

Final Report from the External Effectiveness Review of the FSA Board

FSA 26/03/08 - Report by Dr Timothy Riley, FSA Deputy Chair

1. Summary

1.1 The Board is asked to:

- Discuss the final independent report from the Government Internal Audit Agency's external effectiveness review of the FSA Board (**Annex 1**).
- Agree to consider and respond to the recommendations within six months.

2. Introduction

2.1 The [Terms of Reference for the FSA Board](#) state:

Effectiveness: The Board will undertake a formal and rigorous annual evaluation of its own performance and that of its committees and individual members in line with best practice outlined in the [Corporate Governance Code for Central Government Departments 2017](#).

2.2 The Code states that non-ministerial departments, such as the FSA, are 'encouraged to adopt the principles in the code wherever relevant and practical'. The Code recommends that 'a board effectiveness evaluation is carried out annually, and with independent input at least once every three years.'

2.3 Separately, guidance in the [Board effectiveness reviews: principles and resources for arm's-length bodies and sponsoring departments](#) also requires an externally facilitated board effectiveness review at least every three years.

2.4 The last independent review was presented to the Board at its June 2022 meeting: [FSA 22-06-12 - Final Report from External Effectiveness Review of the FSA Board | Food Standards Agency](#). The Working Group presented its responses to the review's recommendations in December 2022: [Annual Governance Report 2021-2022 | Food Standards Agency](#)

2.5 An annual evaluation of the Board's performance was carried out by the FSA Deputy Chair in 2023 and 2024.

2.6 A Board effectiveness review with external input was therefore due in 2025 and the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) were engaged to deliver it.

2.7 The objective of the review was to provide the Board with observations regarding its current effectiveness and recommendations for future improvement.

2.8 The GIAA were expected to evaluate the Board in line with the key principles of Board effectiveness in line with the Code and the guidance covering: leadership and culture, Board composition, Board decision making, Board committees, Risk management and Partnership working/stakeholder engagement.

2.9 The final Report from the GIAA's review of the effectiveness of the FSA Board carried out between November 2025 and February 2026 can be found at **Annex 1**.

3. Conclusion

3.1 The Board is asked to:

- Discuss the final independent report from the Government Internal Audit Agency's external effectiveness review of the FSA Board (**Annex 1**).
- Agree to consider and respond to the recommendations within six months.

Annex 1

**Government Internal Audit Agency - Food Standards Agency Board Effectiveness Review
Final Report 2026**

PDF

[View FSA 26-03-08 - GIAA Report Annex 1 pub as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (308.19 KB)