

Sixth edition of Regulating Our Future newsletter

Welcome to our sixth Regulating Our Future newsletter. It's been a busy couple of months and there are a number of developments to update you on.

These include the report from a feasibility study into how Primary Authority scheme, and in particular national inspection strategies, can play a role in the future regulation of food businesses.

We also have the findings of some insight work into how small and medium sized enterprises view regulation. And Michael Jackson, Senior Business User for the programme gives an overview of progress and reflects on our local authority meetings earlier in the summer.

As always please get involved by contributing to the discussion by joining the conversation #FoodRegulation or emailing us directly: FutureDelivery@food.gov.uk

Primary authority national inspection strategy feasibility study

We have published the latest ROF feasibility study, which looks at how the Primary Authority scheme, and in particular national inspection strategies, can play a role in the future regulation of food businesses.

The results from the study will help the FSA in developing a new standard for primary authorities wishing to establish national inspection strategies for food.

The Primary Authority scheme is administered by Regulatory Delivery, part of the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. It was established in 2008 and offers businesses, or groups of businesses, the opportunity to form a legally recognised partnership with one local authority, which then provides robust and reliable advice for other councils to take into account when regulating the business locally.

This means that a single local authority, known as a primary authority, can build a picture of compliance across the whole of the business' operations. After considering all the information available, the primary authority could take the view that it has sufficient evidence that the business is being well managed, and consider that a lower number of checks are needed to ensure compliance and protection for the public. This is implemented via a national inspection strategy.

This feasibility study brought together a range of primary authority partnerships, including: Boots and Rushcliffe Borough Council; Busy Bees Nurseries and Lichfield District Council, and Waitrose and Bracknell Forest Council to draft a set of criteria that will form the basis of the FSA's standard for primary authorities wishing to establish a national inspection strategy.

Nina Purcell, Director of Regulatory Delivery, said:

“This has been a really useful exercise. Working with the primary authorities and their business partners has helped us to begin exploring how Primary Authority national inspection strategies could play a role in the new model of regulation we are

developing. The study has helped identify the work that needs to take place to make development of national inspection strategies a viable option for food partnerships. We'll be taking that work forward in the next phase."

[View Primary Authority National Inspection Strategy Feasibility Study as PDF](#) (227.24 KB)

Working towards a digital solution for Regulating Our Future

We've just begun our work to investigate ways we can improve the registration and assessment of food businesses.

We've embarked on an intensive 10 week period of Discovery with Food Businesses, Local Authorities, and colleagues from across the FSA and other key stakeholders.

During this initial 10 week period, we'll be collating research already conducted by the FSA and Local Authorities, as well as conducting additional research with key stakeholders. We will be trying to consolidate and validate all the findings to have an overall view of the registration and risk classification activities undertaken by Local Authorities and the FSA.

From here we will begin to develop possible solution options that address any issues identified within current systems and look at the opportunities we identify with users. We will also be exploring ways to use analytics to better segment food businesses so we can more accurately identify higher risk establishments.

Finally we are working towards building a single view of the all food businesses across England, Wales and Northern Ireland which everyone can use to make sure our food is safe.

Here is the timeline for the initial 10 week period, we will continue to keep you updated as we move through each phase of development.

[View Timeline for the discovery phase for a digital solution for Regulating Our Future as PDF](#) (83.81 KB)

SME and micro business insight report

As part of Regulating Our Future consultation, we commissioned some research work to ensure SME food businesses have an opportunity to input into the way in which food regulation is undertaken in future.

SME and Micro food business are an important sector for the ROF programme, so over the summer we have been developing our understanding and insight into how these food businesses continue to provide safe food to the public. The engagement was managed by an independent organisation and the insights in this Report are being used to build our evidence base for how regulation will work for all businesses.

[View SME & Micro business insight report for Regulating Our Future as PDF](#) (1.15 MB)

Local authority engagement events report

We have now completed the series of Local Authority Engagement events where we engaged with over 700 LA colleagues in the respective countries on our latest iteration of the Target Operating Model.

We have been analysing the feedback and contributions made by local authority representatives at the events and have created this summary report below. More detailed work around each workstream is on-going and the comments, thoughts and opinions received are of great value to the workstream leads and their teams.

[View Summary of LA Engagement Events 2017 as PDF](#) (492.15 KB)

Listen to Michael Jackson, Senior Business User for ROF and the Assurance workstream lead, discussing the report, what happens next and the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

Pilot project for the BRC global standards for food safety

We have published the findings of a pilot study which identifies the potential for the British Retail Consortium (BRC) Global Standards assurance scheme to play a part in regulated private assurance, one of the key parts of the Regulating Our Future (ROF) model.

The pilot was started before the ROF model was agreed and originally aimed to work with BRC Global Standards to develop an earned recognition scheme for food hygiene and standards. As the ROF model has moved away from the earned recognition approach for further development of regulated private assurance, the pilot shifted its focus on to how the BRC Global Standard could support the key ROF principles of using all available sources of information and recognising businesses that do the right thing.

Regulated private assurance is being developed under ROF to utilise the data generated by audits carried out by and for food businesses where this meets the standards set by the FSA. Assurance schemes, such as the BRC Global Standards, are just one of a number of sources of data being considered under the new model. The FSA will now work with BRC Global Standards to consider the recommendations. These and the full report can be read here:

[View FSA BRC Global Standards pilot report as PDF](#) (598.38 KB)