

To: Interested parties

19<sup>th</sup> April 2007

Reference: CMA 03/366

Dear Sir or Madam,

**Sudan I Review Panel – Call for written comments.**

You are invited to submit written comments to inform the review of the Sudan I incident by 10<sup>th</sup> May 2007.

In March 2005 the Food Standards Agency announced its intention to review the Sudan I incident upon completion of any legal action.

The incident involving Sudan I was an example of a situation where an ingredient with a long supply chain was used in many products. Some of these products had a very long shelf life. Some of the products which included the contaminated ingredient were themselves used, sometimes much later, as ingredients in other foods. The incident involved both large and small food businesses. These factors make such incidents difficult for those involved to deal with.

The Agency has agreed that an independent panel should take the review forward. The review will:

- identify lessons learnt by different sectors of the food chain, including manufacturers, retailers (including catering), enforcement authorities and the Food Standards Agency, from the Sudan I issue (2003-2005) and what actions have been put in place as a result; and
- advise whether there are any deficiencies in current procedures and, if so, make recommendations

The review panel may also explore how the food chain can best be protected given the underlying causes of the Sudan I incident and how the supply chain deals with intelligence, particularly when it relates to on-going incidents over a long period of time.

The Panel is inviting interested parties to submit written comments for their consideration. They will also be discussing experiences and lessons learned from the incident with invited parties in person. These discussions will be held in public at the Agency's Head Office in London on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> May. Annex A to this letter provides important background information to this review that you should read before submitting your comments.

Written comments should be made available to the Panel before it begins its hearings on 24<sup>th</sup> May. They should therefore be sent to Richard Sinclair at the Food Standards Agency by Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May at the latest. Comments may be sent by normal mail or as an attachment to an e-mail to the contact addresses at the foot of this letter. Please ensure that electronic attachments are in MS Word format or Rich Text Format.

Your comments should begin by clearly saying who you are and which, if any, organisation or group you represent along with any particular expertise or qualifications you have. Your comments should be factual and any recommendations that you wish the Review Panel to consider should be clearly identified. If your comments are longer than can be contained on one page, please number your paragraphs and, if you need to continue over many pages, please also provide a one-page summary of your comments.

### **Publication of personal data and confidentiality of responses**

This independent Review Panel is acting within the normal rules of business that apply to all Government organisations including the Food Standards Agency. As the publication of responses may include personal data, such as your full name and contact address details, please advise us of any objections to this by fully completing and returning the Publication of Personal Data Form Annex B together with your response to the consultation. Return of this form does not mean that we will treat your response to the consultation as confidential.

In accordance with the provisions of freedom of information legislation, all information contained in your response may be subject to publication or disclosure. If you consider that some of the information provided in your response should not be disclosed, you should indicate the information concerned, request that it is not disclosed and explain what harm you consider would result from disclosure.

Any automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not be considered as such a request unless you specifically include a request, with an explanation, in the main text of your response.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Sinclair

**Important background information that should be read before submitting comments to the independent Sudan I Review Panel.**

**THE REVIEW**

This was an incident that involved what was effectively a minor ingredient to products over an extended supply chain. It involved products with a long shelf life and it involved large and small businesses. Some of the products which included the contaminated ingredient were themselves used, sometimes much later, as ingredients in other foods. It is important that we identify the lessons that come from this particular incident based on the experience of those involved. The Review Panel will not be able to talk to everybody that was affected by the incident but it is keen to hear from as many as possible among those it cannot talk to directly.

Your comments are invited on your experience of the incident involving the contamination of chilli powder with Sudan I. The Review Panel is particularly interested in receiving comments in the following key areas from those affected by the incident:

- What was your impression of the 2005 incident?  
How did you feel at the time, what went well, what could have been done better?
- What would you do differently if faced with another large scale incident tomorrow and what could others do differently in future?
- In the light of all this what are the lessons that can help all those involved with food incidents in the future?
- What challenges does sourcing of ingredients/products from around the world present and how can the safety of UK consumers best be protected as a result?

Submissions must address these questions and should be as brief as possible, and certainly no more than 3,000 words. Paragraphs should be numbered for ease of reference, and the document must include a brief executive summary.



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[Data.Protection@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Data.Protection@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)



## Publication of Personal Data

Please note that the Food Standards Agency may publish details that you supply in legitimate pursuit of the functions of the organisation.

As the publication of responses in full may include personal data (such as your full name and contact address details), would you please let us know if you object to us using this information.

Please tick the box below, complete the relevant details and return this form (together with your response) to indicate your objection.

I **do not** agree to the publication of my personal details.

**\* If no objection is received we will assume that you consent to full disclosure of your personal details and these may be published.**

Full Name

Full postal  
address

To comply with the *Data Protection Act 1998*, it is essential that we keep our records up to date. Would you therefore please inform us if your personal details change in any way.

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*For general enquiries you may contact Tel: 01625 545745*