



A guide for Food Business Operators on charging for meat hygiene official controls in Northern Ireland May 2024

For all queries about this guidance — including if you require the information in an alternative format such as audio, large print or Braille — please use the number below.

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Summary

Category	Details
Intended audience:	Food Business Operators of approved meat establishments
Which UK nations does this cover?	Northern Ireland
Purpose:	This guidance informs readers how the FSA in NI charges for the delivery of official controls in approved meat establishments.
Legal status:	This guidance does not place any legal requirements on food business operators. It explains the legal requirements that the FSA must comply with in charging for official controls in meat premises, and how charges are calculated.
Key words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Charges Guide• Approved meat establishments• Meat Official Controls• Food Business Operator
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Sunset date	N/A

Revision History

This guidance follows the Government [Code of Practice on Guidance](#). If you believe this guidance breaches the Code for any reason, please let us know by emailing the contact on the previous page. If you have any comments on the guidance itself, please call us using the contact details on page 2

Revision No.	Revision date	Purpose of revision and paragraph number	Revised by
1	December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replaced references to Business Agreements with Statement of Resources ▪ Updated Annex A – hourly rates ▪ Updated Annexes B, C and D – calculations and worked examples ▪ Updated Annex F – examples of backing invoices ▪ Updated Annex G – delivery support costs 	Billy Armstrong
2	June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DARD references to DAERA ▪ New discount system explained ▪ EU minima calculations updated ▪ Changes to PIA arrangements explained ▪ Updated Annex A ▪ New Annexes B, D, E, F, G, H, I and J 	Billy Armstrong
3	November 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated Annex A ▪ Updated Annex H regarding re-definition of global costs 	Billy Armstrong
4	April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Removal of references to EU minimum including the relevant Annexes C & F ▪ Updated monthly timetable – Annex B ▪ Updated discount bandings – new Annex C ▪ Updated glossary of terms – new Annex D 	Billy Armstrong
5	September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated Annex A 	Billy Armstrong
6	April 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated monthly timetable – Annex B ▪ Updated discount bandings – Annex C 	Billy Armstrong

Revision No.	Revision date	Purpose of revision and paragraph number	Revised by
7	September 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated Annex A 	Billy Armstrong
8	April 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarified position regarding UAIs – paragraph 16 ▪ Removed references to PIA discount ▪ Clarified position regarding approval appraisal visits ▪ Updated Annex A – hourly rates ▪ Updated Annex C – Discount bands and rates ▪ Updated Annex G – removed PIA forms and replaced with FSA privacy notice 	Billy Armstrong
9	March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ References to Regulation (EC) 882/2004 and Regulation (EC) 854/2004 replaced with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and associated EU tertiary legislation where appropriate ▪ Removal of references to throughput information previously required ▪ Updated Annex A – hourly rates ▪ Updated Annex C – Discount bands and rates 	Billy Armstrong
10	June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Removal of paragraph on charging for additional official controls under Article 28 of Regulation (EC) 882/2004 	Billy Armstrong
11	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated Annex C – Discount bands and rates 	Billy Armstrong
12	March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updated Annex C – Discount bands and rates 	Billy Armstrong

Revision No.	Revision date	Purpose of revision and paragraph number	Revised by
13	April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added reference to the 2022 Review of Resources – paragraph 9 ▪ Added reference to the removal of discounts from time spent on enforcement activities – paragraph 20 ▪ Updated overtime premium rates – paragraph 21 table ▪ Updated Annex A – hourly rates ▪ Updated Annex B – Monthly accounting tables ▪ Updated Annex C – discount bands and rates 	Billy Armstrong
14	May 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Out of Hours postmortem Inspection of on-farm emergency slaughter ▪ Amalgamation of grades to simplify grade rates ▪ Updated Annex A – hourly rates and one off rates for emergency slaughter ▪ Updated Annex B – Monthly accounting tables ▪ Updated Annex C – discount bands and rates ▪ Updated Annex F – grade supplement 	

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Introduction

1. The Food Standards Agency (the Agency) is a non-Ministerial Government Department. The Agency is the central competent authority for Meat Hygiene Official Controls in approved meat establishments across the UK. DAERA Veterinary Service, Veterinary Public Health Programme (DAERA VPHP) carry out Meat Hygiene Official controls in approved slaughterhouses, game handling establishments and cutting plants in Northern Ireland on behalf of the Agency.
2. DAERA VPHP currently provides a range of services in approved meat establishments in Northern Ireland. Some of these services are paid for by other Government Departments, for example, national surveillance for residues, other services are charged to you, the Food Business Operator (FBO). This Charges Guide provides an explanation of the charging process for Meat Hygiene Official Controls only.

Why are charges necessary

3. The need for charging arises from two sources. These are:
 - Legislative requirements under European law, and consequently also national legislation and;
 - A [requirement by HM Treasury to charge the appropriate customer for the services provided](#).

Charges regulations

4. Meat Hygiene Official Controls charges are required by the finance provisions set out in Articles 79 to 85 (inclusive) of [Regulation \(EU\) No 2017/625](#) (the EU Regulations). These provisions came into operation in Northern Ireland on 14th December 2019 under [The Meat \(Official Controls Charges\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2009 No. 247 \(as amended\) \(the Charges Regulations\)](#).
5. This means that we must charge you for the meat hygiene official controls that are carried out by DAERA VPHP and must calculate charges in line with the requirements of those regulations.
6. [The national regulations](#) can be found online.

Within this document, these regulations are referred to as 'the Charges Regulations'.

[European Regulation \(EU\) No 2017/625](#) can be found online.

Who is charged and what are they charged for?

7. Meat Hygiene controls charges are applicable to all operators of approved slaughterhouses, cutting plants and game handling establishments. Meat Hygiene Official Controls and other official activities are carried out on behalf of FSA by DAERA VPHP in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 2017/625, Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 2019/627 and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 2019/624. These include duties relating to;
 - Food chain information
 - Ante mortem inspection
 - Animal welfare in relation to animals slaughtered there for human consumption
 - Post-mortem inspection
 - Health marking
 - Specified Risk Material (SRM) and other animal by-products
 - Verification and audit of food business operators “own checks”

Official controls and other official activities that you are not currently charged for

8. Time spent on controls associated with specified risk material (SRM) are currently not charged.
9. DAERA staff at approved establishments also carry out official controls which are not delegated by FSA and which are not covered by FSA charging policy (eg residue sampling, trade, animal by-products and TSE activities).

Background

10. The Review of Resources carried out in 2022 determined the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Official Auxiliaries required to carry out FSA meat hygiene official controls in each approved slaughterhouse. The use of FTE as a metric introduces an element of flexibility in the deployment of DAERA officials and is the reference point used for each establishment when agreeing the level of service on the Statement of Resources (SOR). The total FTE forms the basis of what each slaughterhouse operator will be charged.
11. Authorised Officers (AO) attendance is based on information contained in the SOR. Actual AO hours worked are recorded by DAERA VPHP officials through the completion of an electronic timesheet on a weekly basis. As laid out in regulation 5 of the Charges Regulations, operators are required to supply DAERA VPHP (acting on behalf of FSA in NI) with any information

that may be reasonably required for the purpose of calculating charges. Examples of information that may be required from you are:

- Operating hours
- Information relating to the trading and legal status of your business

Charges are calculated at the end of each charging period based on the timesheet information and may on occasion, include adjustments from earlier periods.

Discount is deducted from the full cost and the net amount is invoiced to the food business.

Overview

12. Charges are based on the actual time cost of carrying out meat hygiene official controls. There are two main stages involved in calculating your charge, calculating the full-time cost and applying a discount.
13. The full-time cost is calculated by multiplying the time (expressed in hours and fractions of an hour) spent by each DAERA officer exercising controls at those premises, by the hourly chargeout rate applicable to that grade of officer. Current hourly chargeout rates are detailed at Annex A.

Elements of charging

14. Two main elements are used to determine FBO charges
 - (a) Time based charges – detailed from paragraph 15 to paragraph 20
 - (b) A discount to reduce that time-based charge – detailed from paragraph 35 to paragraph 49

Time based charges

15. The FSA will charge food businesses for all the hours agreed on the Statement of Resources (SOR) with the following exceptions
 - Where DAERA officials are not required at your establishment, and sufficient notice has been received so that they can be redeployed elsewhere;
 - Where 'force majeure' applies, for example, where you are unable to operate due to a utility failure that resulted from activities beyond your control; and
 - For up to two hours on any two occasions in any 4 or 5 week charging period, where downtime has resulted from events outside of your control, for example, a machinery breakdown where a verifiable programme of maintenance is in place and written notification is

provided to the DAERA team.

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 - Where 'force majeure' applies, for example, where you are unable to operate due to a utility failure that resulted from activities beyond your control; and
 - For up to two hours on any two occasions in any 4 or 5 week charging period, where downtime has resulted from events outside of your control, for example, a machinery breakdown where a verifiable programme of maintenance is in place and written notification is provided to the DAERA team.
16. Any time worked outside of the agreed hours specified in paragraph 15 above will also be included in the time costs e.g. if the daily finishing time of the business extends beyond those specified on the SOR, or there is an earlier starting time agreed for the verification of pre-operational checks.
 17. For the audit of establishments, all audit time spent on site by independent OV auditors as well as any preparation and reporting time that may be required off site, is chargeable.
 18. Unannounced inspections (UAI) take place in cutting plants. If any non-compliances are identified during the course of these inspections, the total hours spent dealing with them become chargeable.
 19. Time spent carrying out follow up visits that have been deemed necessary by the auditor to assess the status of non-compliances will be chargeable. This includes time spent on enforcement.

Post Mortem Inspection of on-farm emergency slaughter out of hours

20. Animals slaughtered on-farm under emergency conditions need to be transported to the slaughterhouse within 2 hours. Under EU Regulations post mortem inspection of on-farm emergency slaughtered animals must take place without delay and can only be carried out by an official veterinarian. When this occurs out of hours there is a one-off charge applied which equates to a minimum of 3 hours of official veterinarian time. More details can be found in Annex A.

Enforcement activities

21. From April 2023, time spent on enforcement activities which go beyond verbal advice will not be discounted.

Overtime

22. Hours worked by any Authorised Officer in excess of their weekly contractual hours (42) will be charged at the hourly overtime rate appropriate to that grade (see Annex A for full list of overtime rates). Hourly overtime rates are based on average salary costs for the grade multiplied by the applicable premium. The applicable premium are shown in the table below:

Job role	Mon-Fri (> contracted hours)	Saturday	Sunday and bank holidays
OV/VI	Single time	Time and a half	Double time
SMI	Single time	Time and a half	Double time
MI/PMI/OA	Time and a third	Time and a third	Double time

23. Where overtime has been accrued at more than one establishment in any week you will only be charged at the overtime rate on a pro-rata basis eg if 70% of an Authorised Officers total weekly hours were worked in your establishment then you will be charged for 70% of the overtime cost for that week.

Facility time (for example, dressing up and dressing down)

24. Any facility time (up to a maximum of 30 minutes per day) paid to DAERA officials will be included in time costs.

Break time

25. As employees of the NI Civil Service, DAERA officials are entitled to a 1 hour lunch break on a daily basis. Any unexpended part of that lunch hour will be included in the time costs for each DAERA official.

Travel time costs

26. Travel time costs apply where backfill is required to maintain service delivery at your establishment. These costs will include any hours spent exercising official controls at your establishment as well as the travel time accrued travelling to your establishment (single journey only) as a result of the re-location.
27. Other expenses associated with the replacement of staff eg the return journey and mileage expenses of relief officials, are included elsewhere in the calculation of the hourly chargeout rate.

Unproductive/underworked time

28. Unproductive/underworked time includes any hours during the normal working week where the level of DAERA service has been agreed in the SOR but subsequently has not been required. If sufficient notice (at least 24 hours) of the revised arrangements has been provided, it may be possible to re-deploy DAERA officers elsewhere. However, if officers cannot be utilised or re-deployed elsewhere as a result of insufficient notice, then the hours as agreed in the SOR will be charged.
29. All charges for unproductive/underworked time are levied at core rates.

Calculation of hourly charge out rates

30. Hourly chargeout rates are applied to each hour (or fraction of an hour) spent on FSA tasks as recorded on the HOMIF timesheet for your establishment. Hourly chargeout rates are generally revised on an annual basis (see Annex A for current rates).
31. The OV hourly rate is a combined weighted average of the DAERA veterinary officer and DAERA veterinary inspector grades and any staff supplied and deployed as OVs via the external contractor.

32. The OA hourly rate is a combined weighted average of the DAERA meat inspector, poultry meat inspector and official auxiliary grades and any staff supplied and deployed as official auxiliaries via the external contractor.

What is included in the hourly charge out rates?

33. There are two main parts to the hourly chargeout rate;
- a. Direct staff costs, associated with DAERA officials directly involved in carrying out official controls E.g. Official Veterinarians and official auxiliaries and includes employment costs such as national insurance contribution and superannuation.
 - b. Delivery support costs, associated with DAERA and FSA staff who provide an essential operational or administrative supporting role in the delivery of meat hygiene official controls (see Annex F for more detail).
34. Hourly chargeout rates are generally reviewed on an annual basis to be applied from the August charging period. However, the FSA reserve the right to review hourly chargeout rates when deemed necessary.

Discount on official control charges

35. Operators of approved slaughterhouses and game handling establishments may receive a discount which will reduce the time costs associated with their establishment.
36. The calculation behind the discount changed in 2016-17 in line with the recommendations of the Steering Group on Meat Charging.
37. The Steering Group on Meat Charging was an industry stakeholder group, which was tasked with the development of options for a fairer distribution of meat charging discounts. The group was chaired by Bill Stow and was facilitated and supported by FSA. The NI meat industry was represented on the group by representatives from NIMEA, the NI Pork & Bacon Forum and UFU. More information about the group can be found [on Meat Charging Steering Group guidance page](#).

Discount rates (slaughterhouses and game handling establishments only)

38. The discount rates applied are based on the usage of hours of DAERA resource.
39. The discount rates reduce in stages as the usage of hours increases and charges are

discounted at progressively lower percentage rates according to the discount band into which they fall.

40. Where food businesses do not receive a discount, the charge will be based on the full cost of carrying out meat hygiene official controls.
41. Time spent on official controls following the detection of non-compliance in cutting plants do not receive any discount on charges.
42. Charges for time spent on enforcement activities which go beyond verbal advice will not be discounted.

Hours discount bands

43. Each discount rate has an associated banding into which hours will be allocated, for example, the first 60 hours used in each charging period will be allocated to the first band which attracts a 85% discount, the next 100 hours will be allocated to the next lowest discount rate eg 70%, and so on until all the hours in each charging period have been allocated to a band. Each sector (red meat slaughter, poultry meat slaughter and game handling) will have a different allocation of hours within each band. NB: to take account of small establishments in the game handling sector, the red meat bandings now apply to this sector.
44. Bands are calculated on an annual basis and allocated to each charging period cumulatively so that at the end of the first charging period, one twelfth of the total hours available for that band will have been allocated, at the end of the second charging period two twelfths of the total hours available for that band will have been allocated and so on until the year end. This means that any unused hours from a higher discount band will be carried forward. However, there is no carry forward of any unused discount band from one financial year to the next.
45. Adjustments in respect of late additional time within the financial year, which has not yet been charged, will receive the discount applicable to the month being charged, i.e. treated as current month charges.
46. Credits for previously charged time will be made at the lowest discount percentage for the grade and rate of staff of the month to which the credit relates, which means the amount of money credited will be at the highest level band giving the highest value credit. Hours credited back will then become available again in the discount band 'hours available' at which they were credited.
47. Any adjustments for a previous financial year will be calculated separately from the current financial year. These will be calculated as though the amendment had been included in the final charge period of the year, with the adjustment being detailed on a separate backing schedule and invoice or credit amounts included with the invoice of the month the amendment has

been actioned.

48. Where there is a change of ownership of an approved establishment, and the approval number is unchanged, the establishment will continue using the remaining discount allocation for the remainder of the financial year. Any invoices in the month of change will be recalculated applying the available discount first to the original owner and then to the new owner.
49. Where a new approval number is issued, the discounting process will be reset and the discount band allocation for the full year will be available. Operators of new establishments, never approved before, will also receive the full discount band allocation for a financial year. Where operations commence part way through a financial year, operators in these circumstances should note that this can result in a proportionately larger discount for initial invoices. There is no carry forward of any unused discount band allocation from one financial year to the next.

Hierarchy of grades

50. Hours accrued by DAERA officials will be allocated starting with the most expensive core rate (OV grade) and following the hierarchy detailed in Annex C.
51. Adjustments regarding retrospective additional hours which have not been charged will receive the discount applicable to the period being charged ie treated as current period. Credits for previously charged hours will be made at the lowest discount rate for the grade and rate of staff which means that the amount of money credited will be at the highest level band.

Force majeure and flexibility – when FSA will not apply a charge

52. This section sets out the circumstances when official controls charges to approved meat businesses would be waived under the time-based charging mechanism.
53. It relates to the waiving of charges due to unforeseen events affecting your business that are caused by exceptional circumstances, including those that it would not be reasonable to view as commercial risks to be accepted by your business as part of your business practices.
54. The FSA in NI waives certain charges in recognition of the particular difficulties that some businesses face in planning regular working hours. In view of this, charges will not be made for downtime that is due to:
 - Force majeure;Or

- any other reason, for up to two hours on any two occasions in any four/five week charging period¹ where downtime has resulted from contractual or customary practices or where circumstances were outside of FBOs' control and written notification is provided to the DAERA meat inspection team. NB: Where this flexibility is required on a regular basis the Statement of Resources will be reviewed to assess whether it could more accurately reflect the working times and practices of the establishment.

55. The flexibility above will be limited to the members of the DAERA team present on site at the time. You will be required to declare in writing at the time (within one working day of the occasion the downtime occurs) that you are exercising one of the two instances of flexibility above. Once you have declared that you are exercising this flexibility you will not be able to retrospectively change the instances to which the flexibility will be applied.

Examples of force majeure

56. It is not possible to definitively list all events that would be considered as force majeure, but the list below provides guidance:

- Electricity, gas or water failure as a result of activities on or off-site not in the control of the FBO;
- Protest or civil disturbance delaying the arrival of stock;
- Emergency disease / public health restrictions and/or controls;
- Severe adverse weather resulting in the late delivery of stock;
- Premises evacuated as a result of an incident in neighbouring premises; and
- Closure of livestock markets due to sudden severe adverse weather conditions

Examples of events for which charges would not be made for unproductive time for up to two hours on any two occasions in any one month

57. As above, it is not possible to definitively list all events that would be applicable, but the list below will provide some guidance:

¹ 'Charging period' refers to the 4 or 5 week period which commences on the Sunday prior to the 1st of the month.

- Sudden unexpected breakdown of machinery that has been properly maintained, as evidenced by maintenance records;
- Planned repairs to essential equipment where reasonable notice is given to DAERA;
- Markets have no suitable stock;
- The FBO considers that:
 - a. The price of stock is unacceptably high or;
 - b. Stock is not of an appropriate quality
- The FBO loses an order;
- The FBO cannot predict when stock will arrive or its quantity (e.g. game); and
- Traffic accident resulting in the late delivery of stock.

Examples of events within your responsibility or due to market forces and which charges would be made for unproductive time:

58. As above, it is not possible to definitively list all events that would be applicable, but the list below will provide some guidance:

- On-site failures due to the activities/decisions of the FBO, including:
 - a. Incidents caused by contractors,
 - b. Failure of machinery / equipment due to poor maintenance,
 - c. Maintenance, repair or replacement of machinery / equipment without sufficient prior notice,
 - d. Failure of electricity, gas or water supply due to non-payment of the utility;
- Events for which it would be reasonable for the business to seek redress from a third party
- Events against which it would be reasonable to expect the business to be insured.
- A market is closed unexpectedly, other than for sudden severe adverse weather conditions.
- Delayed working because of insufficient staff.
- Late delivery of stock, for example due to the breakdown of a delivery vehicle;

Statement of resources (SOR)

59. The Charges Regulations require you to provide details of your working hours and working practices. The Review of Service Delivery carried out in 2022 determined the full time equivalent units of staff and number of inspection points in each approved slaughterhouse to achieve compliance with the official controls regulations. DAERA will work with you, on our behalf, to agree the number of inspectors required to carry out the official controls and the number of hours required daily for that purpose. This information will be part of a Statement of Resources (SOR) which should be agreed between the FBO and the resident DAERA meat inspection team. The SOR will provide the basis for your time cost charges. The details will include, amongst other information, operational starting and finishing times, the number of animals expected to be processed and any additional information such as seasonal variations. The SOR is intended to be beneficial to both parties. It enables DAERA to ensure that the appropriate and most efficient level of staffing is deployed to ensure compliance with the EU Regulations. Please see the Statement of Resources for your own establishment for further details.
60. The SOR documents the minimum level of DAERA resources required for the delivery of Official Controls to be in full compliance with the Regulations. However, any time worked outside the SOR will also be included in the time costs to be charged.
61. The SOR should be agreed before each charging period. FBOs must provide as much notice as possible if they need to change their operating hours in the middle of a particular charging period. In most cases this will give DAERA time to re-arrange their resources to fit the new requirements without incurring additional costs.
62. For major or permanent changes, including extended periods of closure, the FBO must notify FSA. At least 30 days' notice is required to enable FSA to give meaningful notice to DAERA. FBOs should always notify the FSA in writing of the intended start date of any major or permanent change, this helps to avoid any confusion.
63. More [detailed guidance on the SOR](#) can be accessed online.

SOR appeals procedure

64. Your charges are based on the operating hours and attendance levels set out in the SOR. If you are unhappy with the attendance levels set out in the SOR then you can appeal against them. The appeals procedure is described in the SOR guidance document which can be accessed using the link above.
65. While the appeal is being carried out, the FBO is still required to pay the FSA invoices in full. If the appeal is successful, the FBO will receive a credit on a

future invoice. If the appeal is not successful, then the charges will not be credited and the charges will stand.

66. The FSA may in certain circumstances continue to retain the disputed resources in the establishment even after an appeal is lost by the FSA where it is considered necessary to meet the requirements of the EC Regulation, but the operator will not be charged for the excess attendance.

Approval advisory visits

67. Prospective FBOs wishing to obtain approval for their establishment or existing FBOs wishing to add further approved activities to their approval may request an advisory visit prior to the approval visit. Advisory visits aim to help the FBO identify the welfare and hygiene requirements which may apply to their proposed activity. Areas of advice include structure, equipment and facilities, operational hygiene considerations and HACCP, good practices, records and procedures. Currently, these visits are free of charge. Where DAERA invoice FSA for approval advisory visits, the FSA reserves the right to charge for such visits. If applicable, visits will be charged at a set fee which is payable before the visit is scheduled to take place.

Ways to reduce your charges

68. To ensure your charges are kept to a minimum you can do the following:
- **Make sure that your operating hours and working practices are agreed with DAERA and are accurately documented in the SOR.** These should represent your normal practices and should be reviewed on a regular basis. DAERA may be able to contribute positively when considering your operating patterns, by suggesting ways in which changing your patterns slightly could reduce the level of resource required therefore reducing your time costs.
 - **Give DAERA as much notice as possible when there are temporary changes to your operating hours and working practices.** Where you plan to make longer term changes eg extended periods of closure, the more notice you give provides a better opportunity to re-organise staff without incurring additional costs. NB: FBOs need to notify FSA at least 30 days before major or permanent changes are intended
 - **Ensure that your food safety and management practices are of a good standard.** This will reduce the likelihood of line stoppages and other enforcement action that lead to additional costs. For cutting establishments, this will improve your audit score and may reduce your audit frequency leading to reduced time costs for your establishment.
 - **Ensure that all equipment is properly maintained.** This will reduce the likelihood of machine and equipment breakdowns that can lead to additional costs.
 - **Make sure that you keep in regular contact with DAERA management team.** They will be able to advise you on any issue that may impact your charges, keep you informed of future changes and can help you make the best use of their resources.

When you will be required to pay

69. Charges are due to be paid on receipt of the FSA invoice. Payment must be received within 14 days of the date of the invoice.

What if I have a query with my invoice?

70. If you have a query regarding your invoice, you should contact us using the details below.

Overdue Invoices

71. Existing rules will apply regarding overdue invoices. Where court action is required to recover outstanding debts, the court may be asked to award the FSA with the total debt, court costs and interest. Successful court action will enable FSA to use enforcement action to obtain payment, including the withdrawal of official controls (as per paragraph 72 below).

Withdrawal of official controls

72. If you fail to pay for your official controls charges FSA in NI may be entitled to request DAERA to withdraw their services from your establishment – this would prevent you from producing meat for human consumption. These powers are set out in the Charges Regulations and will only be used as a last resort ie after all other means of debt recovery have been tried or are inappropriate. FSA in NI will only request the withdrawal of official controls where a Court judgment or decree has been obtained.

What do I do if I have a complaint, any other comments or suggestions?

73. If you have any difficulty in understanding your charges, or you suspect that we may have made an error, you should contact us using the details below.

[NI.Debt.Recovery@
food.gov.uk](mailto:NI.Debt.Recovery@food.gov.uk)

Finance
Department
Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland
10a-c Clarendon Road
Belfast
BT1 3BG

Telephone 028 90 417700

If this does not resolve your complaint, and you remain dissatisfied, please refer to the [FSA complaints procedure](#) on food.gov.uk.

Annex A: Hourly chargeout rates

Red meat / poultry rates

Applicable from 31st March 2024

RED MEAT AND POULTRY HOURLY RATES

APPLICABLE FROM 31 ST MARCH 2024			
GRADE	Official Veterinarian*	Official Auxiliary**	Senior Meat Inspector
CORE RATE	£55.8623	£34.5295	£36.4002
OVERTIME RATE (MON-FRI)	£55.8623	£40.0017	£36.4002
OVERTIME RATE (SUNDAY & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS)	£102.8187	£60.1530	£63.8944
OVERTIME RATE (SATURDAY)	£77.1140	£40.0017	£47.9208

*Includes veterinary officer, veterinary inspector and agency veterinary officer

**Includes meat inspector, poultry meat inspector and agency inspectors

Out of hours one off charges for PM inspection of on-farm emergency slaughter animals

Saturday – 3 OV hours @ £77.11 per hour = £231.33

Sunday / bank holiday – 3 OV hours @ £102.82 = £308.46

Annex B: Monthly accounting timetable 2024-25

Month/Period	Week Number	Week Commencing (Sunday)
Apr/Period 1	1	31/03/24
Apr/Period 1	2	07/04/24
Apr/Period 1	3	14/04/24
Apr/Period 1	4	21/04/24
Apr/Period 1	5	28/04/24
May/Period 2	6	05/05/24
May/Period 2	7	12/05/24
May/Period 2	8	19/05/24

May/Period 2	9	26/05/24
Jun/Period 3	10	02/06/24
Jun/Period 3	11	09/06/24
Jun/Period 3	12	16/06/24
Jun/Period 3	13	23/06/24
Jun/Period 3	14	30/06/24
Jul/Period 4	15	07/07/24
Jul/Period 4	16	14/07/24
Jul/Period 4	17	21/07/24
Jul/Period 4	18	28/07/24
Aug/Period	19	04/08/24

5		
Aug/Period 5	20	11/08/24
Aug/Period 5	21	18/08/24
Aug/Period 5	22	25/08/24
Sep/Period 6	23	01/09/24
Sep/Period 6	24	08/09/24
Sep/Period 6	25	15/09/24
Sep/Period 6	26	22/09/24

Month /Period	Week Number	Week Commencing (Sunday)
Sep/Period 6	27	29/09/24
Oct/Period 7	28	06/10/24
Oct/Period 7	29	13/10/24
Oct/Period 7	30	20/10/24
Oct/Period 7	31	27/10/24
Nov/Period 8	32	03/11/24
Nov/Period 8	33	10/11/24
Nov/Period 8	34	17/11/24
Nov/Period 8	35	24/11/24
Dec/Period 9	36	01/12/24
Dec/Period 9	37	08/12/24
Dec/Period 9	38	15/12/24
Dec/Period 9	39	22/12/24
Dec/Period 9	40	29/12/24
Jan/Period 10	41	05/01/25
Jan/Period 10	42	12/01/25
Jan/Period 10	43	19/01/25
Jan/Period 10	44	26/01/25
Feb/Period 11	45	02/02/25
Feb/Period 11	46	09/02/24
Feb/Period 11	47	16/02/24
Feb/Period 11	48	23/02/25
Mar/Period 12	49	02/03/24
Mar/Period 12	50	09/03/25
Mar/Period 12	51	16/03/25
Mar/Period 12	52	23/03/25
Mar/Period 12	53	30/03/25

Annex C: Discount rates and bands and the hierarchy of hours

Annual Hours Bands and Discounts 2024-25

Discount Band	Poultry Slaughter (annual hours available)	Red Meat Slaughter and Game Handling Establishments (annual hours available)	Discount rates (2024-25)
1	Up to 804	Up to 267	85
2	804 – 1,962	267 – 951	70
3	1,962 – 3,576	951 – 3,300	40
4	3,576 – 6,660	3,300 – 7,482	22
5	6,660 – 21,396	7,482 – 15,879	6
6	More than 21,396	More than 15,879	2

Note: One twelfth of the annual hours in each band will be available for each charging period.

Hierarchy of Hours

1. OV Core > OV Overtime (Mon-Fri) > OV Saturday > OV Sunday > OT Bank holiday
2. SMI Core > SMI Overtime (Mon-Fri) > SMI Saturday > SMI Sunday > SMI Bank holiday
3. PMI Core > PMI Overtime (Mon-Fri) > PMI Saturday > PMI Sunday > PMI Bank holiday
4. MI Core > MI Overtime (Mon-Fri) > MI Saturday > MI Sunday > MI Bank holiday

Annex D: Glossary of terms

Term	Description
DAERA full cost	Sum of multiplying the hours of all DAERA grades recorded for slaughter and cutting by the relevant hourly rates
Total regulated charges for slaughter	Sum of discounted charges for all DAERA grades for slaughter activities
Total regulated charges for cutting	Sum of charges for all DAERA grades for cutting activities
Final charge	What you will be invoiced for The total regulated charges for slaughter and cutting

Annex E: Draft example of backing papers – generated for each establishment (These examples are for illustration purposes only)

SUMMARY AREA

Invoice Backing Schedule

Charges for [period]

Food Business

Invoice [Number]

Red meat/Poultry slaughter

Band	Hours Available in Period	Discount Rate	Grade	Time Rate	Number of Hours	Hourly Rate	Full Cost Charge	Discount	Charge
				Total Regulated Charges for Poultry Slaughter					

Red meat/Poultry Cutting

Grade	Time Rate	Number of Hours	Hourly Rate	Charge
				Total Regulated Charges for Poultry Cutting

Total Regulated Charges - Slaughter and Cutting			
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Food business

Charges for [period]

Red meat/Poultry Slaughter	Rate	Hours	Hourly Rate	Full Cost Charge
Total Regulated Charges for Veterinary Officer Core	Core			
Total Regulated Charges for Veterinary Officer Overtime	OT Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Veterinary Officer Saturday	Sat Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Veterinary Officer Sunday	Sun Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Veterinary Officer Bank Holiday	BH Rate			
Total Veterinary Officer Charges				
Total Regulated Charges for Senior Meat Inspector Core	Core			
Total Regulated Charges for Senior Meat Inspector Overtime	OT Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Senior Meat Inspector Saturday	Sat Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Senior Meat Inspector Sunday	Sun Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Senior Meat Inspector Bank Holiday	BH Rate			
Total Senior Meat Inspector Charges				
Total Regulated Charges for Poultry Meat Inspector Core	Core			
Total Regulated Charges for Poultry Meat Inspector Overtime	OT Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Poultry Meat Inspector Saturday	Sat Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Poultry Meat Inspector Sunday	Sun Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Poultry Meat Inspector Bank Holiday	BH Rate			
Total Poultry Meat Inspector Charges				
Total Regulated Charges for Meat Inspector Core	Core			
Total Regulated Charges for Meat Inspector Overtime	OT Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Meat Inspector Saturday	Sat Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Meat Inspector Sunday	Sun Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Meat Inspector Bank Holiday	BH Rate			
Total Meat Inspector Charges				
Total Regulated Charges for Slaughter				

Red meat/Poultry Cutting	Rate	Hours	Hourly Rate	Full Cost Charge
Total Regulated Charges for Veterinary Officer Core	Core			
Total Regulated Charges for Veterinary Officer Overtime	OT Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Veterinary Officer Saturday	Sat Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Veterinary Officer Sunday	Sun Rate			
Total Regulated Charges for Veterinary Officer Bank Holiday	BH Rate			
Total Veterinary Officer Charges				
Total Regulated Charges for Cutting				

Annex F: Delivery support costs

Following a two-stage review of overheads which was completed in 2011 and 2023, delivery support costs are now charged as part of the hourly rate. There are 5 categories. These are travel costs, Management costs, FSA staff costs, global costs and the Grade Supplement for central overheads.

(a) Travel costs

These are costs associated with DAERA officials travel expenses, eg mileage allowances, subsistence and travel time².

The hourly rate associated with travel costs is calculated by dividing the total actual cost of the above expenses incurred during the previous year, by the DAERA total hours for the same time period.

(b) Management costs

These are costs associated with the professional, technical and administrative support provided to frontline DAERA officials in your establishment.

This hourly rate is calculated by dividing the total annual Management cost, by the DAERA hours spent on FSA tasks for the previous year.

(c) FSA staff costs

FSA staff costs are associated with the amount of time FSA staff in the Belfast office spend on tasks related to operational delivery of official controls. As above, this hourly rate is calculated by dividing the annual FSA staff cost attributed to operational issues, by the DAERA hours spent on FSA tasks for the previous year.

(d) Global costs

These costs are associated with consumables and equipment provided by DAERA to support front line staff in your establishment. Examples of these costs are telephone and laundry costs. As with travel costs above, the associated hourly rate is calculated by dividing the total cost of the above expenses incurred during the previous year, by the DAERA total hours for the same time period.

(e) Grade Supplement for central overheads

Central overheads are taken from the VSAHG ready reckoner and include DAERA employment costs such as national insurance and employers' superannuation. The hourly rate for each grade is calculated by dividing the total cost of overheads for that grade and dividing by the total hours worked per grade.

The hourly rates associated with the delivery support costs detailed in (a) to (d) above are added to the DAERA hourly rate per grade to get the chargeable hourly rate applicable.

² Outward travel time for DAERA officials providing relief cover in establishments other than their headquarters is charged directly to the establishment being visited and is not included in the travel cost overhead.

It is important to note that these delivery support costs are recovered as follows

- Over contractual hours for MI, and PMI grades
- Over all Mon-Fri hours for OV, and SMI grades.

Annex G: FSA Privacy Notice

The Food Standards Agency is what is known as the 'Controller' of the personal data provided to us.

What information do we hold?

The personal information we may collect from you consists of:

- Throughput information for your premises
- Names and addresses of sole traders and related billing information

Where do we get this information from?

The Food Standards Agency obtains this information from the Food Business Operator.

Disclosure of other people's personal information

You should show this notice to anyone whose personal information you provide to us. You must make sure that any information you supply is accurate and that you have obtained their consent to use their data for the purpose set out in this privacy notice.

Why do we need it?

We need to collect this information for the purpose of calculating accurate charges for official controls. We will not collect any personal data from you which we do not need.

What we do with it

We retain personal information only for as long as necessary to carry out this function, and in line with our retention policy. This means that this information will usually be retained for 6 years after the financial year end to which it relates, unless otherwise stated. All the personal data we process is located on servers within the United Kingdom / European Union. Our cloud-based services have been procured through the government framework agreements and these services have been assessed against the national cyber security centre cloud security principles. No third parties have access to your personal data unless the law allows them to do so. In line with this commitment your information may be passed to the National Audit Office if they request the information

as part of their audit of FSA processes and other government departments as required in their regulatory duties.

What are your rights?

You have a right to see the information we hold from you by making a request in writing to the email address below. If at any point you believe the information we process from you is incorrect you can request to have it corrected. If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled the personal data you have provided, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter. If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are not processing the personal data, you have provided, in accordance with the law you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Our Data Protection Officer at the FSA is the Information Management and Security Team Leader who can be contacted at informationmanagement@food.gov.uk