

Summary Report of 10 March 2025 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Meeting

INFO 25/03/01 - Report by Anthony Harbinson

The Committee considered the following items:

Executive Update

The Director of People and Resources gave an update on the latest work and issues within the FSA and wider government including: economic conditions, the Spring Statement, Annual Report and Accounts, current financial position and Spending Review, staff changes and Business Committee update. ARAC members thanked her for the update. They also discussed with the National Audit Office representative the reasons behind no management letter or plan for next year's audit being presented at this meeting.

Internal Audit Progress Report

The Head of Internal Audit introduced her latest progress report to ARAC. ARAC noted that delivery of the 2024/25 plan had improved and is on target to meet delivery against the KPI.

Internal Audit Strategy

The Head of Internal Audit introduced her first Internal Audit Strategy reflecting the team's ambitions in the long-term. ARAC members were content to approve the strategy and detailed activities for 2025/26.

Draft Internal Audit Annual Strategy and Plan for 2025/26

The Head of Internal Audit presented her proposed plan for 2025/26 in line with the planning process outlined at the November 2024 meeting. ARAC members discussed the plan and were content to approve.

Regulatory Audit Progress Report & the Assurance Strategy and Plan for 2025/26

The Head of Delivery Assurance presented the latest progress report detailing the progress made in delivering regulatory audit assurance activities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. He also introduced the proposed plan for 2025/26. ARAC members noted the progress made delivering 2024/25 activities and were content with the proposed plan.

Governance of Management Actions Resulting from Internal and Regulatory (FSA Operations in England and Wales) Audits

The Heads of Internal Audit and Delivery Assurance introduced the proposals to strengthen the governance for agreeing management actions resulting from audits and extensions to agreed timescales. ARAC members agreed to the proposed changes in process to start with audits in the 2025/26 plans.

Strategic Risk Management

The Head of Planning Performance and Risk introduced the annual update of the strategic risks being managed across the FSA following the annual workshop with the Board and Executive. ARAC members were content that the principal risks and mitigations reflected the risk workshop conversation.

Update on Food Chain Information (FCI) and Collection and Communication of Inspection Results (CCIR)

The Head of Operational Assurance and Excellence introduced the paper updating ARAC on the latest activities and decisions made in respect of FCI and CCIR since the last paper in June 2024. ARAC members noted the progress made and next steps.

Environmental Sustainability Update

The Head of Culture and Development introduced the annual update on FSA's performance against its environmental sustainability targets and how these will be reviewed in line with the next Greening Government Commitments reporting cycle. Members noted the update and confirmed support of the report's conclusion.

Current Litigation

The General Counsel gave the ARAC members an overview of current litigation involving the FSA.

Below the line papers received for information:

- Audit Management Actions
- Annual Gifts and Hospitality Report
- Security Risk Update
- FSA Change Portfolio Update
- ARAC External Assurances
- Risk and Crisis Management Update
- NAO Wider Work Update

Date of next meeting:

10 June 2025 10:30 – 12:30