeholders. The plan is regularly reviewed and formally updated annually to reflect evolving risks, lessons learned from previous outbreaks, and changes in legislation or international obligations.

The contingency arrangements cover all exotic diseases such as foot and mouth disease, avian influenza, African swine fever, and Newcastle disease . Each disease has specific control strategies, including surveillance, movement restrictions, culling protocols, and disinfection procedures. These strategies are supported by legal powers under the [Animal Health Act 1981](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/22) (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/22>) and associated Orders.

Defra's emergency response capability is regularly tested through exercises, such as exercise aspen in November 2025. This ensures readiness and coordination among all involved agencies. These exercises also support continuous improvement in outbreak management and communication strategies.

In addition to animal health, Defra maintains contingency plans for plant and aquatic animal health.

A generic contingency plan (<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/contingency-planning/>) for plant health and pest specific contingency plans are published on the plant health information portal. These plans outline surveillance protocols, containment measures, and stakeholder engagement approaches tailored to each sector.

The Defra healthy bees plan 2030, outlines the strategic approach (https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/assets/PDFs/4_Science_and_engagement/HBP_2030/HBP2030_English_language_version.pdf) to protecting honey bee populations in England and Wales.

Defra's aquatic animal disease contingency plan (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64b68c1471749c001389ed8c/Contingency_plan_for_Exotic_Notifiable_And_Emerging_Diseases_Of_Aquatic_Animals_in_England_and_Wales.pdf) outlines how the UK government, in partnership with the Welsh Government and operational bodies such as Cefas, prepares for and responds to outbreaks of exotic notifiable and emerging diseases affecting aquatic animals in England and Wales.

Devolved Government – Scotland

Roles and responsibilities

The Scottish Government is responsible for animal health, animal welfare, and plant and tree health policy, legislation and official controls. Within the Scottish Government, SASA provides policy advice on plant health and Scottish Forestry (SF) provides advice and implements plant health forestry policy.

The Horticulture and Marketing Unit (HMU) is responsible for the detection and management of regulated plant pests and pathogens through import checks and inland surveillance, ensuring statutory compliance and monitoring for new and emerging threats.

SASA is the plant health NRL for Scotland. It provides scientific and technical support in the form of laboratory diagnosis of pests and diseases, scientific advice, training, and the development of new methods and technologies.

Within Scottish Government there is an overarching assurance group to support delivery of the Official Controls Regulation. The Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625 Delivery Committee (OCR—DC) is principally responsible for advising and supporting the CVO (Scotland), in discharging their responsibilities whilst providing veterinary advice to Scottish Ministers and leading on animal health and welfare for Scotland. These responsibilities include protecting human health through the control of zoonotic diseases alongside preventing, controlling or eradicating notifiable

diseases such as avian influenza, foot and mouth disease, rabies and TB, thereby maintaining or opening trade routes. It is important to stress the overarching remit of the OCR-DC and its function of being an independent scrutiny group to oversee the delivery of all OCR areas within the Scottish Government. With representatives from Internal Audit and from each of the OCR areas and independent members its principal focus is to ensure that performance of OCR areas is being appropriately scrutinised, that the work of IA and other assurance providers is robustly challenged.

Official controls – organisation and management

Scottish Ministers are accountable for ensuring that official controls relating to animal health, animal welfare, and plant health, including forestry, are carried out in accordance with established responsibilities and functions. These controls are implemented by trained personnel under established working arrangements.

In plant health, HMU conducts routine surveillance, import checks, and export certification, with a primary focus on preventing, detecting, and managing quarantine pests and pathogens.

For animal health, welfare, and forestry, these teams work in close collaboration with delivery partners, namely the APHA and the FC.

Co-ordination and collaboration

In fulfilling their responsibilities, the teams work closely with delivery partners and stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness for animal health and welfare, and plant health policy to deliver OCR's principal objectives. Close collaboration with other agencies and governments are delivered through business as usual (BAU) and ad hoc working, and through specific co-ordinated working arrangements.

Audit assurance

The OCR guidance states that adequate coverage of official controls areas is required of a period not exceeding five years. The Scottish Government internal audit (SGIA) has created a separate audit strategy and a rolling programme to ensure that all key aspects of the official food and feed control areas are reviewed through a risk-based audit methodology. To comply with global internal audit standards (GIAS), SGIA is an independent appraisal function which examines and evaluates the Scottish Government's activities. All work must also comply with process and procedures set out in the Internal Audit Manual. SGIA reports on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal control systems, and on compliance with those systems to the Scottish Government's OCR Delivery Committee.

Training of staff

HMU personnel engaged in official control activities are subject to annual performance evaluations, which assesses the quality and consistency of the controls they implement. Their training comprises of a structured

programme of initial classroom-based and online instruction, supplemented by supervised practical experience through work shadowing.

Documented controls procedures

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) provide structured guidance for HMU staff ensuring the consistent delivery of official controls. These documents are organised into chapters, stored in a shared electronic location, and updated to reflect current policy and regulatory requirements. SOPs also outline procedures for recording and reporting official controls, as well as processes for addressing non-compliance and enforcement. All records are securely managed within the Scottish Government's electronic records management system.

Contingency planning

Scotland has its own generic contingency plan for plant health, and two specific contingency plans to deal with pests of potatoes. Details of these contingency plans (<https://www.sasa.gov.uk/plant-health>) are available on the [sasa.gov.uk](https://www.sasa.gov.uk) website. In the absence of any other pest specific plans, where additional measures over and above those set out in generic contingency plan are required, the pest specific contingency plans published on the UK plant health information portal will be used.

Scottish Government Marine Directorate (aquatic animal health controls)

Roles and responsibilities

Scottish Government's Marine Directorate (MD) fulfils the role of the competent authority for Scotland with respect to aquatic animal disease controls and undertakes this role on behalf of Scottish Ministers. The MD Fish Health Inspectorate (FHI) are the main party involved in the implementation of official control measures, but are supported by wider MD colleagues, in particular with respect to laboratory testing and disease diagnosis as well as in aquaculture and aquatic animal health and welfare policy. Responsibilities include the enforcement of the provisions within the Aquatic Animal Health (Scotland) Regulations 2009, principally around the provisions to prevent, detect and control listed and emerging aquatic animal diseases.

Official controls – organisation and management

Official controls are implemented throughout Scotland by the MD, primarily the FHI. Control measures include implementing programmes of surveillance designed to help detect the presence of listed and emerging diseases. Surveillance can involve routine inspection as part of a risk-based programme, as well as passive surveillance initiatives in response to third party notifications of increased mortality or suspicion of the presence of a

listed disease. Statutory control measures are implemented in case of suspicion or confirmed of a listed disease.

Co-ordination and collaboration

Aquatic animal disease is a devolved matter and is the responsibility of relevant administrations (Scottish Government for Scotland). MD maintains regular contact with counterparts in Defra and Cefas and well as DAERA, where necessary. This is important as Scotland is part of a wider Great Britain aquatic animal health zone, which includes England and Wales and as aquaculture sectors often operate across the areas governed by different administrations, co-ordination and collaboration is essential. UK government fulfil specific reporting requirements on behalf of the wider Great Britain health zone and devolved governments.

Audit assurance

Internal and external audit procedures are implemented as part of the UKAS accreditation of inspection, sampling and laboratory testing procedures. A quality management control system is used to maintain version control of appropriate documentation and to raise and monitor an improvement actions or modifications to the standards being implemented. The Marine Laboratory in Aberdeen has bespoke office and laboratory facilities to allow suitable activities and actions to be carried out.

Training of staff

Relevant staff undergo dedicated training programmes in various disciplines involved in the activities associated with the FHI, or laboratory function and practice, depending upon an individual's role within the organisation.

Documented controls procedures

Standard operating procedures are maintained and regularly reviewed and updated and managed through the quality control system. These documents form core training and reference materials for individuals involved in this work.

Contingency planning

Contingency plans for listed and emerging diseases have been developed which detail the responses to be implemented by the MD in event of suspicion or confirmation of disease. Recognising its importance, and the potential significant impact on wild fish, specific contingency plans for *Gyrodactylus salaris* have been developed. *Gyrodactylus salaris* can be challenging to control and eradicate, therefore part of the contingency procedure involves developing and fostering links with Norwegian counterparts who have practical experience in dealing with this pathogen.

Devolved Government – Wales

Roles and responsibilities

Plant health is devolved and is the responsibility of Welsh Ministers. However, the Welsh Government work closely together on plant health across the UK with England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the FC. This arrangement is covered by a common framework (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plant-health-provisional-common-framework>), setting out how the devolved governments and the FC work together on plant health issues and is available on gov.uk website.

The Plant Biosecurity Strategy 2024 is a joint Great Britain strategy (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plant-biosecurity-strategy-for-great-britain-2023-to-2028/plant-biosecurity-strategy-for-great-britain-2023-to-2028>) for the next 5 years and provides a useful overview of what Great Britain governments are looking to achieve.

In addition to the common framework with its overarching principles and dispute resolution processes, there are a number of governance arrangements covering the organisations who are involved in the delivery of plant health services in Wales (the Welsh plant health services). These are:

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) – a plant health (forestry) MoU is in place. NRW deliver plant health (forestry) services in Wales with a focus on the Welsh Government Woodland Estate but also tree health issues and compliance with regulations on private forestry.

FC cross border agreement – covers England but delivers some services in Wales, for example inspection of wood packaging material such as crate imports.

APHA – APHA act on an England and Wales basis, covering crops, and inspections of imports and exports of non-forestry materials.

Forest Research (FR) – an SLA is in place, with three schedules setting out specific work they do in Wales. FR is an executive agency of the FC covering Great Britain.

The assessment of risk from plants and trees pests and diseases is undertaken by Defra scientists sitting in their risk team, which is done on behalf of all Great Britain nations.

Official controls – organisation and management, plant health

The Welsh Government Plant Health and Environmental Regulation branch (the Welsh PHERB) is the designated lead government department (LGD) in Wales for responding to plant pest outbreaks. The Welsh Government PHERB is supported by APHA, NRW, FR, and FC in fulfilling this responsibility.

Within Wales, departments are accountable to Ministers for the effective delivery of their responsibilities. In its capacity as LGD, the Welsh

Government PHERB will:

- assess the situation and, if necessary, establish an incident management team
- ensure that relevant Welsh Ministers are briefed
- coordinate the handling of media and Welsh parliament interest

In the interests of maximising the protection of plants across the UK, the Welsh Government PHERB will also communicate new interceptions with plant health colleagues in Defra, SF and DAERA.

Other Welsh Government departments will provide support to the Welsh Government PHERB to ensure a coordinated response, but will remain responsible for their own policy areas, including their responsibilities to Ministers.

A list of which LGDs are responsible for planning, response and recovery for different types of emergency, as well as guidance and best practice for LGDs, is kept up to date - see the UK National Leadership for Risk Identification, Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/list-of-lead-government-departments-responsibilities-for-planning-response-and-recovery-from-emergencies>).

Underpinning legislation

The following pieces of legislation are important for responding to plant pest outbreaks.

The Plant Health Act 1967, which gives the Secretary of State (or the FC in respect of forest trees and timber), as the competent authority, power to make Orders for preventing the introduction to, and spread of plant pests within, Great Britain (such as setting movement restrictions on plants or plant products).

In Wales, plant health (forestry) functions are delivered by NRW and the Forestry Commissioners under an Agreement under section 83 of the Government of Wales Act 2006. NRW carries out terrestrial disease control and surveillance.

The FC delivers Cross-Border Plant Health (forestry) functions on behalf of Wales, as detailed in Schedule 3 to the MoU for the Cross-Border provision of Forestry Functions and Research Delivery. This schedule establishes an agreed framework for the roles, responsibilities, relationships and co-operation between the Users and the Forestry Commissioners in relation to the regulation of Plant Health (Forestry) and Forest Reproductive Materials.

A provisional UK Common Framework on Plant Health (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1052044/plant-health-provisional-common-framework.pdf) is in

place which allows for a shared approach to plant health across Great Britain. This includes a governance structure of groups and subgroups to support decisions to be taken on protecting plant biosecurity in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

The Plant Health Risk Group sits under the UK common framework on plant health which:

- advises on technical matters relating to Northern Ireland, supporting decision making by DAERA, in the context of the NI Protocol
- assesses new and emerging plant health threats and proposals for changes to policy, and takes decisions on these proposals
- leads on technical risk assessments and decisions on updating lists of pests and high-risk plants, including adopting measures for provisional quarantine and quarantine pests
- proposes amendments to retained EU legislation
- when considering a proposal or recommendation for divergence in one or more nations, the UK Plant Health Risk Group will also consider the impact divergence would have on plant health protection in Great Britain, UK consumers, UK trade and international obligations
- is supported by technical sub-groups that draft policy proposals for decision at the UK Plant Health Risk Group

The Welsh Government is also a member of the plant health operational readiness board and its subgroups which support preparedness through surveillance and contingency planning.

The Plant Health (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020, set out the requirements for the competent authority with respect to eradication of quarantine pests, establishment of demarcated areas, surveys and modifications of demarcated areas and lifting of restrictions, and the reporting of measures taken. The regulations also set out the requirements for measures taken by professional operators and persons other than professional operators.

The Civil Contingencies Act (2004), which sets out the arrangements for civil protection at the local level and the UK's emergency powers for making special temporary legislation to deal with the most critical emergencies.

Under the Plant Health (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020, there is a further requirement for Great Britain to produce pest specific contingency plans for the priority pests. Priority pests are defined as those pests which have the potential to cause the most severe economic, environmental and social impacts in Great Britain and are not yet present in Great Britain or are present but not widely distributed and are being officially controlled.

These plans should be regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate. Simulation exercises should also be carried out to test the pest specific contingency plans within a reasonable period and with the involvement of relevant stakeholders.

There is a requirement for each of these pest specific contingency plans to include the following: 'the roles and responsibilities of the bodies involved in the execution of the plan in the event of an officially confirmed or suspected presence of the priority pest concerned, as well as the chain of command and procedures for the coordination of actions to be taken by the competent authorities, other public authorities, delegated bodies or natural persons involved, laboratories and professional operators.' This generic contingency plan fulfils much of this requirement by giving detail on the roles and responsibilities of the PHS and outbreak management procedures.

Co-ordination and collaboration

The Welsh Government works closely with the rest of the Wales Plant Health Service and with stakeholders, to ensure that the OCR's objectives are met in Wales. Through the structures of the provisional Common Frameworks, the Wales Plant Health Service works with other governments and agencies across Great Britain.

Audit assurance

APHA maintains the internationally recognised United Kingdom Accreditation Service UKAS ISO17020 accreditation for certain plant and bee health inspections (UKAS Ref 5640).

QA is a vital component of this system and can be defined in the following 3 tiers.

Management and peer checks (tier 1):

- Observed Field Visits
- Desk Based checks
- ISO Quality Assessment Checks
- Quality Checks on Contracted Workers

Internal audits carried out by Quality Services (tier 2)

External third-party assessment via UKAS for ISO17020 or GIAA (tier 3)

QA assures that work meets the required standards by means of instructions, guidance and the appointment and training of staff. It also confirms that work has been carried out to the required standards by checking an appropriate proportion of individual instances of work.

Training of staff

APHA staff must maintain training and competency records in accordance with Agency procedures (AP076 Management of training and competency records).

All staff complete induction training via Civil Service Learning and APHA induction pathway.

Specialist training needs for each staff member are identified based on their role and responsibilities. This involves determining the required competencies for their role and identifying any gaps in knowledge or skills that necessitate training. Role/activity specific training pathways are documented to determine appropriate competency sign off.

All training is documented in APHA training records held by all staff. All staff document, as a minimum, their job description and career summary and qualifications as part of a CV, or equivalent. This in part demonstrates competency, alongside competency-based training records.

Training record reviews are undertaken on an annual basis to confirm that the contents are up to date and complete.

Documented controls procedures

APHA is moving towards a single document control platform for all controlled content. This platform is the Defra Content Cloud+. Controlled content currently includes instructional documents, forms, notices and guidance. It has been configured with additional permissions, assurance, approval, review and disposition controls to ensure the content of documents are well managed and controlled.

Content owners manage their content through a structured lifecycle that helps them navigate how content is created, reviewed and continuously improved until it is withdrawn from use. It is a more robust, evergreen platform with improved usability, mobile responsiveness and improved content management features allowing full visibility of version control, increased remote access and a mechanism for user feedback.

Contingency planning – plant health

If an outbreak of a quarantine plant pest or provisional quarantine plant pest is confirmed in Wales, the Wales plant health service (WPHS), led by Welsh Government and including personnel from the Animal and Plant Health Agency Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate (APHA PHSI), Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Forest Research (FR), and the FC, will act with operational partners and stakeholders to eradicate and/or contain the plant pest and regain pest free status where possible. The WPHS will follow the Generic Contingency Plan for Plant Health in Wales.

In England and Wales, APHA's PHSI operate through a series of standard operating procedures (SOPs) analogous to contingency plans, which are also made available to other parts of the plant health services. Plans for

high profile pests and diseases including for Colorado beetle and *Xylella fastidiosa* as well as generic contingency plan for plant and pest (<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/contingency-planning/>) disease is available on Defra's website. Details of contingency plans for bee pests (<https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/bees-and-the-law/contingency-planning>) is available on national bee unit website.

Following the creation and implementation of a plant health risk register, contingency plans have been developed and published for plant and tree pests identified on the risk register as presenting the highest risk. Defra's generic contingency plan has been published to fall into line with other national level emergency plans. Both the generic and pest specific contingency plans have been produced in line with international standards, and with consultation from UK stakeholders. Pest specific contingency plans include those for Colorado and potato flea beetle and *Xylella fastidiosa*. The UK plant health services are involved in UK preparedness operations. Plant pest specific contingency plans are published on the UK Plant health portal. Where the situation is significantly different in Wales, the Welsh Government will publish Wales-specific plant pest contingency plans.

The FC has developed a generic contingency plan and has published pest-specific contingency plans for tree pests including Emerald Ash Borer, Sweet Chestnut Blight and Oak Processionary Moth. Tree pest specific contingency plans are published on the UK Plant health portal.

A pro-active, on-the-ground surveillance programme (<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/monitoring-tree-pests-and-diseases-in-wales/>) for both fungal and insect pest species has been established. The Wales plant health surveillance network currently focuses its activities at sites adjacent to the main transport corridors along the North Wales coast, down the Welsh-English border, and part way along the M4. Spore and insect traps are also being deployed at Wales sentinel site locations (<https://www.gov.wales/wales-plant-health-sentinel-site-network>), such as the National Botanic Gardens of Wales near Carmarthen and the National Trust's Plas Newydd on Anglesey.

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

APHA is an executive agency of Defra, and a competent authority designated by Defra under OCR Article 4. APHA provides services to Defra, the Scottish and Welsh Governments, other government departments, Local and Port Health authorities, and a range of other bodies.

The competent authorities for plant health in Great Britain are:

- Defra and the FC – England

- Scottish Government – Scotland
- Welsh Government - Wales

Plant health official control tasks have been delegated to APHA by the competent authority of Wales.

Further information about APHA

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about>) is available.

APHA's Chief Executive is responsible for overall performance of the Agency. The APHA Board sets the strategic direction of APHA, monitors achievement of key targets and management of risk.

The APHA Executive has responsibility for the day-to-day running of APHA.

APHA governance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/our-governance>) includes a Steering Board, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC), Science Advisory Board, Strategic Board, Strategic Health and Safety Committee and five sub-committees. Details of each groups' responsibility is also included.

APHA's headquarters are in Weybridge, Surrey, and also operates from many sites across Great Britain, providing field services, veterinary investigation, surveillance and laboratory services. There is also a team of APHA animal welfare veterinary advisors who support policy teams in Defra.

APHA's mission is to protect animal, plant and bee health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.

Roles and responsibilities

APHA is responsible for:

- identifying and controlling endemic and exotic diseases and pests in animals, plants and bees, and the surveillance of new and emerging pests and diseases
- scientific research in areas such as bacterial, viral, prion and parasitic diseases and vaccines, and food safety
- acting as an international reference laboratory for many farm animal diseases
- acting as a regulator for farmed animal welfare
- facilitating international trade in animals, POAO, and plants
- protecting endangered wildlife through licensing and registration
- managing a programme of apiary inspections, diagnostics, research and development, and training and advice

- regulating the safe disposal of animal by-products, to reduce the risk of potentially dangerous substances entering the food chain

The requirement to protect public health underpins many of the activities of APHA, and much of its resource is dedicated to administering and delivering agreed policies for public health - such as controlling bovine TB through herd testing, culling and other measures.

Official controls – organisation and management

APHA undertakes responsibilities and functions relating to the official controls required for plant and animal health and animal welfare, under agreed working arrangements with Defra, LAs, PHAs, the devolved governments, HMRC, Border Force and others. The Agency conducts surveillance for endemic and statutory diseases, plant pests and the majority of its work is focussed on the prevention, detection and management of animal diseases and plant pests.

APHA delivers the national feed audit (NFA) - a risk based programme of inspections based on requirements in Regulations (EC) No 999/2001 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2001/999/contents>) (control of TSE) and Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>) (OCR). The programme includes measures for surveillance to identify the illegal use of catering waste, and diversion of organic fertilisers and soil improvers into animal feed.

The NFA covers feed businesses throughout the animal feed chain including at import, production, haulage, storage and at end-user premises. Samples of feed ingredients and manufactured feeds are collected and analysed by the NRL for the presence of animal proteins. On finding animal proteins in animal feed, an investigation is conducted to determine whether the findings breach the TSE regulations. If a breach of the TSE regulations is likely to have occurred, further investigations are initiated to determine the cause and extent of the breach.

APHA is responsible for ensuring compliance with prohibitions on the use of most animal proteins in ruminant feed, and processed animal protein in farm animal feed. Feed ban requirements are part of a range of measures to guard against TSE and exotic notifiable diseases.

APHA has a role in inspecting and approving establishments to use restricted proteins like fishmeal in non-ruminant feed production, and to permit finished products containing these restricted proteins to be used on farms with ruminants present.

Prosecutions are the responsibility of LAs, except in plant health cases, although there is provision in the legislation for Defra to take on prosecutions in particular cases. However, in the event of an infringement, APHA will usually advise and assist LAs, normally Trading Standards Services to prevent the movement of ruminant animals or animal feed, and

require the recall or destruction of suspected feed. APHA will issue plant health notifications, for example to prevent movement and destroy material of concern.

For incidents involving TSE-susceptible animals that have had access to feed material containing banned animal proteins, risk assessments are completed by APHA to inform decision-making on the fitness of animals, which have had access to such contaminated feed, to enter the food chain.

APHA has a critical control responsibility for enforcing primary production hygiene requirements at egg production premises, which APHA inspects on behalf of the FSA. Inspections are carried out to enforce the satisfactory standards of the premises, equipment, range areas, birds and records. APHA also provides guidance and advice to FBOs on compliance with the relevant regulations.

Formal enforcement, including prosecution (excluding plant health cases), is the statutory obligation of LAs in almost all the legislation in which APHA staff are involved. In some cases, where it may involve an area of national interest, investigation and enforcement may be carried out by the Defra investigation service.

Co-ordination and collaboration

In fulfilling its responsibilities, APHA works closely with delivery partners and stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of government animal health and welfare and plant health policy to deliver OCR's principal objectives. Close collaboration with other agencies, for example UK Health Security Agency, FSA, FC and FR is delivered through business as usual, incident management teams, ad hoc working and also through following specific co-ordinated working arrangements.

Audit assurance

Information on control activities is recorded on APHA's dedicated IT systems. Reports are regularly extracted from field data supplied providing results for both national and local requirements. Operational reports are produced monthly for all APHA activity and targets. These reports are shared internally within APHA and externally and to the devolved governments. Shortfalls in delivery are discussed and remedial action plans are developed to ensure that any shortfall in control visits is rectified.

APHA is working with its internal auditors and other bodies to develop a programme of audit work which will meet the requirements of Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625. Procedures are also being developed to ensure the audit process is transparent, subject to independent review and ensuring action is taken in response to audits in accordance with EU legislation.

An annual report (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/animal-and-plant-health-agency-annual-report-and-accounts-2024-to-2025>) is produced giving

details of targets and accounts, which is posted on the gov.uk website.

APHA has an internal audit programme of official controls, co-ordinated in conjunction with Defra through the audit and risk assurance committee to ensure that both policy and delivery aspects are covered. Audits are conducted by the GIAA.

APHA's PHSI activities for imports, plant passporting and surveillance and action are accredited by UKAS for compliance under ISO 17020 - as is Bee health, for control of European and American Foulbrood (see Schedule of Accreditation (https://www.ukas.com/download-schedule/5640/InspectionA?_gl=1*dyl9hc*_up*MQ..*_gs*MQ..&gclid=EAlalQobChMI_tKqw4-XkAMVCqVQBh2N0wmnEAAYAiAAEgJXCfD_BwE)))). These areas also undergo local official field visits (plants and bees) plus quality assessment checks (plants only) (tier 1) and Quality Services team (tier 2) system audits.

The laboratory side of APHA is accredited to ISO 17025 for a range of tests (see Schedule of Accreditation (https://www.ukas.com/download-schedule/1769/Testing?_gl=1*xey8ln*_up*MQ..*_gs*MQ..&gclid=EAlalQobChMI_tKqw4-XkAMVCqVQBh2N0wmnEAAYAiAAEgJXCfD_BwE)))), and has ISO 9001 certification within a number of departments. In specialised areas, laboratories comply with the principles of Good Laboratory Practice, Good Manufacturing Practice and Good Distribution Practice. There are internal audit arrangements in place at the local, departmental level (tier 1 audits) in relation to ISO 17025 and 9001, plus internal audits by the Quality Services team (tier 2 audits) in relation to system audits of the departments with ISO9001 and 17025, plus all the regulatory GxP audits.

Training of staff

APHA staff must maintain training and competency records in accordance with Agency procedures (AP076 Management of training and competency records).

All staff complete induction training via Civil Service Learning and APHA induction pathway.

Specialist training needs for each staff member are identified based on their role and responsibilities. This involves determining the required competencies for their role and identifying any gaps in knowledge or skills that necessitate training. Role/activity specific training pathways are documented to determine appropriate competency sign off. Competency is renewed or revalidated on a four year cycle.

All training is documented in APHA training records held by all staff. All staff document, as a minimum, their job description and career summary and qualifications as part of a CV, or equivalent. This in part demonstrates competency, alongside competency-based training records.

Training record reviews are undertaken on an annual basis to confirm that the contents are up to date and complete.

APHA staff undertaking official control activities are assessed on the quality and consistency of the controls that they carry out, as part of the management and peer tier 1 assurance through a selection of observed field visits (plants, animals and bees), desk based checks (animals) and quality assessment checks (plants).

APHA trains private veterinarians as required by OCR Article 6, on official certification systems to authorise and quality control export certifications. Training is revalidated every four years. Authorisation is subject to a candidate successfully passing the final examination after training and meeting the additional requirements detailed in the OV13, Policy for Authorisation of OV's in Great Britain.

Official veterinary performance is regularly monitored through quality control checks on certification issued. Non-compliances are investigated. Minor non-compliances are usually dealt with by formal letter of advice and warning with repeated minor non-compliances and any serious non-compliances triggering formal investigation. Authorisation may be suspended as a precautionary measure pending the outcome of a formal investigation. Where required, disciplinary action is taken that may result in retraining, suspension or removal of authorisation and, where there are concerns of professional misconduct, referral to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons' disciplinary committee. Cases of alleged criminal activity, such as fraud, can be referred to the Defra counter fraud and investigation team or the police.

Documented controls procedures

All APHA controlled content (instructions, guidance and procedures) are available on Content Cloud document management system.

Detailed guidance regarding tasks to be undertaken, along with roles and responsibilities for APHA staff and veterinary contractors, is provided by operating instructions referred to as the animal health instructions (operations manual). The various chapters within the instructions are available to APHA staff on content cloud via the APHA controlled content hub sharepoint online site. This is updated continuously to reflect current policy instruction.

The instructions include all procedures to be undertaken for the recording and reporting of required official controls. Instruction is provided on the necessary action to be undertaken when non-compliance is identified and enforcement is required.

All plant and bee health instructions can also be found on content cloud via the APHA controlled content hub sharepoint online site.

Contingency planning

Under OCR, APHA carries out the function of detecting and responding to any outbreak of endemic or exotic animal disease within its remit, and quarantine plant health pest and diseases. APHA is responsible for delivering detailed departmental animal health contingency plans. The contingency plan includes an overarching plan for dealing with a range of endemic and exotic animal diseases as well as plans for responding to specific notifiable diseases including foot and mouth disease, avian influenza, rabies and bluetongue.

In England, as part of Defra's emergency preparedness for exotic notifiable diseases of animals, APHA and Defra prepare and maintain the Defra Contingency Plan for Exotic Notifiable Diseases of Animals

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/contingency-plan-for-exotic-notifiable-diseases-of-animals-in-england>), available on gov.uk website. Scotland

(<https://www.gov.scot/publications/exotic-animal-disease-contingency-framework-plan-august-2022/>) and Wales (<https://www.gov.wales/exotic-animal-diseases-contingency-plan>) have complementary plans, also available on gov.uk website.

In addition, APHA supports preparation and maintenance of the Defra Plant Health Generic Contingency Plan

(https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/assets/Contingency-plans/Generic_contingency_plan_for_plant_health_in_England_April_2024_FINAL.pdf) and Pest specific plant health contingency plans

(<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/contingency-planning/>).

Each plan sets out the operational response that each government, their agencies and partners will put in place to deal with any occurrence of foot and mouth disease, avian influenza or Newcastle disease. The plans are also applicable to all other notifiable exotic diseases of animals. The plans highlight the activities and processes that ensure a high-level of preparedness for an outbreak of an exotic notifiable disease.

These plans are subject to on-going revision based on the latest developments in science and epidemiological modelling, feedback from stakeholders and operational partners and the lessons identified from exercises and incidents.

In accordance with the requirements of relevant EU legislation, the contingency plan is tested and validated at least twice in a five-year period by a major UK wide exercise unless there is an outbreak of notifiable exotic disease in the UK.

APHA also operates a programme of centrally co-ordinated local exercises to rehearse and test APHA's emergency preparedness to deal effectively with outbreaks of animal disease and plant health pests and diseases at the operational level. This programme is delivered in liaison with Defra, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government, other government departments, operational partners and key stakeholders.

Border Force

Border Force is a division of the Home Office and the competent authority responsible for conducting customs and immigration controls at Great Britain borders. It works in coordination with Defra, the Forestry Commission, Food Standards Agency, Food Standards Scotland and the Scottish and Welsh Governments to ensure that regulated goods entering Great Britain comply with official controls.

Border Force is responsible for delivery of anti-smuggling controls to combat illegal imports of products of animal origin (POAO) at points of entry into Great Britain. This includes imports of POAO that breach the concessions applicable to goods carried in travellers' baggage for personal consumption and personal consignments sent by post to private individuals, as well as freight.

Border Force is also responsible for approving locations for customs purposes an international boundary or first control point, where the movement of goods coming into or leaving a country for customs can be controlled. The requirement to hold an appropriate customs approval is part of the border control post (BCP) and control point (CP) designation criteria.

Food Standards Agency (FSA)

Strategic objectives

The FSA's primary objective is to safeguard public health and protect the interests of consumers in relation to food. Our mission is food you can trust. By food you can trust, we mean a food system in which:

- food and animal feed is safe
- food is what it says it is
- consumers can make informed choices about what to eat
- food is healthier and more sustainable

As the food system continues to evolve, the FSA has greater responsibilities now that the UK is outside of the EU. New technologies, business models and changing consumer behaviours, means the FSA needs to think differently about how we deliver our mission.

We also need to take account of growing public concern about health and sustainability and affordability. Our vision for the food system is set out in

our five year strategy document (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/our-strategy>) covering 2022 to 2027. Alongside this the FSA has also published a three year corporate plan (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-3-year-corporate-plan-introduction>) which translates the strategy into action and sets out how we will deliver our strategy.

Our core objectives, as set out in the three-year corporate plan are:

Evidence generator: We will ensure that our decisions are based on science and evidence. We share this evidence to inform and influence others (consumers, businesses and policy makers). We will build evidence, including through science and research so we can anticipate opportunities and risks across the UK food system.

Policy maker: We will make robust recommendations and support decision makers to take informed decisions on rules relating to food, based on evidence and independent assessment. We will create a proportionate, effective, efficient and future focused approach to regulation through the risk analysis process and regulated products service, that protects consumers and removes barriers to innovation.

Regulator: We will deliver our regulatory responsibilities to enable feed and food businesses to comply with the rules so that food is safe and what it says it is. We will reform the feed and food safety regulatory framework to deliver more proportionate and risk-based assurance, now and in the future.

Watchdog, convenor and collaborator: We will speak out publicly about areas of consumer interest to encourage high food standards in the UK. We will work in partnerships across the food system to address issues affecting consumers and businesses. This means consumers can be confident we're working with a wide range of partners to achieve more than we could alone to deliver food that is safe and is what it says it is. It also helps us identify opportunities to contribute with others to achieving food that is healthier and more sustainable.

Enabler: We will provide the people, resources and processes needed to deliver our corporate objectives and priorities. This ensures that all the parts of our organisation are equipped to deliver our objectives and ensure food is safe, is what it says it is, and is healthier and more sustainable.

Please see appendix 1 of the three year plan (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-3-year-corporate-plan-appendix-1-our-activities>) for more detailed specific activities to deliver each objective, by year.

Roles and responsibilities

The FSA is the central competent authority for the main body of food and feed safety law in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. For the purposes of this document, we will only describe the FSA's functions in England and Wales. Northern Ireland produces their own separate annual report (the

Annual Report on Official Controls) which is submitted directly to the EU Commission, in line with the Northern Ireland Protocol. A Northern Ireland specific MANCP is currently being worked on.

The Food Standards Act 1999

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/28/contents>) gives the FSA statutory powers to deliver national priorities and objectives, such as setting performance standards for enforcement of feed and food law and monitoring and auditing performance of enforcement authorities against the standards. It gives the FSA powers to require LAs, who are also competent authorities, to provide information on feed and food law monitoring and enforcement. LAs have a statutory duty to enforce the requirements of food law and have regard to the Food and Feed Codes of Practice (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>). The Practice Guidance (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice#practice-guidance>) offers best practice advice. The FSA also offers guidance to food businesses (<https://www.food.gov.uk/here-to-help>) on general food safety and allergens.

The FSA has direct responsibility for some official controls in meat, dairy, wine and shellfish. More detail on the division of controls between different establishment types and competent authorities can be found in the official controls section below and in control area – food sector section.

In addition to our office-based staff in England and Wales, the FSA also employs field-based staff who deliver official controls in the form of Meat Hygiene Inspectors (MHIs), OV's, Wine Inspectors and Dairy Hygiene Inspectors (DHIs).

Official controls - organisation and management

The FSA is responsible for official controls in the following sectors and establishments:

Official controls in FSA approved meat establishments

The FSA is responsible in England and Wales for the approval and delivery of official controls at establishments that require official veterinary supervision. These are slaughterhouses, wild game handling establishments and cutting plants. Within these establishments, OV's and Meat Hygiene Inspectors (MHIs) carry out inspections and deliver hygiene and welfare checks, and verify controls delivered by food business operators (FBOs).

Where other approvable operations are co-located with any of the above then the FSA is also responsible for the approval and delivery of official controls. These include:

- 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 / re packaging establishments.

LAs also approve and perform checks at certain types of meat establishments, for more details see the LAs section.

Dairy hygiene on farms

All FBOs producing milk must register their milk production holding with the FSA. After registration, the FSA maintains the database of holdings and notifies other agencies.

The FSA offers voluntary advisory visits by local DHIs, especially during planning stages or for new milking equipment. These visits help operators meet hygiene standards from the start, although participation is at the FBO's discretion.

The FSA carries out routine inspections of dairy farms to ensure compliance with hygiene regulations and protect raw milk supplies. These inspections cover milking premises and equipment, the health and hygiene of animals, hygienic milking practices, storing and cooling of milk and sampling raw cows' drinking milk for direct human consumption.

Inspection frequency (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/dairy-registration-and-inspections>) depends on the species producing the milk, production type (direct sale or wholesale), membership of assurance schemes (for example Red Tractor Farm Assurance), compliance history and risk factors.

In addition, the FSA Veterinary Audit Team also carries out Animal Health inspections in Dairy Farms to ensure compliance with Official Control requirements under the hygiene package.

Feed delivery programme

In England, the Feed Delivery Programme (FDP) is funded from core FSA funds and overseen and supported by the Feed Delivery Team within FSA. It is the FSA's national model for delivering official controls on animal feed in England. Its purpose is to ensure that feed is safe, traceable and produced in accordance with feed hygiene legislation. By improving compliance and supporting risk-based oversight across the feed chain, the programme contributes directly to animal health, food safety and confidence in UK trade.

The model combines national coordination, regional expertise and local delivery, creating a consistent and professionally managed system for

carrying out feed controls.

The FSA funds the programme and sets national policy, priorities and standards. National Trading Standards (NTS) coordinates delivery on behalf of the FSA. Nine English regions plan and manage activity at a regional level. LAs carry out inspections, sampling and enforcement using FDP guidance and annual plans.

In Wales, the delivery model is similar to England. It achieves the same purpose to ensure that feed is safe, traceable and produced in accordance with feed hygiene legislation. LAs across 6 regions carrying out official controls funded by the FSA in Wales from a ring-fenced budget. The FSA in Wales oversees the delivery of animal feed official controls and, in conjunction with the Feed Governance Group, provides strategic oversight of the regional feed delivery model. The governance group comprises of representatives from FSA in Wales, Directors of Public Protection Wales (DPPW), Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Trading Standards Wales, Chair of the Regional Lead Officers and, in an observatory capacity, Welsh Government.

The group agrees the process to facilitate the day-to-day operational delivery and review whether regions are proceeding in accordance with their agreed work plans. A delivery proposal is generated on an annual basis in conjunction with the Regional Lead Officers and submitted to the group for their consideration and approval. The delivery proposal, once approved, is then ratified by each regional LAs signing their agreement of the delivery plan and associated funding.

Live bivalve molluscs (shellfish) safety and classification

The FSA is directly responsible for decisions in relation to the classification (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/shellfish-classification>) and official control monitoring of shellfish harvesting and relaying zones. Shellfish include oysters (pacific and native), mussels, clams, cockles and scallops. As filter feeders, they can accumulate toxins, chemical or bacteriological contaminants from their environment. To protect human health, these species can only be commercially harvested from classified areas that are monitored. We monitor sampling data and work with LAs to ensure the system of classification supports industry whilst remaining protective of public health.

Classified harvesting and relaying areas are monitored for marine biotoxins, phytoplankton and chemical contamination (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/biotoxin-and-phytoplankton-monitoring>). Sampling is carried out by LAs responsible for the classified harvesting or relaying area. Under specific arrangements, with appropriate verification by the responsible LA, this activity may also be undertaken by private contractors or cross border organisations. Designated official laboratories carry out the specified testing and analysis of the samples. When sample results indicate that levels of

contaminants are found to be above permitted levels, action is taken by the appropriate LA.

Wine regulation and enforcement

The FSA is responsible for encouraging growers, producers and traders to comply with laws on wine by offering advice and education. We carry out a programme of inspections, using risk analysis to deliver a targeted and cost-effective service. We identify breaches of the law and gather evidence for legal action in serious cases, often working with other regulatory bodies.

We ensure the safety, quality, authenticity and correct labelling of wine products. Our enforcement covers trade and premises within the production and distribution chain. This includes bottling plants, bonded warehouses, importers, wholesalers, vineyards and wineries.

We also maintain the UK Vineyards Register which records areas under vine and production returns from producers.

Wine regulations at retail premises are enforced by LAs.

Inspection and approval of food irradiation facilities

The FSA has direct responsibility for the inspection and approval of food irradiation facilities in England and Wales. In Scotland, this responsibility is covered by the FSS. Enforcement of legislation relating to irradiated food, such as labelling regulations and import controls, is the responsibility of Local and PHAs.

There is currently only one facility in the UK that can irradiate food. In recent times, the operator has confirmed in an annual declaration to FSA that it is not currently undertaking any irradiation of food.

Radioactivity in food

The FSA is responsible for monitoring of radioactivity in food and is involved in two projects in collaboration with FSS and the four UK environment agencies. Results are published in the Radioactivity in Food and Environment (RIFE) Report

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/radioactivity-in-food-and-the-environment-rife-reports/rife-30-general-summary-radioactivity-in-food-and-the-environment-2024>) which combines data for all food and environment monitoring conducted by government bodies and the Radiological Habits Surveys which includes data on food consumption. The FSA undertakes monitoring and assessment work around nuclear sites.

Natural mineral water

Recognition of natural mineral water from sources in the England and Wales is granted by the relevant LA. Where a LA decides not to grant recognition or to withdraw recognition of a natural mineral water, the business may request a review of the decision. This review will be carried out by the FSA in Wales. In England, Defra has this responsibility.

The FSA has direct responsibility for the assessment of any application made in Wales for the recognition of a natural mineral water source located in a non-EEA country under Directive 2009/54 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudr/2009/54/resources>).

Defra are responsible for any application made in England. If the non-EEA source meets the requirements, it is awarded recognition throughout the UK and details are published in the Edinburgh, Belfast and London Gazettes. Subsequently the list of recognised natural mineral waters in the UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/natural-mineral-waters-lists-of-recognised-products>) is updated. Defra then informs the EU Commission.

Kitchenware from China and Hong Kong

There are specific conditions and procedures for the import of polyamide (nylon) and of melamine plastic kitchenware originating in, or consigned from, the People's Republic of China or the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China to Great Britain, set up by assimilated Regulation 284/2011. There are designated specific Border Control Posts (BCPs) for such consignments of kitchenware. A document check and an identity and physical check, including sampling for laboratory analysis of 10% of such consignments, takes place at the BCP and by the PHA at the point of importation.

Food contact materials – recycled plastics

The FSA, together with FSS, will be responsible for carrying out the competent authority responsibilities in regard to the requirements set out under Commission Regulation (EU) 2022/1616 on recycled plastic materials and articles in contact with food. This will include the review of technical documents (for example the compliance monitoring summary sheet) and carrying out an official controls audit of operational UK-based plastic recycling installations that have applied to the EU. The audit outcomes will be notified to the EC.

Food contact materials – packaging materials and LA enforcement

LAs are responsible for enforcing FCM legislation across Great Britain. Their role includes ensuring that businesses comply with the requirements of assimilated Regulation 1935/2004 and associated national regulations, including the Materials and Articles in Contact with Food Regulations 2012. To carry out this duty, LA enforcement officers (typically TSOs or EHOs) undertake a range of activities, including inspecting businesses and issuing enforcement notices.

Co-ordination and collaboration

FSA international work

The FSA collaborates internationally to safeguard food entering the UK and to be at the forefront of international developments in food safety. We work with our partners to influence international food safety standards. This enables us to ensure that global standards protect consumers.

Codex Alimentarius commission

The Codex Alimentarius commission was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization (WHO) to develop international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice.

Whilst the Defra is the lead UK Government Department for Codex, the FSA takes the lead in many of the vertical committees dealing with food hygiene, food additives, methods analysis and sampling, food contaminants and imports and export certification systems.

Scientific groups

At the core of the FSA's values is that our policy and regulatory decisions are science and evidence based. We advocate that science remains at the heart of international policymaking. We participate in a wide range of international scientific groups in areas such as social science, regulatory economics and food allergens.

The FSA provides support for UK experts to engage in expert committees, for example the:

- Biannual WHO Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives
- International Commission on the Microbiological Specifications for Foods – this is a leading source for independent scientific advice to international standard setting bodies

Rapid alert system for food and feed (RASFF)

Great Britain continues to receive RASFF notifications concerning the GB and provides responses via the International Food Safety Authority Network (INFOSAN) and Emergency Contact Points (ECPs). The FSA has built alternative arrangements with other international partners as well as investing in new surveillance approaches.

Memorandum of understanding (MOU) with FSS

The MOU (<https://www.food.gov.uk/our-work/memorandum-of-understanding>) with FSS covers incident handling, resilience, science collaboration, data sharing and communications, with standing senior-officials meetings and protocols for joint incident management across GB. The MoU underpins consistent incident coordination across countries in GB and exchange of intelligence needed to deliver Official Controls.

Local authority networks and focus groups

The FSA regularly attends regional LA Food Liaison Groups (FLGs) to discuss the work of LAs in relation to food hygiene and standards. The FSA also regularly attends Food Hygiene Focus Group (FHFG) and Food Standards and Information Focus Group (FSIFG) meetings.

These meetings are local-authority led practitioner forums that brings together regional FLGs representatives to share good practice, agree consistent approaches to enforcement, and feed back to national policy makers on food hygiene issues. FSA act as speakers/observers to brief on guidance, collect feedback and discuss implementation challenges. The focus groups' consolidated views are sometimes used to inform FSA policy work and UK positions on hygiene and standards matters.

FSA LINK (Local Authority Information Network) is the FSA's online portal in both England and Wales. This is used for communication, collaboration and resource-sharing with LA officers working in food and feed enforcement (forms, templates, toolkits and guidance).

Several expert panels and groups operate in Wales under the DPPW structure, the FSA attend these meetings to provide operational updates and respond to enquiries. These panels include:

- Wales Food Safety Expert Panel
- Trading Standards Wales Food Standards and Labelling Group
- Communicable Disease Expert Panel and Task Groups
- North Wales Food and Communicable Disease Panel
- Port Health Expert Panel
- Welsh Food Microbiological Forum

Regional feed groups

The FSA in England, attends meetings of the 9 English Regional Feed Groups, which are LA coordination forums that support the delivery of animal feed official controls within the FDP. They bring together Trading Standards feed officers within each region to share intelligence, coordinate inspections, standardise practice, and raise issues that require national attention.

The 9 English regional groups are:

- Central England Trading Standards Authorities (CEntSA)
- East of England Trading Standards Authorities (EETSA)
- London Trading Standards (LTS)
- North East Trading Standards Authorities (NETSA)
- Trading Standards East Midlands (TSEM)
- Trading Standards North West (TSNW)
- Trading Standards South East (TSSE)
- Trading Standards South West (TSSW)
- Yorkshire and Humber Trading Standards Group (YAHTSG)

In Wales, the FSA attends two groups.

Regional lead officers group A meeting of the nominated lead feed officers for each of the six regions operating in Wales. The regional group discuss areas of concerns, best practice and seek to achieve consistency across Wales. The group also discuss delivery progress and considers feed related projects they may wish to seek funding for. It also serves as a forum to discuss delivery proposals for the next financial year.

Feed governance group: This group is made up of representatives from FSA Wales, DPPW, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Trading Standards Wales, Chair of the Regional Lead Officers and, in an observatory capacity, Welsh Government. The Governance Group oversees the delivery of animal feed official controls and provides strategic oversight of the regional feed delivery model. They agree the process to facilitate the day-to-day operational delivery and review whether regions are proceeding in accordance with their agreed work plans. The group also approves the delivery proposal that is developed.

Shellfish working groups

The national shellfish liaison group is a strategic working group providing a platform for the FSA and LAs to discuss shellfish official controls delivery and develop proportionate, risk-based systems that enhance consistency and excellence.

The shellfish stakeholder working group is a collaborative forum that brings together the FSA, regulators, the shellfish industry, and the research community, to address issues relating to shellfish water quality and the application of the shellfish regulatory regime.

The all Wales LA shellfish liaison group includes representatives from the FSA and LAs and meets to discuss shellfish hygiene matters and share information on enforcement.

FSA Wales also attend two regional groups that meet twice a year, the North Wales Fisheries Local Action Group and South Wales Fisheries Local Action Group. The aim of these groups is to support the fishing industry and associated communities through the delivery of a range of actions and activities.

Food hygiene rating scheme (FHRS)

The FHRS for England and Wales aims to protect public health through transparency. The schemes are operated by LAs in partnership with FSA. They enable consumers to make informed decisions about the places where they eat out or shop for food by providing them with information about the standards of hygiene found at the time of intervention by LA food safety officers. The schemes recognise those businesses that meet legal requirements on food hygiene and incentivise others to improve standards. The aim is to reduce the incidence of foodborne illness and costs to the

economy. FHRs ratings are published on the [FSA website](https://ratings.food.gov.uk/) (<https://ratings.food.gov.uk/>) and are openly accessible to consumers and others for further analysis (such as journalists and academics).

Businesses in England are not legally required to display ratings at their premises. In Wales, it is a legal requirement for businesses to display their rating at premises.

In England, LAs operating the FHRs must follow 'Brand Standard' (<https://www.food.gov.uk/local-authorities/guidance-on-implementation-and-operation-of-the-food-hygiene-rating-scheme-the-brand-standard-and-statutory-guidance>)' guidance which aims to ensure consistency in operation of the scheme. LAs in Wales operate the scheme in line with [statutory guidance](https://www.food.gov.uk/local-authorities/guidance-on-implementation-and-operation-of-the-food-hygiene-rating-scheme-the-brand-standard-and-statutory-guidance#the-food-hygiene-rating-wales-act-2013-guidance) (<https://www.food.gov.uk/local-authorities/guidance-on-implementation-and-operation-of-the-food-hygiene-rating-scheme-the-brand-standard-and-statutory-guidance#the-food-hygiene-rating-wales-act-2013-guidance>).

National FHRs stakeholder dialogue

The FHRs Steering Group (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-hygiene-ratings-steering-group>) advises on the operation of the FHRs with a focus on facilitating and promoting consistency of implementation across LAs in England and Wales.

The group is independently chaired and its membership comprises of consumer, food industry and LA representatives as well as officials from the FSA and the Department for Business and Trade.

In England, the FSA chairs a representative group of LA officers to provide advice and guidance on FHRs policy and delivery.

The FSA in Wales leads an all Wales Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRs) Steering Group. This group, with representatives from all Welsh LAs, works collaboratively to ensure the Scheme is implemented and enforced consistently and continues to be credible and up to date.

National statutory surveillance for chemical contaminants

The VMD's surveillance, as delegated by Defra, provides information on substances and contaminants found in the UK in POAO and what action is being taken to avoid unacceptable residues and chemical contaminants (for example heavy metals) in the future.

FSA are involved in the planning of reporting in this area, ensuring the chemical contaminants analysed within the POAO commodities listed, meet the requirements as set out in [Assimilated Regulation \(EC\) 1881/2006](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2006/1881) (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2006/1881>).

Red meat and poultry samples from carcasses from slaughterhouses are collected by FSA and FSS. Other government departments collect samples of the other POAO. Non-compliant results which present a food safety

concern are sent to the FSA for review and provide suitable risk management advice, which may involve removing the product from the market where appropriate and / or a suggestion for on-farm investigations or additional samples to be taken. If necessary, risk assessments are conducted to support the risk management decisions.

National Food Crime unit (NFCU)

The National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) is a dedicated law enforcement function of the FSA, tackling serious fraud and related criminality within food supply chains in England and Wales. The Unit also works closely with the Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit (SFCIU).

The NFCU plays an important role in multi-sector engagement at national and international levels. It works closely with the food industry to ensure that businesses are well-informed and resilient against food crime. The Unit aims to create a hostile environment for those engaging in food crime by investigating suspected offenders, leading prosecutions or otherwise supporting partners in their lawful efforts to similarly disrupt those criminals.

The NFCU is a member of the Global Alliance on Food Crime (<https://www.foodauthenticity.global/global-alliance-on-food-crime>) which is a coalition of international leaders who work together on the prevention, detection and disruption of food crime. The NFCU also participates annually in operation OPSON. This is an international initiative, facilitated through EUROPOL and Interpol, that targets counterfeit and substandard food and drink.

Intelligence considerations meetings

Fortnightly Intelligence considerations meetings (ICM) provide a cross FSA / FSS forum for sharing information and signals on developing food and feed standards threats. The meeting is regularly attended by FSA England and Wales, and FSS, ensuring a cross-nation discussion to work to solve identified problems appropriately.

Domestic scientific working groups

In addition to the international groups mentioned earlier, the FSA also contributes to several advisory committees such as the Science Council, the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes, the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food, the Committee on Toxicity, the Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs and many more. A full list of advisory committees and working groups (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/scientific-advisory-committees>) is available.

Research, monitoring and public reporting

The FSA publish a number of public facing reports, these include the Our Food Report (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/annual-reports-and-accounts-including-our-food>) and the Annual Report and Accounts (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/annual-reports-and-accounts-including-our-food>).

Audit and assurance

Regulatory audit

To meet Article 6 requirements of Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>), the FSA carries out audits of LAs. LAs are required to take appropriate measures as a result of the audits. Audit reports are usually published.

Audits of LAs feed and food law enforcement functions are part of FSAs arrangements to improve the consistency and effectiveness of enforcement. Audits assess LAs' conformance against the Food and Feed Law Code of Practice (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>) and relevant official enforcement guidance. An overview of audits undertaken (<https://www.food.gov.uk/our-work/regulatory-audit>) is also available.

The FSA also regularly audits competent authorities in England and Wales to provide assurance that the delivery of official controls for feed and food is compliant with UK legal requirements and official guidance. Competent Authorities (CAs) include the FSA itself, LA, and PHAs.

The power to set standards and monitor CAs' food law enforcement services was conferred on the FSA by the Food Standards Act 1999 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/28/contents>) and the Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/3255/contents>) and parallel legislations in Wales.

These audits are designed to verify the effective implementation of planned arrangements and to assess whether the planned arrangements are suitable to achieve the objectives of the relevant legal requirements and guidance.

Audit of approved meat establishments

The FSA undertakes announced audits of all FSA approved meat establishments in England and Wales under veterinary control. These audits apply to red meat, farmed game slaughterhouses, poultry slaughterhouses, and wild game handling establishments, and include the audit of any other approved operations that are co-located: minced meat, meat preparations, mechanically separated meat, meat product plants including 'ready to eat' and co-located cold stores.

All audits are carried out by Veterinary Auditors (VAs) or Audit Veterinary Leaders (AVLs), who are independent and separate from regular business operations and routine inspection duties.

Audits are intended to ensure that FBOs comply with food law requirements and that FBOs meet regulatory standards in relation to public health and, in slaughterhouses, animal health and welfare. Full details of the audit process and instructions to our officials are in Chapter 4.1 Audit

([https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/Chapter%204.1%20Audit 0.pdf](https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/Chapter%204.1%20Audit%200.pdf)) of the Manual for Official Controls.

Performance management of LAs

The FSA routinely collect data and information on the delivery of official controls carried out by LAs in relation to food hygiene and food standards. LAs are expected to have due regard to the Food Law Code of Practice and Food Law Practice Guidance (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>) when enforcing food and feed law. Key metrics are reported to the FSA Business Committee (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-board-meetings#previous-fsa-board-and-business-committee-meetings>) on a quarterly basis.

This data, along with any other intelligence and information is assessed and analysed to identify trends and any emerging issues in individual LAs. The FSAs Performance Management Teams follow up on any emerging concerns on a risk basis, contacting relevant LAs to address any performance issues and offering additional support and guidance where possible.

Training of staff

The FSA offers free online food safety courses (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/online-food-safety-training>) for businesses on allergens and root cause analysis.

The FSA also organises training for LA officers that are primarily delivered via third party providers. This can include topics such as HACCP, Enforcement Sanctions and allergens.

A Continuous Professional Development (CPD) requirement of 2 days per year must be completed by MHIs who carry out enforcement activity.

Staff delivering official controls in FSA approved establishments comprise staff employed by Service Delivery Partners (SDPs) and directly employed FSA staff. SDPs are responsible for providing suitably trained staff and the FSA provides an external QA programme to assess the suppliers training system.

FSA employed staff have a CPD requirement, that includes 2 days training per year delivered by the FSA for meat inspectors, and 5 days for veterinarians, in line with the requirements of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

Documented controls procedures

Food and Feed Law Code of Practice (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>) - The Food and Feed Law Code of Practice give instructions that LAs must have due regard to these documents when enforcing food and feed law. LAs need to follow and implement the relevant sections of the Code that apply.

Food and Feed Law Practice Guidance (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>) - The Practice Guidance documents are non-statutory documents which complement the Code of Practice. They provide general advice on approach to enforcement of the law.

Competency Standard (<https://fsalink.food.gov.uk/official/guidance/competency-standard>) - The Competency Standard has been developed for use by LAs and PHA officers in England and Wales. It provides a clear, consistent way to assess whether officers have the right knowledge, skills and experience to perform their feed/food duties.

Manual for Official controls (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/manual-for-official-controls>) - The MOC describes the tasks, responsibilities and duties of our staff carrying out official controls in approved establishments.

Supplemental guides and tools

Safer Food, Better Business (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-sfbb>) - Safer food better business details the food safety management procedures for small businesses.

Industry guides to good food hygiene (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/industry-guides-to-good-food-hygiene>) - Various industry guides covering a range of food types.

MyHACCP (<https://myhaccp.food.gov.uk/home>) - A free online web tool to support small food manufacturing businesses to develop HACCP based food safety management systems.

Contingency planning

The FSA maintain an Incident Management Plan (IMP), which sets out the framework for the FSA's response to non-routine incidents, crisis and emergencies. The IMP defines the FSA's response arrangements to a non-routine incident where the FSA takes responsibility, either by statutory requirement (as set out in the Food Law Code of Practice

(<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>)) and/or in its role of lead government department (LGD), following an actual or potential threat to the safety, quality or integrity of food and/or animal feed; or as a supporting department response. Incident management is guided by FSA's Non-Routine Incident Management Plan (<https://www.food.gov.uk/our-work/incident-management-plan-management-of-a-non-routine-incident-de-escalation-and-closure#the-daily-rhythm>).

Information in [Chapter 12 \(https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/manual-for-official-controls\)](https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/manual-for-official-controls) of The Manual for Official Controls (MOC) sets out how to escalate an incident identified by our field-based staff.

Food Standards Scotland (FSS)

FSS was established on 1 April 2015 as the national food body for Scotland, with responsibility for those central government functions previously carried out by the FSA in Scotland, including feed and food safety and standards, nutrition, food labelling, and meat inspection policy and delivery.

The [FSS Strategy \(https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/governance/fss-strategy-2026-2031?utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=strategy&utm_content=staff\)](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/governance/fss-strategy-2026-2031?utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=strategy&utm_content=staff) from 2026 to 2031, sets out a vision for a food system that is safe, authentic and healthier, and one which Scotland can trust. The Strategy lays out the following strategic priorities:

- Public health and consumer protection
- Evolving and reforming the regulatory landscape
- Providing an effective public service for the people of Scotland

A key focus of the [FSS Regulatory Strategy \(https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/science-and-evidence/food-standards-scotland-regulatory-strategy\)](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/science-and-evidence/food-standards-scotland-regulatory-strategy) is to ensure that food regulation in Scotland is proportionate, targeted and risk based, aligning with better regulation principles and the Scottish Regulators' Strategic Code of Practice, and that feed and food official control systems are sustainable, responsive and robust.

The [FSS three year corporate plan \(https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/governance/corporate-plan-2024-2026\)](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/governance/corporate-plan-2024-2026) describes the work that will be undertaken to deliver the strategy between 2024 and 2026.

The SAFER programme is FSS' strategic response to the risks that surround the food law delivery model in Scotland. The programme supports Ministerial commitments to wider public service reform and is a programme

of reform to secure improved public health outcomes through model redesign, developing and embracing new and more efficient ways of working, better use of data and digital technologies, and ensuring financial sustainability. Further information about the SAFER programme (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/regulatory-approach-and-policy/safer-programme>) can be found at the [foodstandards.gov.scot](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot) website.

Roles and responsibilities

FSS is the central competent authority for the main body of food and feed safety law in Scotland. The Food Scotland Act 2015 gives FSS statutory powers to deliver national priorities and objectives, such as setting performance standards for enforcement of feed and food law and monitoring and auditing performance of enforcement authorities against the standards.

The objectives and functions (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/1/contents>) of FSS are detailed in the Food Scotland Act 2015.

FSS is designated as a competent authority by Scottish Ministers for official control delivery for feed and food sectors. Further information can be found at in feed and food sections. Schedules 4 and 5 of The Official Feed and Food Controls (Scotland) Regulations 2009 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2009/446/contents>), as amended, lays out the respective competent authority roles of FSS and LAs in relation to certain provisions of EU Regulation 2017/625, as they apply to feed and food respectively. In addition to office-based staff, FSS also employs field-based staff who deliver official controls in the form of Meat Hygiene Inspectors (MHIs), OVIs, Wine Inspectors and Feed Inspectors.

The Food Scotland Act 2015 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/1/contents>) provides FSS with the powers to require LAs to provide information on food law monitoring and enforcement. FSS has a role in providing guidance and direction to LAs to aid consistency. This role includes development of guidance and training materials, and development of the Food Law Code of Practice (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/publications/food-law-code-of-practice-scotland-2019>), on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

Investigation of food crime is carried out by the SFCIU, within FSS. The SFCIU works in collaboration with the National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) at the FSA. Both units work in compliance with the National Intelligence Model (NIM) to ensure food is safe and authentic and consumers and food businesses are protected from the threats and risks of food crime. Further consumer information (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/consumer-advice/food-safety/food-crime-consumer-information>) is available on the [foodstandards.gov.scot](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot) website.

The SFCIU supports public bodies, including LAs, to protect the public from risks to health from eating food. Information on understanding what food crime is and how to report it (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/consumer-advice/food-safety/food-incidents>) can be found on the foodstandards.gov.scot website.

Official controls – organisation and management

Official controls, which include inspections, audits and sampling, are carried out on a risk basis. FSS is responsible for official controls and requirements for official control delivery are:

Official controls in FSS approved meat establishments

FSS holds competent authority responsibility for approvals in certain meat establishments. This includes Slaughterhouse, Cutting Plant, Game Handling Establishments, wholesale markets, processing plants (for products, fats, gelatine), and re-wrapping/cold stores. Within these establishments OV's and Official Auxiliaries (OAs) deliver hygiene and welfare checks.

Where establishments are co-located with an approved slaughterhouse, cutting plant or game handling establishment, then the following associated meat activities are also approved by FSS:

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

The Scottish manual for official controls

(<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/scottish-manual-for-official-controls-smoc>) (SMOC) provides further information.

LAs also approve and perform checks at meat establishments. See the chapter on LAs for more detail.

Animal feed

FSS is the competent authority for feed delivery in Scotland, although there are DSLAs with a number of LAs in Scotland to deliver official controls on behalf of FSS. Further information on DSLAs

(<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/industry-specific-advice/animal-feed>) in place, registration and approval, inspection, sampling and analysis and enforcement can be found on the foodstandards.gov.scot

website. The site also includes guidance on the feed manual of official controls. (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/feed-manual-of-official-controls>)

Egg hygiene

FSS is the competent authority for egg hygiene in production holdings. Official control delivery has been delegated to Scottish Government Poultry Unit. Further information on egg hygiene regulations (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/enforcement-egg-hygiene-regulations>) is available on the foodstandards.gov.scot website.

Wine standards

FSS is responsible for encouraging growers, producers and traders to comply with laws on wine by offering advice and education in Scotland. We carry out a programme of inspections, using risk analysis to deliver a targeted and cost-effective service. We identify breaches of the law and gather evidence for legal action in serious cases, often working with other regulatory bodies.

We ensure the safety, quality, authenticity and correct labelling of wine products. Our enforcement covers trade and premises within the production and distribution chain. This includes bottling plants, bonded warehouses, importers, wholesalers, vineyards and wineries.

Working with FSA, we also maintain the UK Vineyards Register which records areas under vine and production returns from producers.

Wine regulations at retail premises are enforced by LAs. Further information on wine producer regulations (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/industry-specific-advice/drinks/wine-producers>) is available on the foodstandards.gov.scot website.

Shellfish safety and classification

FSS is directly responsible for decisions in relation to the classification and official control monitoring of shellfish. We give advice on closure and re-opening of shellfish production and relay areas.

Live Bivalve Molluscs (LBM) which include oysters, mussels, clams, cockles and scallops, are filter feeders, and are therefore susceptible to picking up and accumulating toxins, chemical or bacteriological contaminants from their environment. To reduce the risk of contamination, these species can only be commercially harvested from classified production areas that are monitored.

The results of this programme are used to determine whether an area should be open or closed for harvesting depending on the levels of microbiological and chemical contaminants, including marine biotoxins.

More details of the individual strands of this programme (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/industry-specific-advice/fish-and-shellfish/shellfish>) are outlined on the foodstandards.gov.scot website.

Radioactivity in food

FSS collaborates with UK environmental agencies and FSA to monitor radioactivity in food and the environment (RIFE) on an annual basis. Annual RIFE reports are produced detailing findings from the analyses of food and sources of public drinking water that are consumed across the UK. Further information on understanding and mitigating risks to the food chain (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/science-and-evidence/food-safety-research-and-surveillance/understanding-and-mitigating-risks-to-the-food-chain>) is available on the foodstandards.gov.scot website.

Official controls in all other food establishments are carried out by LAs, who have been designated as competent authorities by Scottish Ministers. FSS has a role in providing guidance and direction to LAs to aid consistency. This role includes development of guidance and training materials, and development of the Food Law Code of Practice (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/publications-and-research/publications/food-law-code-of-practice-scotland-2019>), on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

Co-ordination and collaboration

FSS international work

FSS works with FSA to collaborate internationally to safeguard food entering the UK and to be at the forefront of international developments in food safety. We work with our partners to influence international food safety standards. This enables us to ensure that global standards protect consumers.

Third country audits

As competent authority for trade, Defra is responsible for hosting third country audits. FSS works with Defra, and other Government Departments and agencies, including LAs, to deliver food and feed audits in Scotland.

Scientific groups

At the core of the FSS's values is that our policy and regulatory decisions are science and evidence based. We advocate that science remains at the heart of international policymaking. We participate in a wide range of international scientific groups in areas such as social science, regulatory economics, and food allergens.

FSS provides support for UK experts to engage in expert committees, for example:

- biannual WHO Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA)
- International Commission on the Microbiological Specifications for Foods (ICMSF) – this is a leading source for independent scientific advice to

international standard setting bodies

National level cooperation

The memorandum of understanding (MOU) with FSA covers incident handling, resilience, science collaboration, data sharing and communications, with standing senior-officials meetings and protocols for joint incident engagement across Great Britain. The MoU underpins consistent incident coordination across countries in Great Britain and exchange of intelligence needed to deliver official controls. Detailed corporate governance information (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/governance/corporate-governance>) is available on the foodstandards.gov.scot website.

Local authority networks

FSS develops and maintains working relationships with key partners like the Scottish Government, LAs, the FSA and Public Health Scotland.

Within Scotland, the LA enforcement community is our most important delivery partnership. FSS attends regular regional LA liaison groups. FSS supports LAs through the development of guidance and training materials and facilitation of working groups and committees.

Food hygiene information scheme (FHIS)

The FHIS is a scheme developed to provide consumers with information to allow them to choose where to eat out or buy food by providing clear information about businesses' food hygiene standards. It is operated by LAs in Scotland, in partnership with FSS. Further information and details of the FHIS ratings (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/consumer-advice/food-safety/eating-out-of-home/food-hygiene-information-scheme-consumer-info>) can be found on the foodstandards.gov.scot website.

Scottish Food Crime and Incidents unit (SFCIU)

The SFCIU is a dedicated law enforcement function of the FSS. The unit provides leadership on food crime across Scotland. The unit works closely with the National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) in England and Wales.

The SFCIU was established in 2015 when FSS was established, following a review of the 2013 horse meat incident. The SFCIU is tasked with protecting consumers and the food industry from food crime within food supply chains.

The SFCIU plays an important role in multi-sector engagement at national and international levels. It works closely with the food industry to ensure that businesses are well-informed and prepared to counter food crime. The Unit aims to create a hostile environment for those engaging in food crime by investigating suspected offenders or otherwise supporting partners in their lawful efforts to similarly disrupt those criminals.

The SFCIU is a member of the [Global Alliance on Food Crime](https://www.foodauthenticity.global/global-alliance-on-food-crime) (<https://www.foodauthenticity.global/global-alliance-on-food-crime>) which is a

coalition of international leaders who work together on the prevention, detection and disruption of food crime.

The Food Industry Intelligence Network (FIIN) pools more than 50,000 authenticity tests annually and has a structured two-way information-sharing arrangement with regulators including the FSA's National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) and FSS. FIIN also issues member e-alerts on current issues in real time.

Regular Intelligence considerations meeting (ICM) provide a cross FSA and FSS forum for sharing information and signals on developing food and feed standards threats, ensuring cross-nation discussions to work to solve identified problems appropriately.

Research, monitoring and public reporting

FSS publishes a number of public facing reports. These include Our Food 2024 (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/governance/our-food-2024>), published jointly with FSA and Annual Report and Accounts 2024 to 25 (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/governance/annual-report-and-accounts-202425>).

Audit assurance

The power to set standards and monitor CAs' food law enforcement services was conferred on FSS by the Food Scotland Act 2015 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/1/contents>) and similar provisions in the Official Feed and Food Control (Scotland) Regulations 2009. The FSS Audit Assurance Division has a responsibility to monitor the performance of, and promote best practice by, enforcement authorities in enforcing food and feed legislation in Scotland.

To fulfil the requirements of Article 6 of OCR, FSS carries out internal audits of its own official control responsibilities, and it carries out audits of LAs. These audits are designed to verify the effective implementation of planned arrangements and to assess whether the planned arrangements are suitable to achieve the objectives of the relevant legal requirements and guidance. Internal audits (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/local-authority-guidance/audit-and-monitoring>) are reported to the Audit and Risk Committee and LA audit reports are published.

Audit of approved meat establishments

FSS undertakes announced and unannounced audits of all FSS approved meat establishments approved in Scotland under veterinary control. These audits apply to red meat / farmed game slaughterhouses, poultry meat slaughterhouses, cutting plants, game handling establishments, minced meat, meat preparations and mechanically separated meat establishments co-located with slaughterhouses or cutting plants, meat product plants and 'ready to eat' establishments co-located with slaughterhouses and cutting plants and co-located cold stores.

All audits are carried out by Veterinary Auditors who are independent and separate from regular business operations and routine inspection duties.

Audits are intended to ensure that FBOs comply with food law requirements and that FBOs meet regulatory standards in relation to public health and, in slaughterhouses, animal health and welfare. The SMOC (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/scottish-manual-for-official-controls-smoc>) provides full details of the audit process and instructions to our officials.

Training of staff

Authorised FSS officers are required to maintain Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on an annual basis. CPD may take the form of training courses, attendance at meetings, shadowing or joint establishment visits. FSS either develops and delivers appropriate in-house training courses or sources external courses, which may be accredited, to ensure that officer competence is maintained in relation to new technologies and emerging risks.

FSS offers free tools and training (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/tools-and-training>) for businesses operators.

FSS also organises training for LA officers that are primarily delivered via third party providers. FSS develops training courses and training materials in response to LA requests and can include topics such as HACCP and enforcement.

Documented controls procedures

The Food Law Code of Practice gives instructions (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/food-law-code-of-practice-2019>) that LAs must consider when enforcing food law. LAs need to follow and implement the relevant sections of the Code that apply.

The Feed Manual of Official Controls

(<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/feed-manual-of-official-controls>) is required to be followed by Feed Officers (FSS and delegated agents) and to ensure a consistent approach to the delivery of feed law enforcement to all feed establishments.

The Scottish Manual for Official Controls describes the tasks, responsibilities and duties (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/scottish-manual-for-official-controls-smoc>) of our staff carrying out official controls in approved meat establishments.

Additional guidance is available to LAs and the food industry on the [foodstandards.gov.scot](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot) website:

- [FSS - support for LAs \(https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/local-authority-guidance\)](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/local-authority-guidance)
- [Get industry-specific advice for your food business from Food Standards Scotland \(https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/industry-specific-advice\)](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/industry-specific-advice)

Contingency planning

Article 5 of Assimilated EU Regulation 625/2017 requires that competent authorities have contingency plans in place and be prepared to operate such plans in the event of an emergency. The plans that FSS have in place for both food and feed incidents and crime are:

- [Food incidents \(https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/food-incidents-about-us\)](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/food-incidents-about-us)
- [Incident Management Framework - overview \(https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/incident-management-framework\)](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/incident-management-framework)
- [Incident Management Framework v3 \(https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.foodstandards.gov.scot%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fmigration%2Fdownloads%2FIncident_Management_-_01._Incident_Management_Framework_-_Version_3_-_February_2024_.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK\)](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.foodstandards.gov.scot%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fmigration%2Fdownloads%2FIncident_Management_-_01._Incident_Management_Framework_-_Version_3_-_February_2024_.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
- [The Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit \(SFCIU\) \(https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/the-scottish-food-crime-and-incidents-unit-sfcIU\)](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/about-us/how-we-work/the-scottish-food-crime-and-incidents-unit-sfcIU)

Local Authorities

Roles and responsibilities

There are over 300 LAs operating across Great Britain, each responsible for delivering a range of public services. LAs operate independently, aligning their activities with local priorities and needs.

LAs are designated competent authorities and are responsible for:

- monitoring compliance with and enforcing the requirements of food and feed law in food businesses and certain approved establishments
- the regulation and enforcement of animal health and welfare legislation

Officers responsible for enforcement are trained and authorised according to national standards and procedures set out in the [Food and Feed law Codes of Practice \(https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice\)](https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice)

practice) and the Competency Standard (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice#competency-standard>).

LAs produce service plans that lay out the LA's commitment to service delivery and they provide the control framework for official control delivery and reporting/enforcement during all stages of feed and food production, processing and distribution and animal health and welfare.

The main food and feed related roles of LAs include official control delivery and enforcement of:

- Food law
- Feed law (England and Wales only)
- Animal health and welfare

LAs derive their powers from domestic legislation:

- Food Safety Act 1990 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/16/contents>)
- Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations 2009 (for England (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/3255/contents>), Wales (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2009/3376/contents>) and Scotland (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2009/446/contents>))
- Animal Health Act 1981 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/22>)
- Animal Welfare Act 2006 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/45/contents>)
- Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/28>)
- Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2013/2/contents/enacted>)
- The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2006/3/contents>)

In the event of a food safety incident, LAs work with FSA and FSS to action and manage the incident.

In the event of an animal disease outbreak, LAs act as key operational partners to Defra, taking on responsibilities for enforcing disease control legislation.

Official controls – organisation and management

Food and feed

Generally, LAs have responsibility for official control delivery and enforcement at all registered food businesses (including primary production) and approved establishments that are not otherwise approved by FSA and FSS.

LAs in England and Wales are responsible for official control delivery and enforcement at all registered and approved feed establishments. Whilst FSS is responsible for feed law enforcement in Scotland, some LAs carry out official control delivery of feed under delegation by FSS.

Official controls are undertaken on a risk basis. The risk assessment details are found on the Codes of Practice ([England and Wales](https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice) (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>), [Scotland](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/food-law-code-of-practice-2019) (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/food-law-code-of-practice-2019>)) available on the gov.uk and gov.scot websites.

LA approved meat establishments

LAs approve and perform checks at the following establishments:

- standalone cold stores that are re-wrapping and re-packaging meat
- minced meat establishments
- meat preparations establishments
- mechanically separated meat establishments
- meat products processing plants
- rendered animal fats and greaves processing plants
- treated stomachs, bladders and intestines processing plants
- gelatine processing plants
- collagen processing plants
- frogs' legs and snails processing plant

Fish and shellfish establishments

LAs approve and perform checks at:

- LBMs establishments including dispatch centres and purification centres
- establishments working with fishery products using factory and freezing vessels, processing plants, fresh fishery products, mechanically separated fishery products plants, auction halls, wholesale markets.

Animal produce establishments

LAs approve and perform checks at:

- raw milk and dairy products, including collection centres and processing plants. Note that in Scotland, it is an offence to place raw milk or cream on the market intended for direct human consumption
- eggs and egg products, including packing centres, processing plants, liquid egg plants

Natural mineral waters

Recognition of natural mineral water from sources in Great Britain is granted by the relevant LA. Where a LA decides not to grant recognition or to withdraw recognition of a natural mineral water, the business may request a review of the decision. This review will be carried out by the FSA in Wales and FSS in Scotland. In England, Defra has this responsibility.

Animal health and welfare

Individual LAs primarily operate on a risk and intelligence-led basis. Their responsibilities include enforcing legislation related to:

- disease control
- illegal imports
- animal identification
- livestock movements
- animal health and welfare

At the national level, LAs are supported by:

- the National Animal Health and Welfare Panel (NAHWP)
- National Trading Standards (NTS)
- the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO)

Regional groups also play a key role, bringing together inspectors and other operational partners, including other competent authorities, to ensure coordinated and effective action. In the event of a confirmed disease outbreak, LAs may establish a Strategic Co-ordinating Group to manage the broader impacts within the local area.

Co-ordination and collaboration

Regional and national focus groups for food and feed

In Scotland, LAs participate in regional liaison groups, at least quarterly, with the purpose of sharing good practice and enabling consistency in relation to food safety, food standards and enforcement.

LAs in England participate in regional food liaison groups, normally quarterly, with the purpose of sharing good practice and enabling consistency.

In England, LAs regularly attend FLGs to discuss the work of LAs in relation to food hygiene and standards. Regional representatives from England and Wales also regularly attend FHFG and FSIFG meetings.

These meetings are LA-led practitioner forums that bring together regional representatives to share good practice, agree consistent approaches to enforcement, and feed back to national policy makers on food hygiene and standards issues. FSA also act as speakers/observers to brief on guidance,

collect feedback and discuss implementation challenges. The focus groups' consolidated views are sometimes used to inform FSA policy work and UK positions on hygiene matters.

Several expert panels and groups operate in Wales under the DPPW structure. The FSA attend these meetings to provide operational updates and respond to enquiries. These panels include:

- Wales Food Safety Expert Panel
- Trading Standards Wales Food Standards and Labelling Group
- Communicable Disease Expert Panel and Task Groups
- North Wales Food and Communicable Disease Panel
- Port Health Expert Panel
- Welsh Food Microbiological Forum

National agriculture panel

The National Agriculture Panel is a UK wide forum that brings together LA regional feed leads, the FSA, devolved governments, FSS, National Trading Standards (NTS), APHA, VMD, and Public Analysts. It provides a single national route for coordination on agricultural and feed official controls, ensuring national consistency in how feed and agricultural controls are interpreted. It also strengthens risk identification and response through shared technical insight.

National animal feed at ports panel

The National Animal Feed at Ports Panel is a UK wide specialist forum focused on imported animal feed controls at ports. It brings together LAs with port responsibilities across GB, the FSA, FSS, and National Trading Standards (NTS/ACTSO). Its purpose is to coordinate risk-based checks on imported feed, share intelligence, and support consistent national delivery.

English and Wales regional feed groups

The nine English Regional Feed Groups are LA coordination forums that support the delivery of animal feed official controls within the FDP. They bring together Trading Standards feed officers within each region to share intelligence, coordinate inspections, standardise practice, and raise issues that require national attention.

The nine English regional groups are:

- Central England Trading Standards Authorities
- East of England Trading Standards Authorities
- London Trading Standards
- North East Trading Standards Authorities
- Trading Standards East Midlands

- Trading Standards North West
- Trading Standards South East
- Trading Standards South West
- Yorkshire and Humber Trading Standards Group

In Wales, LAs attend:

Regional lead officers group: A meeting of the nominated lead feed officers for each of the six regions operating in Wales. The regional group discuss areas of concerns, best practice and seek to achieve consistency across Wales. The group also discuss delivery progress and considers feed related projects they may wish to seek funding for. It also serves as a forum to discuss delivery proposals for the next financial year.

Feed governance group: This group is made up of representatives from FSA Wales, Directors of Public Protection Wales (DPPW), Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Trading Standards Wales, Chair of the Regional Lead Officers and, in an observatory capacity, Welsh Government. The Governance Group oversees the delivery of animal feed official controls and provides strategic oversight of the regional feed delivery model. They agree the process to facilitate the day-to-day operational delivery and review whether regions are proceeding in accordance with their agreed work plans. The group also approves the delivery proposal that is developed.

Primary authority and the home authority principle

Primary Authority and the Home Authority Principle help LAs work together with businesses to provide consistent and co-ordinated regulatory food and feed advice, particularly across geographical authority boundaries. Both Primary Authority and the Home Authority Principle are endorsed by the FSA and are reflected in the statutory Food Law and Feed Law Codes of Practice to which LAs must have regard. Primary Authority in relation to food and feed safety, applies in England and Wales only. The Home Authority Principle are endorsed by FSS.

Primary Authority is a statutory scheme administered by the Office for Product Safety and Standards at the Department for Business and Trade. The Primary Authority Statutory Guidance is issued by the Secretary of State and outlines the framework for the operation of Primary Authority. Under the scheme the FSA is both a National Regulator and a Supporting Regulator and has a statutory role in relation to determinations, Primary Authority advice and inspection plans.

Primary Authority enables businesses to form a legal partnership with one or more LAs, which then provides assured and tailored advice on complying with environmental health, trading standards or fire safety regulations that other local regulators must respect.

Home Authorities operate in situations when a business does not have a Primary Authority partnership in place but where there remains a clear need for regulatory activity in relation to that business to be coordinated.

Animal health and welfare framework

The framework (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/animal-health-and-welfare-framework-2018/animal-health-and-welfare-framework>) encourages collaborative working between LAs and other competent bodies. It also provides guidance on sharing intelligence related to animal health and welfare.

The National Animal Health and Welfare Panel (NAHWP) brings together senior inspectors and representatives from LAs, FSA, Defra, the APHA and other enforcement agencies.

At the operational level, LAs work closely with other competent authorities, charities, and the public. Intelligence sharing and public complaints are key triggers for the enforcement actions carried out by LAs.

In the event of an animal disease outbreak, LAs may also collaborate with Local Resilience Forums (LRFs), multi-agency partnerships that coordinate cross-government incident management.

Audit assurance

LAs must have control verification procedures in place as required by Article 12(2) of Assimilated Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>). Control verification (internal monitoring) and requirement for documented procedures are covered by the Food Law Codes of Practice.

Control verification should ensure:

- official controls are carried out consistently and effectively and based on risk
- the planned official control programme is carried out competently
- steps are in place to address any performance not meeting expected standards
- appropriate and consistent application of the risk-rating systems

The codes provide further detail on monitoring in relation service delivery, official control delivery by authorised officers, follow up checks and management information systems.

The Animal Health and Welfare Framework promotes alignment with the standards outlined in Article 6 of the assimilated Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625.

LAs provide assurance through statutory data returns, including information on:

- services, controls undertaken, and enforcement actions
- prosecutions
- issuing of penalty notices

Training of staff

The Food and Feed Law Codes of Practice (England and Wales (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>), Scotland (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/food-law-code-of-practice-2019>)) require that officers undertake a specified number of hours of continuing professional development, which may include structured training. In addition, the Codes require that officers be provided with appropriate training to ensure that their competencies are maintained in relation to new food, feed related technologies and emerging food, feed safety and food and feed standards risks as necessary. Officers whose knowledge and or practical experience of food/ feed law enforcement is out-of-date must receive structured revision training.

Officers are trained and authorised to deliver controls related to animal health and welfare in accordance with local standards and procedures. The Animal Health and Welfare Framework provides guidance to LAs on Article 5(4) of the Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2017/625/contents>), supporting consistent and compliant enforcement practices.

Documented controls procedures

The Codes of Practice require that documented procedures are developed for registration, approval, official control processes, enforcement, internal monitoring and incident handling (including out of hours arrangements).

The Code of Practice is supported by the Practice Guidance documents. FSA and FSS have developed additional guidance available on their websites.

LA working groups have also developed guidance for LAs in Scotland.

LAs carry out annual service planning to support the delivery of animal health and welfare controls within their geographical areas, including:

- identification of high-risk businesses
- targeted interventions
- processes for managing intelligence and public complaints

LAs are also required to maintain published enforcement policies, outlining the actions that may be taken in response to non-compliance. Additionally, each LA must have an up-to-date contingency plan to ensure preparedness in the event of an animal health or public health outbreak.

Contingency planning

Individual LAs maintain an up-to-date animal disease contingency plan which are tested, sometimes as part of multi-agency exercises. LAs may establish Strategic Coordinating Groups following confirmation of disease and facilitate a range of functions such as, provision of staff and buildings and erection of road signs for publicising control zones.

LAs are required to have documented procedures in place for dealing with food and feed incidents and hazards. Further details can be found in the Codes of Practice (England and Wales (<https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/food-and-feed-codes-of-practice>), Scotland (<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-guidance/running-a-food-business/publications/food-law-code-of-practice-2019>)).

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science

Roles and responsibilities

Official controls on aquatic animal health are devolved in the UK. In England and Wales, the Secretary of State (Defra) and Welsh Ministers (Welsh Government) are the competent authority (CA) for aquatic animal health under the Aquatic Animal Health (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2009/463/regulation/3A>). Within Defra, primary responsibility for the fulfilment of CA responsibilities on behalf of the Secretary of State at the policy level is through the aquatic animal health policy team, exotic and endemic disease control, animal health and welfare directorate. Within Welsh Government, primary responsibility for the fulfilment of CA responsibilities on behalf of the Welsh Ministers at the policy level is through the marine and fisheries Division.

Operational implementation of Official Controls on aquatic animal health is primarily delivered through the Fish Health Inspectorate (<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/fish-health-inspectorate>) (FHI) based at CEFAS (<https://www.cefasc.co.uk>) (Cefas) laboratory in Weymouth, Dorset, who are authorised to act on behalf of the CA in this capacity. Cefas is an Executive Agency of Defra, providing scientific research and advice to Defra on a broad range of issues related to the aquatic environment. Responsibilities of the FHI at Cefas include enforcement of the provisions of the Aquatic Animal Health (England and Wales) Regulations 2009. Cefas also provides specialist epidemiology, disease risk, and diagnostic

laboratory services, including the UK NRL for fish, mollusc, and crustacean diseases, which provide specialist advice and support to Defra and the FHI on aquatic animal health and the delivery of official controls. Cefas works to an agreed MoU with Defra and the Welsh Government that sets out roles and responsibilities, objectives and targets, and is reviewed annually.

Within Cefas, the Head of the FHI is responsible for operational activities and reports to the Health and Welfare Science Director at Cefas, who in turn reports to the Cefas Chief Executive Officer.

There are three principal areas within the FHI, each managed by a team Principal:

- inspections, disease surveillance and control
- aquatic animal trade
- aquaculture and freshwater fisheries licensing and data

Official controls – organisation and management

The FHI is responsible for the operational delivery and enforcement of official controls and related activities for aquatic animal health in England and Wales. This includes authorisation of aquaculture production businesses, routine inspections for compliance with conditions of authorisation and biosecurity requirements, risk-based disease surveillance for listed diseases (inspection and sampling), investigation and control of serious (listed and emerging) diseases of fish and shellfish in domestic and wild populations, and the implementation of controls on the import and export of live fish, molluscs and crustaceans. All samples taken by the FHI on suspicion or to rule out the presence of listed or emerging disease in fish or shellfish are submitted to the UK NRL for diagnostic testing in line with the requirements of Great Britain legislation and international standards set by the World Organisation for Animal Health.

Co-ordination and collaboration

The FHI works closely with delivery partners and stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of government aquatic animal health policies and controls. Cefas FHI maintains regular contact with its counterparts in the Scottish Government's Marine Directorate, DAERA, and relevant aquatic animal health policy teams. This collaboration is supported through the aquatic animal health policy group, a forum of officials and specialists from across the UK that meets on a regular basis, which helps to ensure alignment across Great Britain and aids information exchange.

Cefas FHI also coordinates closely with APHA on matters relating to live aquatic animal imports and exports. In addition, the FHI uses bespoke

online systems, including FHI Online and the Starfish Database, to, where appropriate, share data between agencies, collaborate with industry, and proactively promote compliance.

Audit assurance

Cefas is UKAS accredited under ISO 17025 for sampling and diagnostic work for major diseases. In addition, the FHI operates a competency framework to ensure best practice by its field inspectors. The accredited quality systems at the Cefas Weymouth laboratory are audited annually by UKAS. Cefas is also certified to ISO 9001 and ISO14001. The FHI operates under a robust quality management system that includes regular internal audits to ensure all activities are performed to the highest standards. Documented procedures and protocols are reviewed and maintained to ensure consistency and transparency across inspections, testing, and regulatory delivery, supporting continuous improvement and compliance with the legal framework and international standards. Information on all control activities are recorded on the FHI's dedicated bespoke IT systems.

The Cefas Weymouth Laboratory has purpose-built offices and laboratory facilities, providing the necessary infrastructure and resources to support a comprehensive range of regulatory, diagnostic and advisory activities for official controls. Cefas laboratories participate in ring tests organised by EU Reference Laboratories for finfish, molluscan and crustacean diseases covering all major notifiable and emerging aquatic pathogens.

Training of staff

The FHI operates a competency framework to ensure that all Inspectors are properly and fully trained on all aspects of inspection activity, and their performance assessed before they can carry out independent inspection work. The FHI quality management system also requires that all Inspectors are regularly assessed to ensure that they remain competent to discharge their responsibilities to the required standard. The competency framework also ensures that Inspectors develop a broad understanding of matters relevant to their work, such as an understanding of diseases and their control, fish health legislation and enforcement activities.

Documented controls procedures

The FHI adheres to documented Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Desk Instructions (DIs) for all official control activities. The SOPs and DIs are routinely reviewed and maintained in line with the requirements of the Cefas quality control and document record management system, which ensures full version control and a record of issue and acknowledgment for all document users.

Contingency planning

The joint Defra and Welsh Government Contingency Plan for Exotic Notifiable and Emerging Diseases of Aquatic Animals in England and Wales (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/contingency-plan-for-exotic-notifiable-and-emerging-diseases-of-aquatic-animals-in-england-and-wales>) is in place to

facilitate a rapid and effective response by government and operational partners to outbreaks of exotic listed and emerging diseases. Formal contingency exercises are undertaken periodically to test the effectiveness of the contingency plan.

For exotic diseases of particular concern (due to their potentially significant detrimental impact on wild fish populations or aquaculture) working drafts of Defra disease control strategies have been developed to provide more detailed information on the pathogen and disease it causes, susceptible species and population in England and Wales, the measures currently in force to reduce the likelihood of the disease entering Great Britain, and policies and disease control measures that may be applied if an outbreak is confirmed, within the remit of national law. The strategies aim to enable all affected to be better prepared to respond quickly and effectively.

Within Cefas, the FHI, epidemiology and risk teams, and diagnostic laboratory delivery areas undertake internal, scenario-based outbreak preparedness exercises at least annually to test resource capacity and capability. Arising actions are tracked, and the outcomes, including risks and risk mitigation, are reported to Cefas senior leadership and the Defra AAH Policy Team.

FHI maintains a business continuity management plan (BCMP) to ensure uninterrupted delivery of statutory obligations and critical services during disruptive incidents. The BCMP covers incident management, continuity, and recovery. Critical services (for example export health certification, disease response) must be operational within five working days of a disaster. Mutual support agreements with partner laboratories ensure continuity of statutory functions.

Forestry Commission (FC)

Roles and responsibilities

The FC is responsible for plant health (forestry) and forest reproductive material matters in England, including import controls on wood and wood products and most of the operational delivery of tree health policy such as surveillance, responding to outbreaks and advice. It is represented on the various governance bodies that underpin the Common Framework. It delivers cross-border plant health (forestry) functions on behalf of Great Britain, as detailed in Schedule 3 to the MoU for the Cross-Border provision of Forestry Functions and Research Delivery. Schedule 3 sets out the arrangements for the delivery of plant health (forestry) and forest reproductive material by the FC on behalf of England, Scotland and Wales. This schedule establishes an agreed framework for the roles, responsibilities, relationships and cooperation between the users and the

forestry commissioners in relation to the regulation of plant health (forestry) and forest reproductive material.

Official controls – organisation and management

The FC undertakes responsibilities and functions relating to the official controls required for forestry pests and diseases in England and via a Cross-border MOU on behalf of the devolved governments in Scotland and Wales. These Plant Health (Forestry) functions include:

- port inspections: inspections of wood, wood products, wood packaging material (WPM)
- interception reporting
- wood processing and movement licenses
- statutory notification scheme for firewood
- pest free area and quarantine pest surveys and reports
- phytosanitary certificates for export of controlled products
- commission and support investigations into potential malpractice directly related to PH and FRM functions
- pest specific contingency plans and pest risk assessments

Co-ordination and collaboration

The FC delivers cross-border plant health (forestry) functions on behalf of Great Britain, as detailed in schedule three to the MoU for the Cross-Border provision of Forestry Functions and Research Delivery. This schedule establishes an agreed framework for the roles, responsibilities, relationships and cooperation between the users and the Forestry Commissioners in relation to the regulation of plant health (forestry) and forest reproductive material. The schedule sets out arrangements for a cross-border coordination group which has annual reporting and planning meetings. These are complemented by ad hoc meetings as required to address particular topics.

In fulfilling its responsibilities, the FC also works closely with other agencies and wider stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency. Collaboration with other agencies such as with APHA on wood packaging inspections is delivered through BAU and ad hoc working.

Audit assurance

Audits of performance are carried out as required and may be undertaken internally or by GIAA as part of the wider FC audit programme. Performance is monitored through KPIs, databases, and regular reporting.

Training of staff

The FC is committed to learning and development. It aligns with the Modern Civil Service vision of a skilled, future-ready workforce and supports the

organisations strategic objectives. Effective training is vital for performance, innovation and staff engagement. It ensures that staff and contractors are trained and competent to carry out their work. This could be through a number of methods including formal training, shadowing and mentoring or the provision of written guidance in the form of standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Documented controls procedures

Detailed guidance regarding tasks to be undertaken, along with roles and responsibilities for Forestry Commission staff and contractors, is provided by a suite of operation guidance including Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), process documents and desk notes. These are stored centrally and accessible to all staff.

Contingency planning

The FC supports testing and development of contingency plans for forestry pests and diseases in collaboration with Defra, devolved governments and other agencies such as APHA. In addition, it regularly reviews of outbreak readiness and preparedness for the highest profile threats including training for external bodies.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

The HSE is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places, and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.

Our role goes beyond worker protection to include public assurance on a range of issues. We work to ensure people feel safe where they live, where they work and in their environment.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is the HSE's sponsoring department. HSE is governed by a board and the executive committee.

A DWP and HSE Framework Document

(<https://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/assets/docs/dwp-hse-framework-document.pdf>) sets out the broad framework within which HSE shall operate and the respective roles and responsibilities of DWP and HSE with a Board Operating Framework (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/assets/docs/board-operating-framework.pdf>) that sets out the HSE Board's role and responsibilities and the way in which it conducts its business.

The HSE's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's Terms of Reference (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/assets/docs/arac-terms-or-ref.pdf>) sets out the Committee's roles and responsibilities in supporting the Board to meet its

obligations to ensure HSE has an effective framework of governance, risk management and internal control.

There is a 10-year strategy (2022 to 2032 (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/the-hse-strategy.htm>)) that reflects HSE's role at its broadest. A strategy designed to keep HSE focussed on tackling both new and traditional risk, at the right time in the right way. By setting out clear objectives and themes to guide future interventions and regulatory activities.

HSE works closely with Defra which has strategic policy responsibility for pesticides, chemicals and detergents and with FSA on issues related to food safety

HSE's regulatory functions apply across the UK, including the devolved nations. HSE has operational and enforcement authority legally delegated to them by Defra, Scottish Government and Welsh Government.

The HSE has access to UK and EU registration data for pesticide authorisation, which informs the Chemical Regulation Division (CRD) analytical and sampling programme. It manages work on the annual surveys of pesticide usage in the UK, providing useful intelligence to inform its monitoring programme.

HSE has official arrangements or commercial contracts with laboratories for pesticide residues in food analysis and formulation monitoring, and other work in support of plant protection product regulation. It also funds analytical and other projects in support of the pesticide residues monitoring programme, to improve the programme's robustness, range and speed.

HSE Headquarters are in Bootle, Merseyside, but inspectors and other field professionals are based in offices organised into regions across Great Britain.

Roles and responsibilities

The CRD support the HSE work in 'the prevention of death, injury and ill health to those at work and those affected by work'. This is achieved by early intervention in the supply chain and seeking to prevent the adverse effects of chemicals on people and the environment. The aim of CRD is to ensure the safe use of biocides, industrial chemicals, pesticides and detergents to protect the health of people and the environment. This includes acting as the competent authority (CA) for plant protection products and biocides. CA activities include monitoring programmes and undertaking proactive and reactive interventions.

The CRD's major role is to deliver CA functions within EU legislation regulating the manufacture and/or use of chemicals, where HSE is the appointed authority for the UK.

The principal programmes covered are:

- Plant Protection Products (PPP) Directives and Regulations
- The Biocidal Products Directive and Regulation
- Regulatory responsibilities under the UK Control of Pesticides Regulations
- The REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) Regulation
- EU Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulation
- Regulation of the Export and Import of dangerous substances, and the Rotterdam Convention
- Detergents Regulations

The Directorate delivers a number of other functions including specialist expertise to Defra and other parts of HSE and international representation of UK interests in chemicals regulation. We also provide the secretariat function to a number of committees and fora, undertake international twinning work and provide a conference and training programme.

Our compliance activities encompass a range of interventions, from advisory and educational activities such as stakeholder engagement, communication programmes and the provision of information and advice, to inspections and investigations, and ultimately formal enforcement measures such as issuing enforcement notices and taking legal proceedings. This supports the ultimate purpose of enforcement to prevent harm and secure justice where appropriate.

In protecting the health of people and the environment our work extends beyond the bounds of work and work related activities and seeks to reduce the impact of chemicals on consumers, bystanders and the environment to levels which are acceptable to society. We also assess the benefits arising from the use of biocides and pesticides.

Official controls – organisation and management

HSE's CRD is responsible for the application of food and feed law rules relating to plant protection products under the Official Control (PPP) Regulation 2020.

CRD undertakes PPP interventions, utilising a risk-based, situational approach to compliance monitoring, responding to notifications of concerns or incidents. Proactive inspections target the highest risks, based on factors like activity type, sector, and safety record, focusing resources where hazards are least controlled or competence is in doubt. Defra annual funding resources eighteen full time equivalent Pesticide Enforcement Officers (PEOs) dedicated to inspections and HSE regulatory inspectors for investigations.

CRD also delivers a monitoring programme for pesticides residues in food and drink in the UK food supply and undertaking enforcement, liaising with FSA/FSS regarding food safety issues. The residues monitoring programme is managed through contracts and SLA for UK sample collection and laboratory pesticide residue analysis that are subject to close continual monitoring to ensure reporting milestones are met and comply with both internal and external audit standards. To enable wide-ranging monitoring sample selection HSE's contract includes APHA authorisation to undertake sampling of produce at restricted access locations (BCPs) and wholesale markets.

Monitoring provides information to verify residue levels found within those expected from normal use of the pesticide and checks that MRLs, are not breached for both imported and home-produced food. The programme involves sample collection from various points in the supply chain and sample analysis. Follow-up action is also taken based on any infringements identified in the monitoring programme, including MRL exceedances, non-approved uses and unexpected residues. Depending on the specific circumstances, follow-up action may take one or more of the following forms:

- writing out to the parties concerned to warn of a breach of the controls and to seek explanations
- repeat sampling to identify further or consistent breaches
- naming of those parties responsible in the published quarterly and yearly pesticide residues in food reports
- formal investigation in preparation for enforcement action, including the issuing of enforcement notices and taking prosecution action

The priority of surveying particular foods is risk-based, dependent on the evidence of incidence of pesticide residue problems and dietary importance and the risks to consumers from any non-compliant findings. Priorities also consider alignment to comply with the European harmonised obligations for pesticide residue monitoring in food and drink.

UK pesticide enforcement is targeted, proportionate and risk-based. The overall aim is always to protect the health of consumers by following up adverse findings or evidence of misuse of pesticides.

Local and Port Health Authorities may conduct their own surveillance of pesticide residues, referring to HSE, in consultation with the FSA, for consumer risk assessments. Where a food safety concern has been identified, these authorities are empowered to take enforcement action under general food safety legislation. LAs have an obligation to send returns on such food related incidents to the FSA.

HSE publishes full details of the results of all monitoring activities on a quarterly basis. The results of certain higher risk surveys are published monthly and an annual report is produced collating the main findings.

Co-ordination and collaboration

HSE delivers its OCR responsibilities through a risk-based, situational approach to PPP compliance monitoring with dedicated PEOs and HSE regulatory inspectors for reactive investigations and through working closely with delivery partners and stakeholders to maintain the effectiveness of the pesticide residues monitoring programme. Close collaboration with other agencies (such as the FSA and FSS) is achieved through regular meetings and ad-hoc working for intervention cases, sharing monitoring programme planning and around quarterly reporting requirements.

Audit assurance

HSE's audit and risk assurance committee guide the development and direction of assurance activity (including internal and external audit) through consideration of the integrated assurance plan, monitoring the performance of internal audit, including conformance with applicable standards, expected performance measures, and the results of both internal and external QA assessments

HSE's annual pesticide residues monitoring programme is split into four reporting periods. All contracts and SLAs have milestones relating to the control plan timetable for the year. Performance of sample collection bodies is monitored every two weeks with analytical progress monitored quarterly when analytical results are peer reviewed.

The CA assigns project managers to monitor performance with controls bodies. Specific personnel are identified as project managers in the delegated bodies. Delivery success against the published timetable of reports is only possible with close co-operation between the CA and the delegated bodies.

HSE has a programme of internal audit, which includes propriety and security in addition to those performed around HSE's various regulatory and financial functions. Audit recommendations are considered by the HSE chemical regulation division's senior management and progress against audit recommendations is reviewed on a quarterly basis. HSE accepts the annual UKAS audits as evidence of the technical and organisational capability of the official laboratories.

Interventions Inspections and PEOs are subject to HSE internal audit and selection of individual inspections for performance validation review to ensure conformity with required standards and consistency in proportionality of enforcement.

For sample collection agencies and laboratories, all procedures are formalised in a contract or SLA which includes an annual work plan. This

may be supplemented by written exchanges which detail changes to the specification. All contracts are reviewed annually but can be subject to in-year amendment with the agreement of both parties. All official laboratories are required to work in accordance with the current European Analytical Quality Control Guidelines (currently SANTE/11945/2015 (<https://www.scribd.com/document/781201362/SANTE-11945-2015>)). These guidelines are supplemented with additional guidance on procedures which HSE reviews quarterly with the official laboratories.

Training of staff

HSE staff undertaking official control activity pesticide residue monitoring and risk assessments are assessed on the quality and consistency of the controls that they carry out, as part of their annual staff performance assessment.

PEOs undertake an established training syllabus of internal and external training, with most recent PEO recruits undertaking an apprenticeship. Earlier PEO recruits have completed and passed the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health Certificate. Once PEOs have completed their initial training syllabus, there is on-going refresher training to build and maintain knowledge to required standards.

HSE staff involved in the surveillance programme, have internally approved standard internal guidance notes (SIGN) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for administrative tasks including follow-up action on results.

Documented controls procedures

HSE's pesticide residue monitoring programme contractually requires laboratories to work in accordance with the current European analytical quality control guidelines including documenting of residue analyses for annual UKAS audit purposes.

HSE staff undertaking residue monitoring risk assessments follow the internally approved SIGN and SOP guidance and procedures to comply with regulatory requirements and to align with international standards from the World Health Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organisation Guidelines for predicting dietary intake of pesticide residues (https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO_FSF_FOS_97.7) and Principles and Methods for the Risk Assessment of Chemicals in Food, Chapter 6 (https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/food-safety/publications/chapter6-dietary-exposure.pdf?sfvrsn=26d37b15_6).

Sampling selection follows regulatory requirements and principles established from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Pesticide Monitoring Program: Design Assessment (<https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/4005>).

HSE monitors international standards for revision and updating of staff guidance and procedures via dated version controls for auditability. Confidentiality of pesticide residue data is maintained via Huddle a dedicated data sharing system. Completed residue risk assessments and reports for the pesticide residue monitoring programme are archived for long-term HSE data storage.

PEO Inspection records are archived in a dedicated long-term storage system, designed to ensure compliance with enforcement data requirements.

Contingency planning

HSE maintains a pesticide residues emergency plan that summarises procedures to be followed in the event of incidents of potential inland food safety concern involving pesticide residues, for which HSE generally has lead responsibility. These include emergency action resulting from monitoring and enforcement activities and arising from spillages (including into waterways), misuse or abuse of pesticides, or contamination from an unknown origin.

The plan also details procedures for dealing with acute safety implications arising from contaminated imports, normally reported via the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) for Great Britain or RASFF for NI, for which FSA takes lead responsibility but involving HSE in risk assessment and dissemination of information.

If there are issues relating to food safety, HSE liaises closely with the FSA or FSS Incidents Branch, which would be responsible for any product recall.

In the event of sanitary and phytosanitary restrictions that could limit agricultural inspections, the interventions have contingency plans to assess with other enforcement authorities if visits can continue to be undertake or select alternative sector inspections.

His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

HMRC ensures that goods entering or leaving the UK comply with relevant legislation concerning biosecurity, food safety, and fraud prevention. HMRC supports the enforcement of official controls by managing customs procedures and collaborating with other authorities such as:

- Defra
- Food Standards Agency
- Food Standards Scotland

- Border Force

Port Health Authorities (PHA)

As a service delivery area of a local authority (or in the case of multiple LAs, managed under a joint board), PHAs are responsible for monitoring and verifying compliance with, and enforcing the requirements of, the main body of imported feed and food law, and certain elements of animal health and welfare. In Scotland the PHA role may be directly covered by a LA. Local service delivery plans provide the control framework for monitoring, reporting and enforcement.

Marine Management Organisation (MMO)

Roles and responsibilities

The MMO plays a central regulatory, oversight, and support role in ensuring fishery products in England are fully traceable from catch to consumer. Responsibilities, include legal enforcement, data management, industry guidance and development of traceability technology, for example Fish Export Service.

Official controls – organisation and management

EU retained law and UK Statutory Instruments require the submission of fish traceability documents during the catching, processing and sale of fishery products. These include:

- fish landing data through logbooks, landing declarations and catch recording submissions depending on fleet composition
- the accurate labelling of fishery products through to first sale
- transportation documents
- records of first sale either direct to merchants or through registered fish auction sites
- export and processing documents may be required post first sale

The MMO undertakes various cross checking of data and physical inspections of activities to verify accurate recording and timely submission of these documents to support full traceability.

The MMO also coordinates and supports industry with guidance and information on regulatory compliance and runs various campaigns such as

the Fish-Trace-Ship used to promote and support fishery exports from the UK.

Co-ordination and collaboration

The MMO coordinates and shares data with other devolved governments on traceability requirements and the movement of fish through the UK, utilising shared data systems, control measures and intelligence and information on non-compliance.

MMO works collaboratively with FSAs, PHAs and various organisations to support full traceability measures are applied. The MMO also works closely with fishing organisations such as the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisation, fish producer organisations and various retail operators to promote traceability requirements.

The MMO carry out various cross checking of data process to ensure that fishery products remain accurate and traceable through the product movement chain and that vessels accurately record the catching and landing of all required products.

Audit assurance

The MMO produces standard operating protocols, compliance and enforcement directions and system process documents to ensure a consistent and effective level of assurance on fishery control processes.

Training of staff

All staff are trained internally on the use of systems, legal and regulatory requirements as well as enforcement of traceability products. MMO has a comprehensive suite of both internal and industry guidance on traceability process.

Documented controls procedures

The MMO retains a comprehensive set of process documents to support traceability.

Contingency planning

The MMO has contingency planning in place for events such as system outages, data failure and non-compliance by industry.

Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)

Roles and responsibilities

The VMD promotes animal health and welfare by assuring the safety, quality and efficacy of veterinary medicines, medicated feed and SFA.

As an executive agency of Defra, the VMD contributes to Defra's objectives to protect public health and meet high standards of animal welfare. The VMD's work also helps the FSA to protect and improve the safety of food that people eat.

The VMD is responsible for:

- monitoring and acting on reports of adverse events from veterinary medicines
- testing for residues of veterinary medicines or illegal substances in domestically produced animals and animal products
- assessing applications for and authorising companies to sell veterinary medicines
- controlling how veterinary medicines are made and distributed
- advising government ministers on developing veterinary medicines policy and putting it into action
- making, updating and enforcing the Veterinary Medicines Regulations

The VMD has a staff of approximately 165, with a mixture of scientific and administrative staff, based at offices near Addlestone, Surrey.

Official controls – organisation and management

VMD inspectors are specifically authorised under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013 (as amended) to:

- inspect and authorise manufacturers and distributors of SFA
- inspect and authorise feed business which manufacture intermediate products and feedingstuffs containing SFA and/or veterinary medicinal premixes
- inspect and authorise retailers of certain restricted veterinary medicines
- conduct follow-up inspections where serious non-compliance necessitates additional control activities

The VMD has a risk-based approach for the inspection of feed business operators. The risk assessment considers the inherent risk of the business based on its activities, the potential risk to animal and public health, and the nature and number of non-compliances that also considers compliance history. The maximum period between inspections for the lowest risk, fully compliant, feed businesses will not exceed four years.

Co-ordination and collaboration

The VMD is responsible for the operation of the residues control programme (RCP) in Great Britain. The VMD drafts the UK residues control plan each year and submits the final version to the Commission. The programme involves sample collection, sample analysis and follow-up action on non-

compliant results. Sampling is targeted according to criteria set out in the Annexes of 96/23/EC. The results of the previous year's surveillance programme are reported to the EFSA.

Samples are collected by APHA, FSA, FSS, Cefas, Marine Directorate and the Scottish Government, under terms set out in SLAs or MoUs. The number of samples taken is based on throughput in line with the levels set out in legislation. Samples are analysed for residues of veterinary medicines, banned substances and contaminants in line with the minimum requirements laid down in the legislation. Follow-up investigations are undertaken at farms where non-compliant residue levels are found in animals/animal products. Sampling of suspect animals and carcasses, and intensified checks are also provided for in the legislation and used when appropriate.

FERA carry out analytical work for the residue control programme. The VMD has an SLA with FERA which includes a detailed specification of requirements. FERA is responsible for analysis of samples and reporting results to the VMD. The laboratory uses analytical methods accredited to ISO 17025 and Commission Decision 2002/657. FERA is subject to independent audits.

Feed business operators manufacturing or mixing SFA or veterinary medicinal products into intermediate products or feedingstuffs, and distributors dealing with these products are required by UK law to be approved by the VMD in Great Britain, and to be inspected regularly to ensure compliance with legislative requirements. The VMD keeps a register of all authorised manufacturing premises and distributors. Those premises manufacturing SFA that additionally manufacture authorised premixes are inspected and authorised under good manufacturing practice (GMP) by either the VMD's GMP inspection team or the medicines and healthcare regulatory authority on behalf of the VMD.

In England and Wales, the VMD delegates the inspection of fish farms authorised to manufacture medicated feed for use on their own fish, to Cefas. The VMD has an SLA with Cefas and Marine Scotland which includes detailed specification of requirements. The VMD delegates to accredited laboratories the task of analysing samples taken as part of routine inspections for the control of medicated feedingstuffs and SFA.

Audit assurance

VMD Internal Audit is provided by an external provider, requiring audits of all work areas, including veterinary residue surveillance to be carried out once every five years. The VMD is audited against EU legislation requirements and audit arrangements are scrutinised by the Audit and Risk committee which sees the final reports. Where recommendations for changes are made, follow-up checks are carried out within 12 months of the original audit. The audits also aim to identify good practice.

The VMD is certified as meeting the international standards for quality management and information security, respectively – ISO 9001 and ISO 27001. This certification provides independent, external assurance that our systems and processes are effective in delivering our published standards and targets and helping us continue to improve as an organisation.

Training of staff

Inspectors are recruited specifically for inspection roles and receive in-depth training to ensure thorough knowledge of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013.

Documented controls procedures

The VMD inspectors work in line with documented SOPs which set out procedures for undertaking official inspections, including sampling and dealing with noncompliance and infringements. They also cover reporting requirements that provide that all businesses inspected by the VMD receive a report of the findings. The SOPs are part of the VMD's quality management system.

Field instructions, SOPs and operation manuals setting out how controls should be carried out are in place for each of the bodies that undertake work for the VMD as part of the RCP. These are reviewed and updated on an annual basis or more frequently where changes in the processes are required. The VMD issues monthly surveillance results to all operators of processing plants who have had animals/animal products sampled and include compliant results and details of the sample type, date of collection and residue detected where samples test noncompliant. Results of the previous year's surveillance programme are reported to the EC by 31 March of the following year. A report is also published bimonthly on gov.uk.

All antimicrobial resistance (AMR) activities carried out as part of official controls on behalf of the VMD by nominated bodies and the NRLs are set out in protocols as specified by Commission Implementing Decision 2013/652/EU.

Contingency planning

Does not apply to the VMD

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