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Food Standards Agency

# Northern Ireland Annual Report and Accounts 2021-2022

For the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022



Food Standards Agency

# **Northern Ireland Annual Report and Accounts 2021-2022**

For the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022



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## Chair's foreword



I welcome this Annual Report and Accounts and am pleased to see the progress being made against the objectives previously agreed by the FSA Board. While acknowledging the work that was ongoing through the year to manage the impact of COVID-19 and EU Exit, it has been good to see a growing emphasis on recovery from the pandemic and adaptation to the expanded role for the FSA post EU Exit. Ongoing work in areas ranging from food hypersensitivity to regulatory reform, and further investment in science and research are all to be welcomed.

While we have done well to meet the challenges of the last year, global events are continuing to impact on the food system and put pressure on resources at home. Despite signs of recovery during this reporting period, local authorities are still struggling and will continue to face constraints which could impact on local food teams. Likewise, we remain concerned that without full import controls the less confident we can be about preventing food incidents occurring.

Towards the end of this reporting year, the FSA published its new strategy which sets out our direction of travel for the next five years. Food systems are continually evolving and have been forced to change as a consequence of external events, including the pandemic and now the war in Ukraine. Businesses are thinking differently about supply chains and consumer attitudes and behaviours in relation to food are also changing.

Against this backdrop, the new strategy recommitments the FSA to our core mission of Food You Can Trust and sets out how we will deliver on three key objectives: food is safe; food is what it says it is; and a new objective – to play our part, alongside other partners in government, industry and civil society, in transforming the food system to ensure food is healthier and more sustainable.

The food we eat is contributing to obesity and other avoidable ill-health, while climate change is leading us to ask urgent questions about how we can produce food in a way that is kinder to the planet. We are concerned that rising food prices and wider increases in the cost of living mean a healthier and more sustainable diet could become even more unattainable for many people.

The FSA's delivery against the new strategy and our corporate objectives will be scrutinised by the FSA Board and captured in future annual reports.

I would like to commend everyone at the FSA for their efforts through the year to uphold food standards and maintain consumer confidence in our food. In addition to doing the day job exceptionally well, the FSA must continue to be agile and responsive to events in a fast-changing world. I look forward to working with FSA colleagues and our external partners to meet these challenges.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Jebb". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Susan Jebb OBE, PhD, FRCP (Hon), FMedSci  
Chair, Food Standards Agency

## Chief Executive's foreword



I am pleased to lay before the Westminster Parliament and the Welsh Parliament, and present to the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Annual Report and Accounts. This edition covers our performance and activities in 2021/22 across England, Wales and Northern Ireland at a net cost of £130.5 million.

The report covers a productive year for the FSA. We have been continuing to manage the changes brought about by the UK's exit from the EU. Last year, the FSA took on responsibility for many of the risk analysis functions previously carried out by the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority. Our report shows we progressed 428 live regulated products applications and provided risk assessments and advice on a number of topics.

We have progressed reforms and continued with our key regulatory responsibilities, from classifying shellfish beds to operating meat hygiene inspections, to investigating the most egregious examples of food fraud. We also saw a 21% increase in the number of notifications of food incidents during the reporting period.

Our Local Authority Recovery Plan was implemented in summer 2021 to help local authorities get back on track. It was designed to achieve a return to pre-pandemic levels of activity, and clear the backlog of food inspections that built up as local authorities successfully targeted their resources at the highest risk businesses while fighting COVID-19, by April 2023. All three countries showed signs of recovery, although the pace differed geographically.

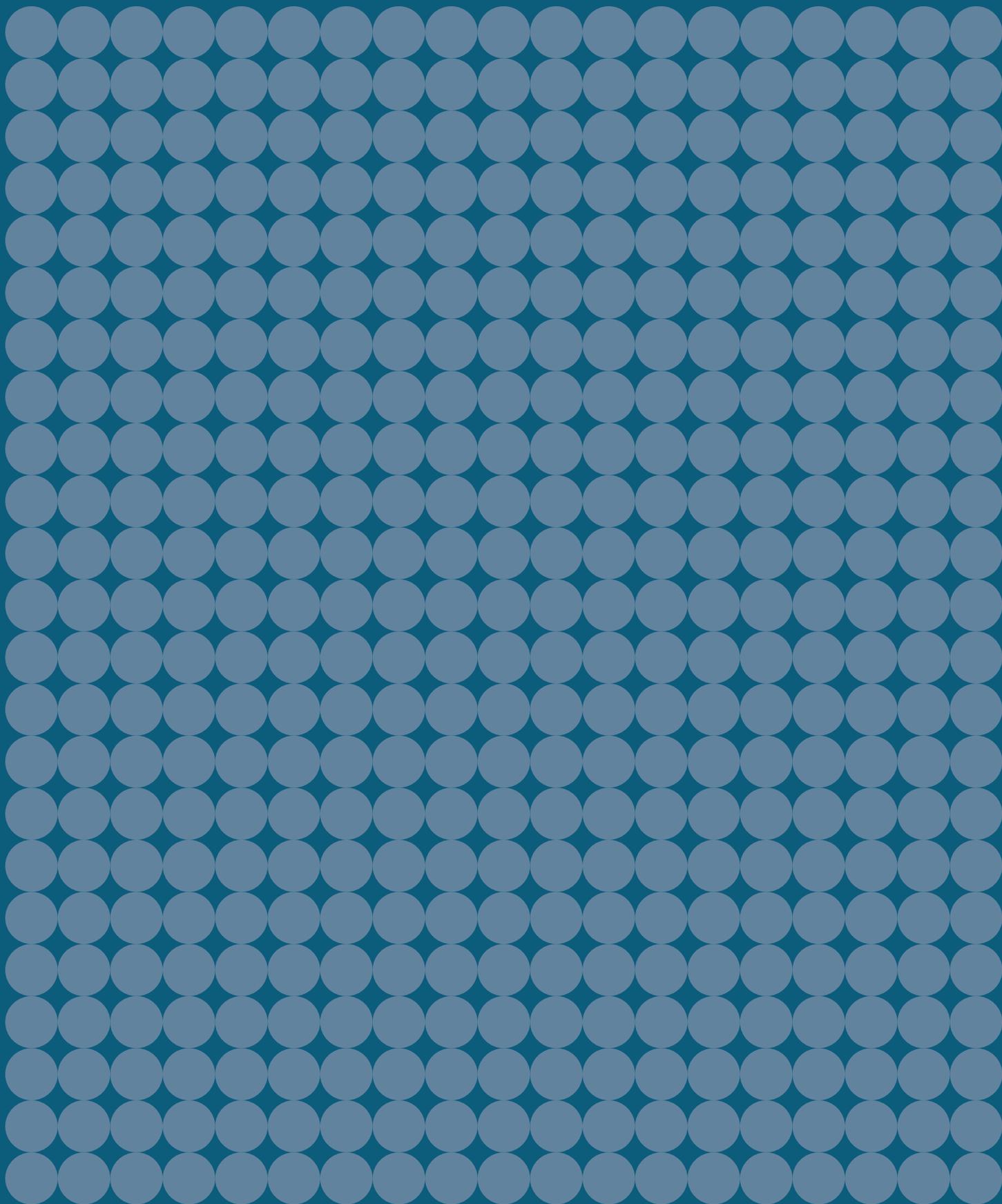
I would like to thank FSA staff, local authority colleagues, and all of the businesses we work with closely for all of their hard work over the year to ensure food you can trust.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Miles". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**Emily Miles**

Chief Executive, Food Standards Agency

# Performance report



# Overview

This overview sets out our purpose and how we are organised.

## About the Food Standards Agency (FSA)

Established in 2000, following several high-profile outbreaks of foodborne illness, the FSA is the independent government department working to protect public health and consumers' wider interests in relation to food in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our mission is **food you can trust**. Our work protects people's health, reduces the economic burden of foodborne disease and supports the UK economy and trade. The FSA – together with Food Standards Scotland – strives toward these objectives by ensuring our food has a strong reputation for safety and authenticity in the UK and abroad.

## Mission, vision, strategic priorities and performance



The linkages between the above are explained more in the introduction to the activities and performance section below.

## How are we organised?

Our objectives, powers and duties are set out in legislation, primarily the Food Standards Act 1999. Our main statutory objective is to protect public health from risks which may arise in connection with the consumption of food (including risks caused by the way in which it is produced or supplied) and otherwise to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food.

Most of food policy making is devolved, so we maintain strong working relationships with the UK Government, the Welsh Government and the Northern Ireland Executive. However, we act independently of ministers and are governed by an independent board. We work closely with Food Standards Scotland, an independent public body with responsibility for food policy and implementation in Scotland. We always factor circumstances or data specific to each nation into the approaches we take and the advice we provide.

[Our strategy 2022 to 2027](#)<sup>1</sup>, published March 2022, covers our role in each country, reflecting our 'one FSA' approach.

More than 1,300 people work for us to ensure food you can trust. They include statisticians, analysts, researchers, inspectors, enforcement experts, policy professionals, economists, veterinarians and more than 500 frontline staff, who work alongside our operational delivery partners to inspect abattoirs and other primary production sites.

Our work is underpinned by the latest science and evidence.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/about-us/foreword-a-changing-food-system](http://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/foreword-a-changing-food-system)

# Activities and performance 2021/22

In this section of our annual report, we state our activities and performance for the financial year 2021/22.

## Our mission and vision

Our overarching mission is food you can trust and, during the reporting period, our vision comprised the following four goals. These were reviewed by the Board in 2022, leading to our new strategy for 2022-27 which will guide us going forward.



Food is safe



Food is what it says it is



Consumers can make informed choices about what to eat



Consumers have access to an affordable diet, now and in the future\*

\*The FSA only holds nutrition policy in Northern Ireland, not in England and Wales.

## Our strategic priorities for 2021/22

The FSA's priority throughout has been to ensure food safety, preserving the high levels of consumer protection in the UK whilst supporting industry in maintaining the nation's food supply. We aim to minimise the impact of leaving the EU on food safety and food accessibility. Our priority activity for 2021/22 continued to be fulfilling our regulatory role in 'doing the day job exceptionally well' which included our response to COVID-19 and the smooth delivery of our work now we are operating outside of the EU. Most of the available funding was allocated to ensure ongoing delivery of the FSA's core regulatory functions. Going forward into 2022/23, these objectives will continue to evolve to align with our new responsibilities.





## Doing the day job exceptionally well

Our work broadly consists of three areas:

- understanding levels of **hygiene and standards** in the three nations
- **delivery** of our operational requirements and delivery of some nutrition and dietary health policy in Northern Ireland.
- internally ensure we can **resource** that work by providing the best people for the job

Some of our achievements in each of these three areas are provided on the next four pages. Later we report in more detail on the following.

### Hygiene and standards

- Foodborne disease
- Public attitudes towards the FSA
- Science and surveillance
- Horizon scanning
- Strategic surveillance and data
- Sampling
- The future for UK official food and feed laboratories
- Research and evidence
- Analysis and insight
- Risk analysis process
- Food Hygiene Rating Scheme
- Meat food business compliance

### Delivery

- Regulated products
- Local authority delivery
- Food and feed incidents
- Animal welfare
- National Food Crime Unit
- Achieving Business Compliance
- Operational transformation
- Food hypersensitivity
- Nutrition: Northern Ireland (NI)

### Our people

- Staff engagement
- Supporting our staff
- Diversity and inclusion

## Hygiene and standards

**This section reviews the variety of work we carried out and how that work enables us to achieve our goals.**

2020 saw a reduction in reporting of laboratory confirmed human cases of foodborne disease for three of the four key pathogens, the FSA's headline food safety outcome measure, coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021 all four increased compared to 2020, with two remaining below pre-pandemic levels. See Foodborne disease section for more information (page 20)

The FSA's flagship survey, Food and You 2, launched three waves throughout 2021/22, collecting data from over 400 households across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. As of wave 3, out of which 60% had some knowledge of the FSA, 75% trusted the FSA to make sure food is safe and what it says it is.

To ensure we can continue to provide the scientific research and evidence that is the backbone of the FSA's dedication to being science and evidence-led, we increased the number of science staff by more than 40% within 2021/22.

To inform our knowledge and information on the UK's food system, meet legislative requirements, inform risk assessment and provide information to local authorities for follow up action, we carried out our sampling work, testing 11,065 samples, found 245 non-compliances at a spend of £3.3 million.

We delivered a research and evidence programme worth over £10 million. This included delivering the allocated budget but also around £1 million of additional external science and evidence. We also started PATH-SAFE, a £19 million cross-government programme, funded by HM Treasury, to explore novel methods for improved foodborne disease and antimicrobial resistance surveillance.

The audit programme for meat food business operators (FBOs) continued to be significantly impacted by COVID-19 in England and Wales. During 2021/22, the FSA prioritised audits previously deferred due to COVID-19 disruption, completing 249 of these audits. There were no outstanding deferred audits and the number of full audits completed against the target had returned to pre-pandemic levels at the end of 2021/22.

As more food hygiene inspections and interventions were carried out, the number of food hygiene ratings given to businesses increased by 179% compared to pre-pandemic levels. In addition, 96.9% of establishments achieved a satisfactory or above food hygiene rating (3 or better).

In Northern Ireland we maintained MenuCal, a free online tool to support businesses in calculating calories and managing allergens. Despite the pandemic and the limited ability to promote the tool, active MenuCal users continued to grow. In the latest wave of the Eating Well Choosing Better Tracking Survey (2021+Data was collected from August to October 2021), there were a high number of respondents (87%) who recognised the traffic light label, which remained consistent throughout each wave.

Most respondents (79%) understood the traffic light label. However, only 42% reported that they use the label when shopping (-14% since 2020<sup>2</sup>).

## Delivery

**This section looks at the practical work carried out by, or on behalf of, the FSA within the meat industry, food businesses and legal enforcement. The FSA largely managed to provide a consistent service across our areas of delivery, despite the continuing challenges we faced during the reporting year. Some of our achievements are described below.**

As at December 2021, we had 420 applications progressing through the regulated products service, at different stages of the authorisation process. We received a high level of contacts to the service for Cannabidiol (CBD) products in the first quarter of 2021/22 which coincided with the FSA deadline on CBD applications.

Local authorities met the expectations of the FSA and made significant progress in relation to inspections and interventions, clearly taking a risk-based approach in line with the Local Authority Recovery Plan (the plan) agreed by the Board in May 2021.

Our animal welfare team introduced the 'Demonstration of Life' protocol. This is a voluntary scheme which aims to reduce the number of small ruminant animals (sheep and goats) that are slaughtered without prior stunning, by certifying that the stun method is halal compliant. We also introduced a referral for investigation triage process which is overseen by a panel of experts who assess animal welfare cases that could be prosecutable. This ensures proportionality and consistency of the FSA's approach to these cases.

Our National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) achieved their first end-to-end conviction, as well as other activities to disrupt criminal behaviour around food.

### Delivering our priority programmes

Our three priority programmes of work were unchanged from previous years. Where necessary, the FSA reprioritised resources to support progress in these areas. They are:



<sup>2</sup> Data was collected from June to August 2020

## Achieving Business Compliance

The ABC Programme continued to progress each of its three workstreams:

- targeted and proportionate approach to regulation
- enterprise level regulation
- assurance of online food sales

This included progressing and concluding the pilots in England and Northern Ireland for a new risk-based model for food standards, developing our approach to modernise the food hygiene delivery model, working with UK's 10 largest retailers to develop a proof-of-concept to test regulating at a business level, and developing our understanding and evidence base to inform future work to assure online food sales. The programme provided a comprehensive report to the FSA Board in September 2022<sup>3</sup>.

## Operational Transformation Programme (OTP)

Worked closely with key stakeholders to develop and agree the Future Delivery Model which outlines the key objectives the OTP will achieve in modernising delivery of official controls. This was successfully signed off by the FSA Board in September 2021 whilst also agreeing the next 12 months' programme of work. The OTP continued to deliver against the agreed work programme by progressing several key project initiatives. These included the digitalisation of meat approvals, progressing the initial review of legislative strategy options for official controls and developing and piloting use of a segmentation model that enables a more data driven, risk-based approach to scheduling of audits.

## Food Hypersensitivity

Implemented the prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) legislation from 1 October 2021 and have supported businesses and local authorities to successfully implement the new rules. The PPDS legislation requires food businesses to label this type of food with the name and ingredients list, with the 14 major allergens emphasised within the list. More information can be found in the priority programmes section on page 74.

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3 [www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-board-meetings](http://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-board-meetings)

## Our people

### This section considers our staff and our engagement during 2021/22

The FSA's engagement index score was 68%, our second highest ever score. Our response rate to the People Survey was 77%, down 10% points since 2020 but remained above the Civil Service benchmark of 62%. Most areas dropped only marginally, except for pay and benefits (-6% points), My Manager (+1% point) and My Team (+/-0% points).

The health, safety and wellbeing of our staff continued to be of utmost importance throughout the pandemic. Due to the nature of the pandemic and the ongoing additional demands placed on staff, we continued to implement a variety of support measures to enable staff to protect themselves and others.

The FSA also continued to make its award-winning flexible Our Ways of Working (OWOW) offer available to support its staff. This location-agnostic approach to recruitment resulted in successful recruitment campaigns, which quite often included reserve candidates.

Our representation remained broadly aligned with the economically active population. However, further work is required to increase disability representation. We continued to implement new, innovative programmes such as Reverse Mentoring and FSA Accelerate, a development programme for underrepresented groups.

All performance and resources reports are published as Board papers<sup>4</sup>, where we present updates and progress against these measures. More detail available in the Our people section on page 82.

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<sup>4</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-board-meetings](http://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-board-meetings)

## Priorities in-year



Whilst our overarching functions carried on, we continued our work to move back to 'business as usual' after major changes to our work resulting from the UK's exit from the EU and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.



### COVID-19 recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to have knock-on consequences for the FSA, particularly around our sampling work and work carried out on our behalf by the three nations' local authorities.

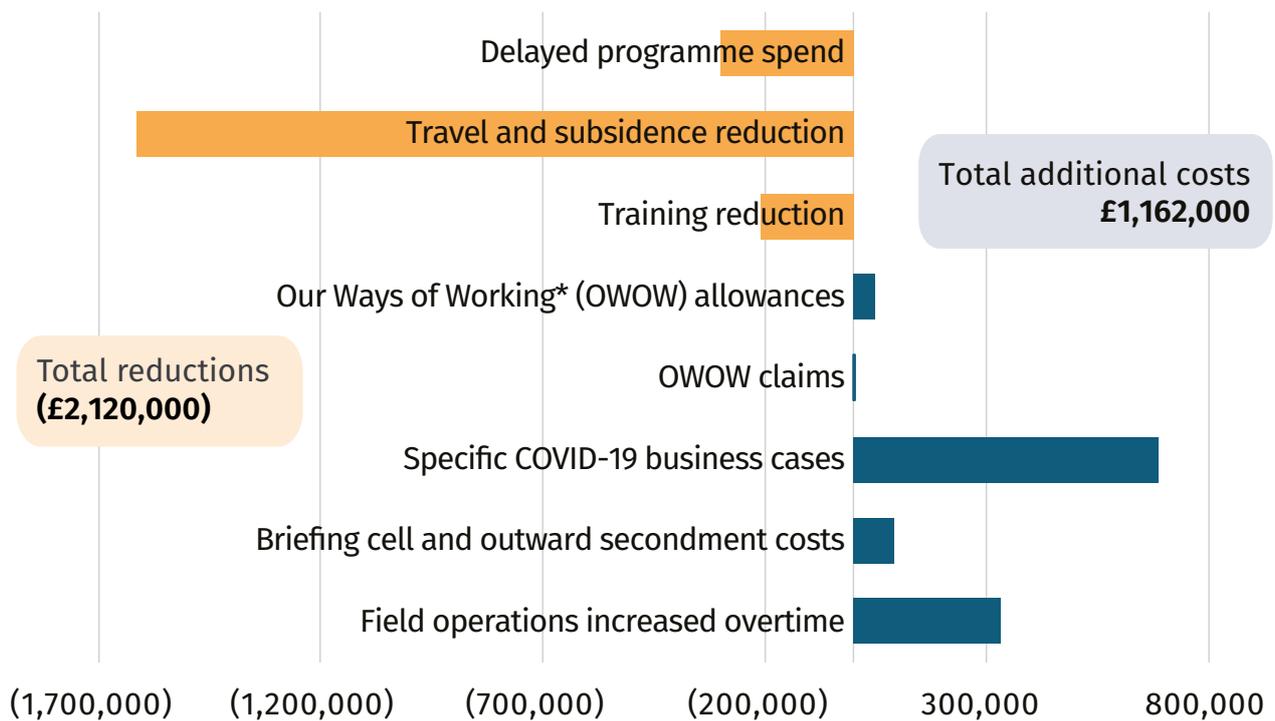
The pandemic severely affected the ability of inspectors to assess industry compliance. This was reflected in the number of food businesses given food hygiene ratings during the pandemic (see the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme section on page 44 for more detail).

Although there was a significant reduction, enforcement officers have had a presence within the hospitality premises to carry out COVID-19 compliance visits. While these visits were not always combined with food hygiene checks, there was significant overlap between the principles used to assess whether a premises was COVID-safe and safe food production practices.

Local authorities resumed inspections across food businesses, prioritising those establishments with a history of non-compliance, or where complaints indicated possible problems. Early discussions with Local Authority Food Liaison Groups suggested that local authorities were encountering higher levels of non-compliance than before the pandemic. More data is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn about the impact of the pandemic on broader hygiene standards.

Sampling conducted by the FSA and FSS during the pandemic provided reasonable confidence that the basic safety of most food products was being upheld. However, a substantial number of products tested did not meet required standards in at least one area, in terms of the quality and accuracy of consumer information. This underlined the need for ongoing monitoring and increased investment in a wider range of sampling activities.

**Fig. 1: Financial impact of COVID-19 on the FSA in 2021/22**



We introduced Our Ways of Working (OWOW), our award-winning flexible working package in 2017, saving the taxpayer almost £2 million on office costs each year. It continued to allow our non-frontline staff the flexibility to work from offices and homes across the UK.

### Risk assessment from food

We continued to manage our research contract, ‘Assessing the survival of COVID-19 on food surfaces and food packaging materials’. This project aims to measure the survival of COVID-19 virus in a range of environs designed to mimic food moving through a retail environment. Its outputs will inform future risk assessments regarding risk of COVID-19 exposure via food and food packaging. This project began in February 2021, and the final report for the project was received by the FSA in July 2022. The report has undergone peer review and will be published in the 2022/23 reporting period.

As part of our risk assessment work, we carried out public consultations on genetically modified organism applications, novel food applications and imports from the Fukushima region of Japan – more information can be found in the risk assessment section on page 41.



## EU exit

**Following the UK's departure from the EU, the FSA continued to internalise processes previously carried out by the EU to ensure we continue to deliver on our priority: Food is safe and is what it says it is.**

The EU has remained by far our largest supplier of imported food, accounting for over 90% of all beef, dairy, eggs and pork products imported into the UK and nearly two-thirds (65%) of all food and feed not of animal origin. Analysis of compliance levels in import controls checks carried out between 2020 and 2021 showed that there was no meaningful change in the standard of imported goods because of either the pandemic or the UK's EU departure.

Until full import controls are introduced for EU goods entering Great Britain, around the end of 2023, the UK food safety authorities will continue to manage risks through pre-notifications, which were introduced in January 2022 for certain high-risk food and feed imports. Additionally, enhanced capability and capacity were put in place as part of EU Exit planning to detect and respond effectively to food and feed incidents.

The UK's exit from the EU means that it no longer has full access to the European Commission's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), although it continues to receive notifications concerning the UK. The FSA and Food Standards Scotland have built alternative arrangements with other international partners as well as investing in new surveillance approaches. Levels of incoming and outgoing notifications from EU and non-EU countries have remained stable.

Despite the pressure put on the food supply chain by the pandemic and the UK's departure from the EU, there was no evidence of significant exploitation by criminals. Generally, there was no discernible increase in food crime detected over this period.

### Post EU transition period update

The FSA's work to build new functions and prepare for the consequences of EU Exit was successfully delivered. We and Food Standards Scotland took on new responsibilities from 1 January 2021. These include:

#### Regulated products

- The FSA has been operating a service to authorise new regulated food and feed products before they enter the Great Britain market.
- As at 31 March 2022, 420 applications were made to the FSA, who carry out a safety risk assessment of the products and consider factors such as trade and environmental impacts before making recommendations to Ministers on authorisation (see page 51).

### Repatriation of International Trade functions (see page 127), including:

- Free Trade Agreements (FTA)/Section 42 reports which explain whether an FTA is consistent with the maintenance of UK levels of statutory protection in relation to human, animal or plant life or health, animal welfare and the environment.
- Delivery of a new market access (imports) function to support the UK Office for SPS Trade Assurance<sup>5</sup> in assessing the food and feed safety of new commodity import requests from third countries.
- Enhancing the delivery of the market access (exports) function to support our existing and new export markets such as opening the United States market to British lamb.

### Other areas

- Expanding the NFCU as well as embedding new working processes and capabilities which have enhanced our abilities to detect, investigate and disrupt food crime (see page 63)
- Taking charge of food and feed law. The FSA is now directly responsible for administering food and feed legislation, including risk assessment of new and novel foods, the regulated products approval process, and undertaking legislative changes, via statutory instruments, to amend food and feed law (see page 51).
- The FSA has initiated risk assessments on four issues due to new evidence and/or emerging changes in the food system, and has provided risk assessment and public health advice to support development of future borders policy (see page 41).

At the end of March 2021, the EU Transition Programme closed following agreement by the [FSA Board in March 2020](#)<sup>6</sup>. Ongoing work moved into business as usual. A significant part of the organisation's ongoing focus in 2021/22 continued to deliver our core functions following the end of the transition period and overcoming issues that arose during the reporting period.

<sup>5</sup> [www.gov.uk/guidance/exporting-to-the-uk-countries-and-establishments-approved-to-export-animals-and-animal-products](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/exporting-to-the-uk-countries-and-establishments-approved-to-export-animals-and-animal-products)

<sup>6</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-21-03-05-eu-transition.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-21-03-05-eu-transition.pdf)

## Hygiene and standards: Our year in numbers

### Foodborne disease:

laboratory confirmed cases in UK per 100,000 population<sup>7</sup> –  
Campylobacter **101.9**, Salmonella **8.8**,  
Shiga-toxin-producing E.coli **0.89**, Listeria monocytogenes **0.28**

### Public attitudes



**75%**  
reported that they  
trusted the FSA to  
ensure food is safe  
and what it says it is

### Strategic surveillance



**12,000**  
signals processed by  
our new receipt and  
management function

### Sampling



**11,065**  
samples tested  
**245** non-compliances  
**£3.3** million total  
spend

### Research and evidence



**£16.6 million**  
spent on science –  
**12.7%** of FSA spend

### Risk analysis process



Published our risk  
assessment relating to  
Fukushima import  
controls

### Meat food business operator compliance



**98.9%**  
meat FBOs rated  
'Good' or 'Generally  
Satisfactory'

### Food hygiene rating scheme



**9,604** fewer  
businesses published  
as 'awaiting  
inspection'

<sup>7</sup> The table presents the rate per 100,000 population of laboratory confirmed cases in the United Kingdom, in 2021 from all sources, not only from foodborne transmission. For further information please read more in the Foodborne Disease section. Underreporting rates differ between pathogens. Therefore, rates for different pathogens should not be compared.

# Students' guide to food safety

**Aims:** To increase food safety practices with young adults, particularly students, by helping them to understand the 4Cs of food hygiene (cleaning, cooking, chilling, cross-contamination).

**When:** 17 November 2021 to 12 December 2021

**Spend:** £30,000

## What we did:

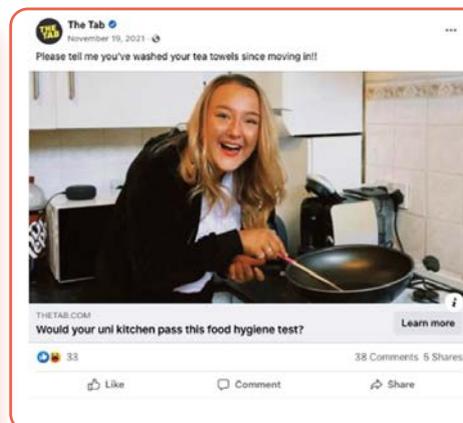
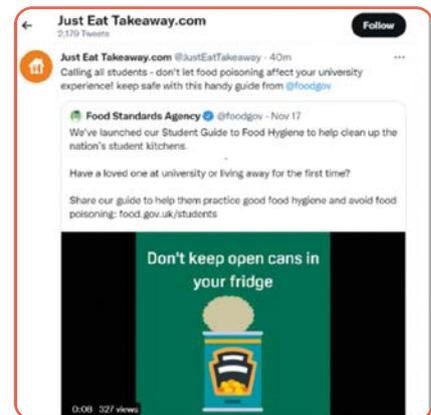
We worked with The Tab, the UK's largest and most influential student media and youth site. They are for students, by students, with more than 1,000 student journalists. Their university network covers 88% of The Times' top 50 universities (including England, Wales and NI). Working with them in a paid partnership capacity, we shared content which they featured as a quiz style advertorial article, and was shared across their site and social channels. This partnership meant that we could reach a highly targeted student audience and ensure accuracy of content – whilst also appealing to a student audience through the tone of the article and imagery used.

We also worked with a range of partners including student, community and parent organisations. The National Union of Students supported as a key partner, sharing content across platforms directly engaging with universities and their newsletter was shared with key decision makers in Student Unions across the UK.

## The results

Overall we generated a reach over 167,497 students with 17,256 video views and 468 interactions. The Tab generated 32,239 unique visits and the quiz had a click through rate of 0.6% (which exceeded the industry benchmark of 0.3%).

Other partnership work delivered a reach of 40,700 and our own social content delivered 44 pieces of content generating 94,558 impressions with Facebook performing best against Twitter and Instagram. Our [Student guide to food safety and hygiene](#)<sup>†</sup> received 1,021 visits over the four weeks.



<sup>†</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/student-guide-to-food-safety-and-hygiene](http://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/student-guide-to-food-safety-and-hygiene)

## Foodborne disease

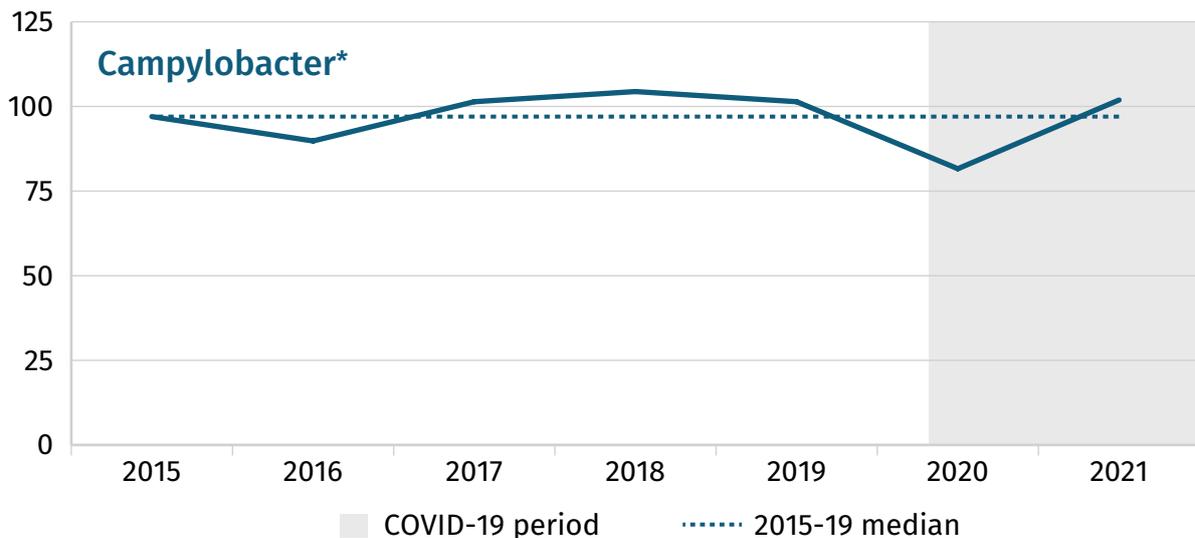
A key aim of the FSA is to ensure that food is safe. This includes working with food producers to reduce likelihood of foodborne hazards in their products, which ultimately reduces the burden of foodborne disease and safeguards the public's health. We have developed a Foodborne Disease Framework to bring together data and surveillance information on the [thirteen foodborne pathogens](#)<sup>8</sup> with the most detrimental effect on society. The framework is informed by a Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis tool, developed by the FSA which ranks pathogens by their most detrimental effect on society, for example cost to society and the level of public concern.

### Objectives in 2021/22

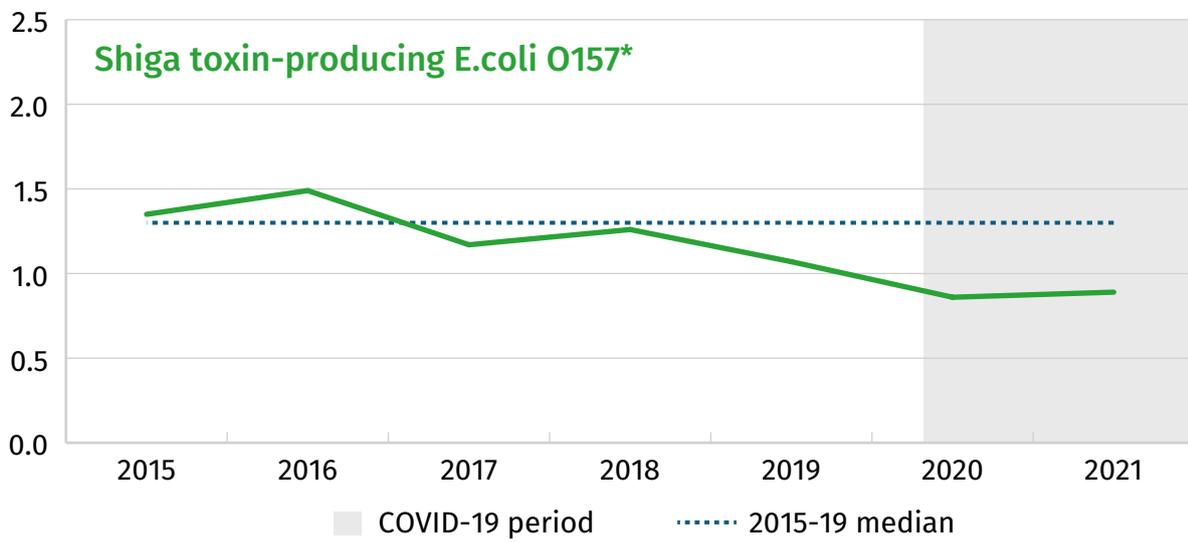
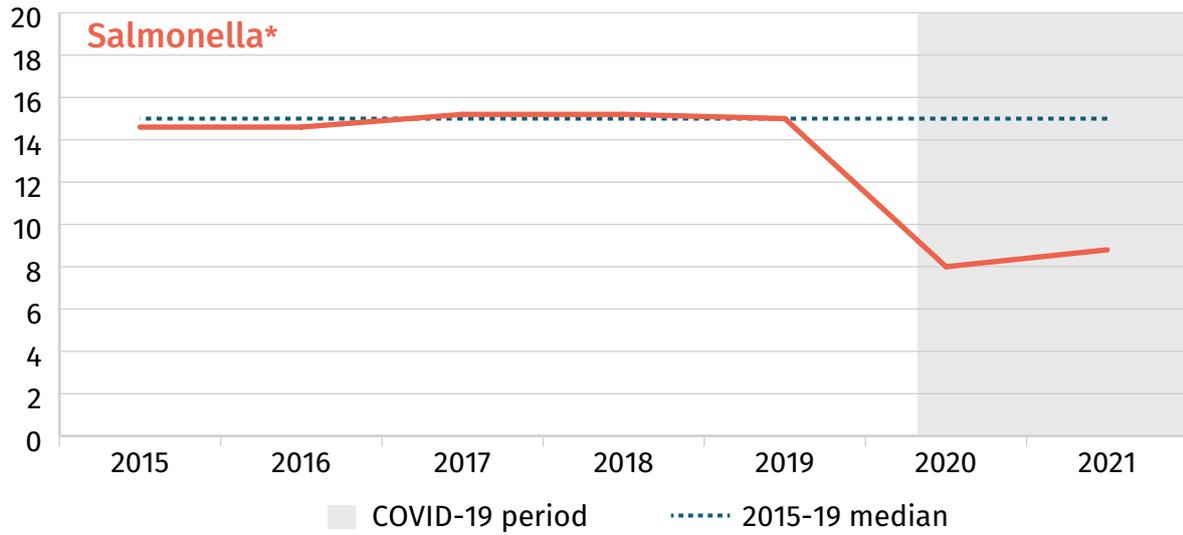
- Support people to reduce the risk of getting foodborne disease, and help them to avoid waste, by working to raise awareness of date labels.
- Progressing key research priorities and contributing to ongoing research.

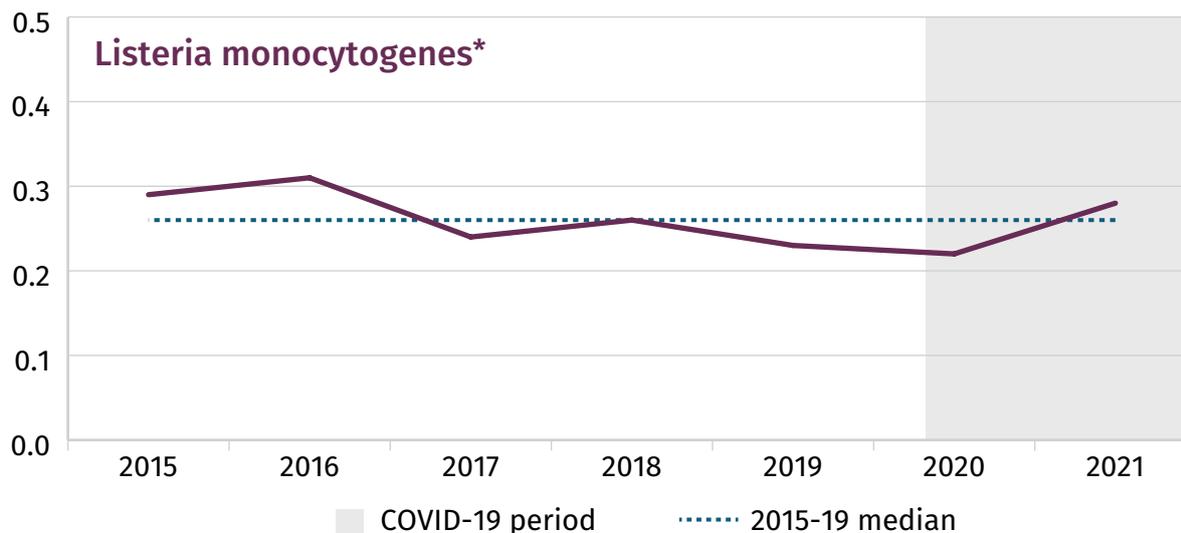
### Trends of gastrointestinal (GI) pathogen reporting

The graphs show confirmed cases from all sources, not only from foodborne transmission, as the cause of illness can be difficult to prove in any single case. Cases are per 100,000 population and are UK laboratory confirmed.



<sup>8</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/prioritising-foodborne-disease-with-multicriteria-decision-analysis-report.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/prioritising-foodborne-disease-with-multicriteria-decision-analysis-report.pdf)





\* Data are derived from multiple live reporting systems managed by The UK Health Security Agency, Public Health Wales, Public Health Scotland and Public Health Agency Northern Ireland. Data are provisional and may change. Rates per 100,000 population are calculated using ONS mid-year population estimates (2020 estimates used for 2021 as 2021 estimates not yet available). Trends over time should be interpreted with caution, particularly over the 'COVID-19' period (2020-2021) due to many factors which impacted pathogen reporting.

In 2020, there was a substantial reduction in reporting of gastrointestinal pathogens to national surveillance, coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. Similar declines were also observed in other countries. In 2021 cases of *Campylobacter* reported in the UK returned to pre-COVID-19 levels, however cases of *Salmonella* and Shiga toxin-producing *E.coli* O157 (STEC O157) remained notably lower than pre-pandemic levels for reasons which are uncertain at present.

The drivers of this change are likely to be multifactorial, vary by pathogen and linked to many different societal and behavioural changes that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. The overall picture is complex and differs throughout 2020 and 2021:



**Underreporting of GI infections** – Some of the reduction will be linked to changes in health care seeking behaviour, with fewer people visiting general practitioners and hospitals as well as reduced samples taken for testing and changes in laboratory testing practices, likely leading to an increased underreporting of GI infections. Individuals with more severe illness would be more likely to seek care and have a sample submitted to the laboratory than those with milder symptoms of illness.



**Implementation of enhanced hygiene measures and social distancing** – Some of the observed reduction may represent a decrease in incidence for some pathogens due to control measures implemented to reduce the spread of COVID-19 such as better hand washing and social distancing.



**Food related behaviours** – The overall impact of some changes in behaviours seen during COVID-19 are unclear, especially in the context of how consumers accessed food during lockdown. Catered events such as weddings, family gatherings and other mass events were not permitted to take place or occurred on a much smaller scale during COVID-19 restrictions, reducing outbreaks of foodborne disease associated with these types of events compared to the pre-pandemic years. Other behaviour changes such as a change in the proportion of food cooked in the home or purchased from takeaways and restaurants may also have had an impact although the direction is less clear.



**Other non-pharmaceutical interventions** – Reduced international travel throughout 2020 and 2021 likely to have contributed to lower numbers of *Salmonella* and STEC O157 cases.

Ultimately the net effect of all these changes is unknown. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) published two papers<sup>9,10</sup> on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on GI pathogen reporting in England. While these acknowledged that increased under reporting was a key contributor to the drop, they also suggested that for pathogens where transmission was primarily person to person, such as norovirus, there may have also been a reduction in disease incidence due to changes in contact patterns and/or improved hygiene.

### Ongoing research and evidence

We carried out further work to better understand the reasons for the changes and continue to identify opportunities most beneficial to public health and reducing the burden of foodborne disease:

**A series of surveys of Intestinal Infectious Disease during COVID-19** – Enabling us to estimate the level of self-reported Infectious Intestinal Disease (IID) and underreporting during COVID-19 period. The surveys will also be used to test whether certain behaviours such as increased handwashing can be associated with lower likelihood of IID.

**Analysing hospital episode statistics by week for the main pathogens** – as hospital admissions are likely to capture the more severe cases, we would expect them to be less affected by underreporting, so closer to a true picture of trends.

**Working with UKHSA and the other surveillance providers** – We have liaised with the UK public health agencies to triangulate data from the two projects above with other surveillance data.

<sup>9</sup> [Love et al \(April 2021\). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gastrointestinal infection trends in England, February – July 2020, www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.04.06.21254174v2](https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.04.06.21254174v2)

<sup>10</sup> [Ondrikova et al \(August 2021\). Differential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on laboratory reporting of norovirus and Campylobacter in England: A modelling approach, https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0256638](https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0256638)

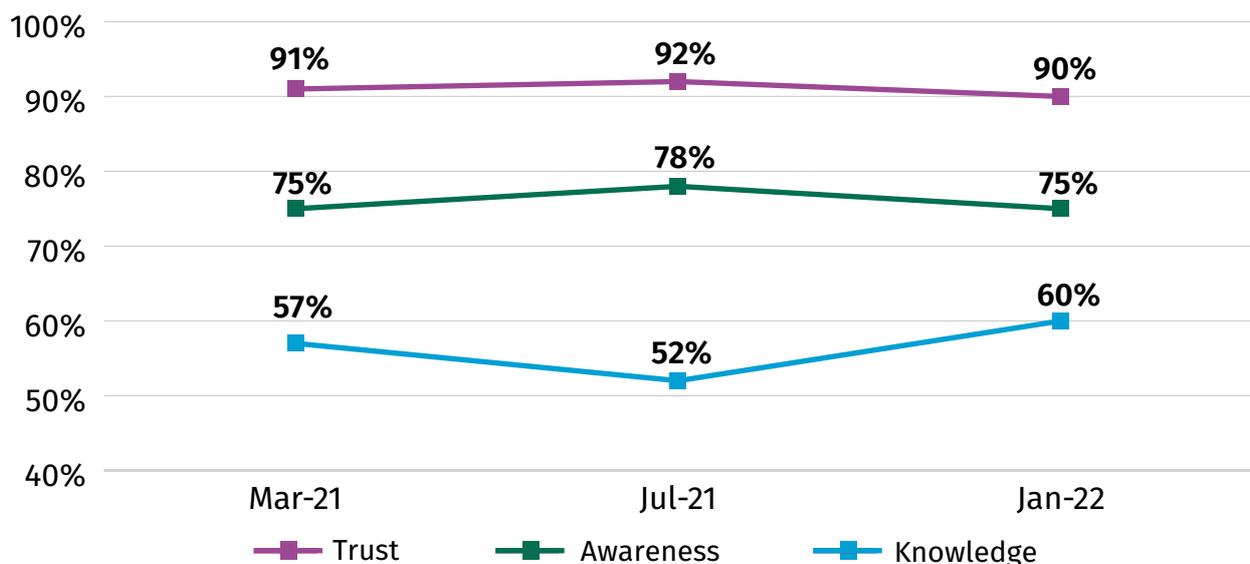
## Public attitudes towards the FSA

Food and You 2<sup>11</sup> is our flagship consumer survey and is an Official Statistic. It replaced Food and You and the Public Attitudes Tracker in 2020. Food and You 2 is designed to:

- provide representative data on consumers' self-reported knowledge, attitudes and behaviour relating to the FSA's policy priorities (such as food safety)
- monitor trends in consumers' concerns, attitudes and behaviour over time
- understand differences between different consumer groups

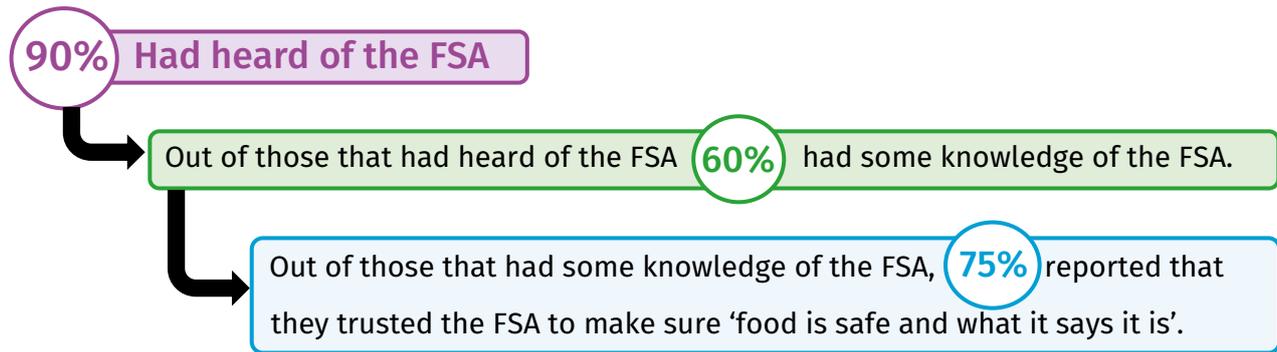
The first wave of Food and You 2 fieldwork was launched in July 2020, providing a new baseline (Food and You 2 cannot be compared to Food and You or the Public Attitudes Tracker due to methodological differences). Wave 2 fieldwork (which included questions on FHSR and food safety) findings were published in July 2021. The findings (including updated figures for confidence in food safety and the FSA) from Wave 3 were published on 26 January 2022. In Wave 3, a total of 6,271 adults from 4,338 households across England, Wales and Northern Ireland completed the survey. A summary of key findings is presented below:

**Fig. 2: Awareness, trust and knowledge of the FSA**

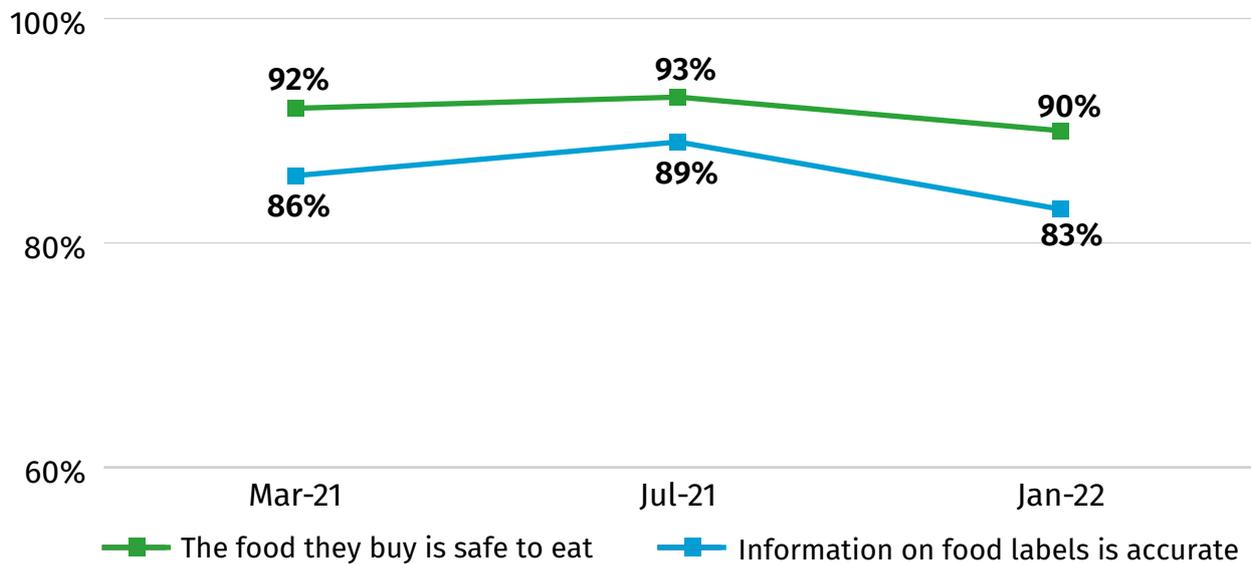


<sup>11</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/research/food-and-you-2](http://www.food.gov.uk/research/food-and-you-2)

Out of **6,271** respondents in wave 3 of the F&Y 2 consumer survey:



**Fig. 3: Confidence in food safety and authenticity**



Respondents to Wave 3 (January 2022 findings), reported the following:

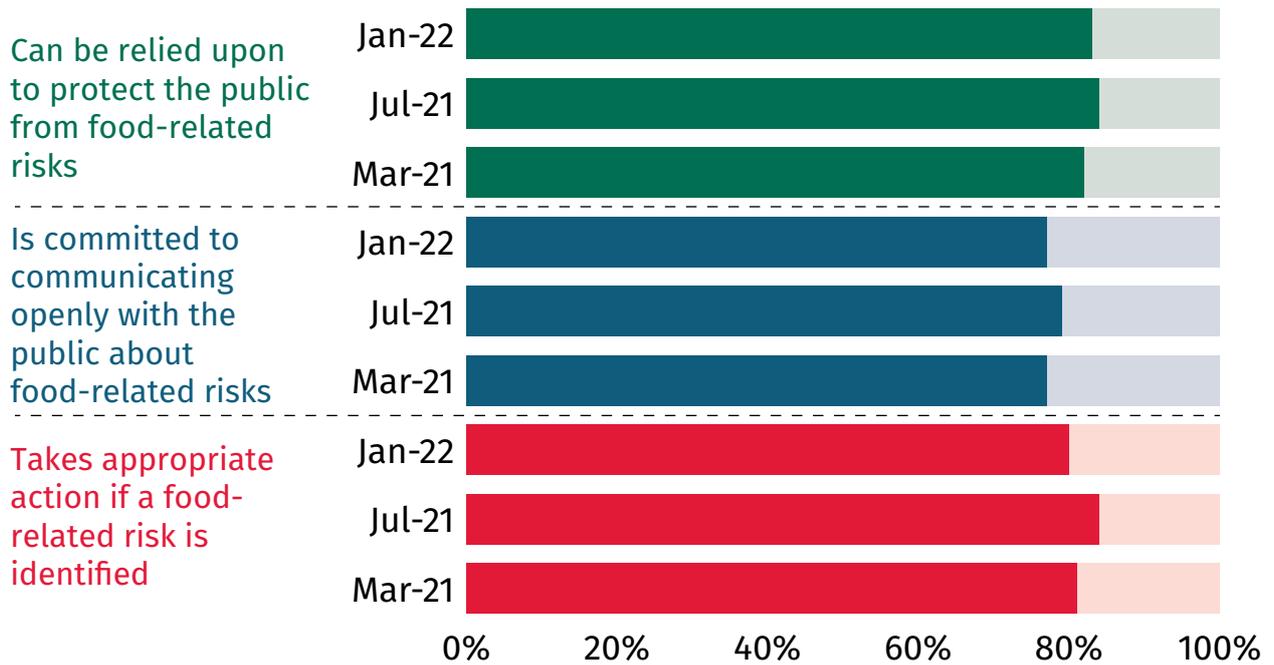
**90%** reported that they were confident that the food they buy is safe to eat.

**83%** respondents were confident that the information on food labels is accurate.

**73%** reported that they had confidence in the food supply chain.

Respondents were more likely to report confidence in farmers (87%), shops and supermarkets (83%) than in takeaways (56%) and food delivery services (41%).

**Fig. 4: Confidence in food safety and authenticity**



**83%** were confident in the FSA protecting the public from food-related risks.

**77%** were confident in the FSA communicating openly with the public about food-related risks.

**80%** reported that they had confidence in the food supply chain.

## Science and surveillance

Our surveillance work allows the FSA to anticipate risks and opportunities within the food industry, which allows us to respond in a timely manner, supporting the FSA's goal to ensure food is safe and is what it says it is. We set out to develop a systematic approach across the FSA to effectively identify food and feed risks, and to identify direct impacts including microbiological risk, changes in consumer attitudes and behaviours to food and technical advancements in food production.

We continued to work towards the delivery of an integrated surveillance sampling system and a more effective and sustainable national capability model. This included:



The development of a programme of work to develop our foresight and horizon scanning capability.



Improve our data management to support the above.



Our future approach to sampling.



Addressing our vision for the future for UK official food and feed laboratories.



Enhance our delivery of science, evidence and research programmes.



Build our capability in analysis and insight.

This allows data from a multitude of diverse sources (from physical sampling to horizon scanning) to be collated and reviewed, so effective and co-ordinated actions can be taken, in a timely manner. This helps the organisation to be strategic, rather than reactive, regarding emerging threats and opportunities. This includes having sufficient laboratory capacity to deal with a major foodborne incident or other surge in demand.

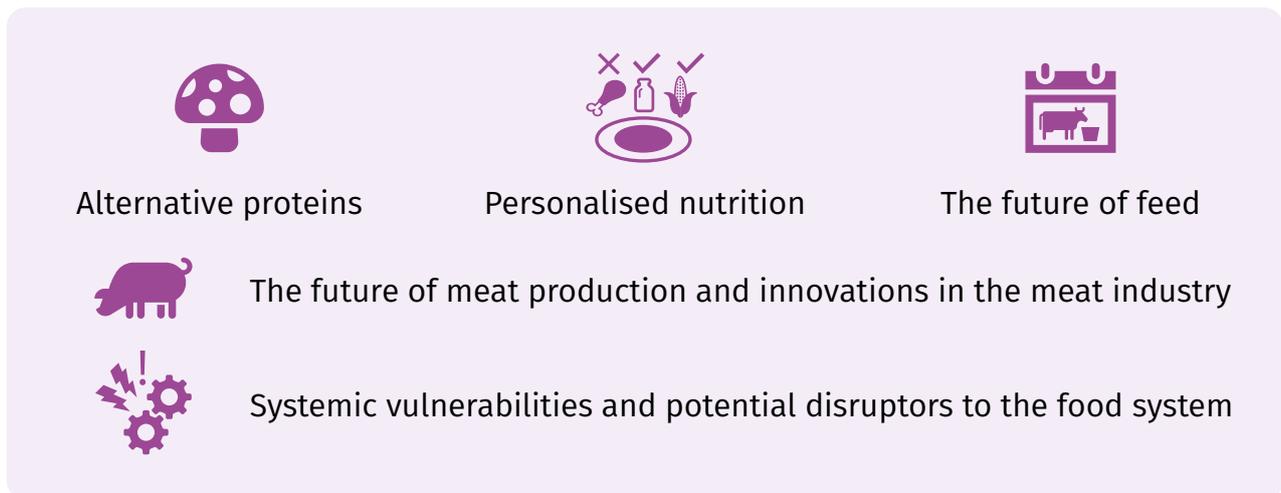
## Horizon scanning

The FSA has developed its horizon scanning and foresight capability to identify signals of change, understand key emerging trends, identify priority risks and opportunities and support strategy, policy, operations, and regulatory teams in identifying and testing options and responses.

### Progress against objectives

We developed our processes and systematising our intelligence flows and assurance processes. New insights were discussed on a regular basis by a cross-cutting team of senior leaders, led by the FSA's Strategy Unit. Actions and decisions were taken to implement activities across operations, policy, regulatory compliance and communications in response. The insights from horizon scanning were reviewed regularly by the FSA Board, by the executive management team and other leaders across the FSA.

Initial evidence review and prioritisation exercises identified priorities for analysis, collaborating closely with the academic community and where appropriate, industry. Some potential priorities for review were:



- 

Alternative proteins
- 

Personalised nutrition
- 

The future of feed
- 

The future of meat production and innovations in the meat industry
- 

Systemic vulnerabilities and potential disruptors to the food system

While being still early in its development, this approach has allowed the FSA better situational awareness. The challenge now is to ensure that we have the appetite and the resource to respond to these changing risks.

## Strategic surveillance and data

The FSA's strategic surveillance service develops tools and techniques to turn data into intelligence, using machine learning and artificial intelligence. This helps the FSA, and our external users, make quicker, better-informed actions to protect consumers. We have established a flexible, responsive data-enabled strategic surveillance service which harnesses the power of data science to identify emerging risks before they become risks to public health, using a variety of data sources.

### Objectives in 2021/22

To continue to develop tools and techniques which will provide relevant data to each area of the business, allowing them to achieve their goals effectively, in a data led way.

### Progress against objectives

- Implemented business change activity to embed the solutions into 'business as usual', by providing user support for adopting solutions, collecting feedback and maintaining request backlogs on each service.
- Introduced an ethics approach to all our artificial intelligence (AI) activities, including machine and deep learning.
- Established a systematic and repetitive process for identifying use cases, conducting 'hackathon' events, regularly engaging with stakeholders.
- Improved data architecture, governance and introduced dashboards and data standards to bring consistency to reporting. Additionally, we have transitioned to a cloud-based environment that standardises the way we ingest, store and visualise data.

Listed below are some of the tools and techniques we have developed.

**Signal Prioritisation Dashboard (SPD):** We developed the SPD, a short-term horizon scanning application. It consolidated food, feed, and food contact material related signals from over 48 open sources each day into a single access point. It also provided users with complete transparency and control over the data sources and the logic used for the prioritisation of signals. It dramatically improved our overview of food safety issues which may affect the UK. The SPD was shortlisted for the Food and Drink Federation awards 2021 in the Digital Transformation category.

The SPD reduced our dependency on third-party systems and resulted in significant annual savings. We also observed occurrences of SPD reporting signals a week before other third-party systems. Having this earlier notification was invaluable to those analysing strategic, tactical, and operational issues and trends, and for those organising interventions. The SPD has proved itself to be one of the key tools in our ability to responding to major events such as EU Exit and COVID-19. Beginning from March 2013, SPD banked over 77k records, thus lending itself to valuable trend analysis.

Presented below are some insights from how the RaM team utilises the information presented by SPD:

### Our new receipt and management function processed over 12k signals



**27** new incidents identified.



**99** referrals to local authorities.



**371** further signals were also passed on for information only.



**9** emerging risks identified, for example listeria in enoki mushrooms from Asia which found a 90% non-compliance rate.

**Risk Likelihood Dashboard (RLD):** The dashboard identifies high-risk commodities imported into the UK. This dashboard helped to present complex information on 'risky' food and feed in an understandable way and flag potential and emerging food and feed safety risks in terms of commodity, country of origin and hazard. The dashboard is used across multiple FSA teams, including Imports, incidents, and National Food Crime Unit. Other users included FSS and 150 port health and local authorities across the country. Inputs from the dashboard have contributed to the imported food sampling plan and helped increase the non-compliance hit ratio in sampled commodities by an average of 60%. The dashboard was one of the sources for the FSA Imports-led sampling survey conducted in February and March 2020. With inputs from the dashboard, the non-compliance ratio in sampled commodities increased by 132%.

**Identifying online display of food hygiene ratings:** The FSA have a goal to extend Wales and Northern Ireland requirements to make display of food hygiene ratings mandatory for businesses operating in England, and to make display compulsory for online businesses in all three countries. We undertook this project to support the rollout and enforcement of mandatory online display, by providing insight into current practice. The findings from this investigatory piece will help the FSA modernise regulations going forward.

**Monitoring high risk food:** In anticipation of the post EU-transition period landscape, work was carried out to strengthen our risk identification capability and capacity by building on proven mechanisms (such as monitoring of key data sources). The FSA created a solution for monitoring unauthorised imports of food and feed commodities at certain ports, starting with Dover. This analysis will be extended to other ports.

**FHRS machine learning predictor:** As part of the COVID-19 local authority recovery plan this service was designed and developed, aiming to ease the increased load of new inspections on local authorities by providing a prediction of expected compliance levels of new establishments, thus helping authorities prioritise inspections. This project was piloted by 16 local authorities across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

**Automated feed identifier (AFI):** On behalf of the Regulatory Compliance team, an automated tool ‘automated feed identifier’ was created that aimed to reduce manual effort in detecting feed commodities listed in manifests, thus improving the delivery of official controls, supporting efficient resource utilisation, and reducing trade friction. The tool made the manifest documents searchable and highlighted feed terms on the manifests themselves. The FSA have also increased the performance of the tool (as compared to the previous iteration) in terms of the time it takes to process a document. Feedback from local authorities involved in this project indicated that the manual process of going through a 100-page document took on average about 1 hour.

#### Realised AFI MVP solution features: performance times

Number of pages	Previous system time	New system time
1	34 seconds	<3 seconds
12	2 minutes	16 seconds
23	5 minutes	30 seconds
100	22 minutes	2.5 minutes

**Local authority performance analysis:** Designed a set of reusable patterns and processes to ingest, clean, analyse and report information on a regular basis in relation to local authority performance in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This will enable us to measure local authority progress against the recovery plan and target timely assistance where is more needed. Surveys were completed for the last two years and we began to use the accumulated data to develop a trend analysis to monitor local authority performance over time. Additionally, the FSA continued to facilitate the completion of the survey by local authorities. The use of individual email links for local authorities was introduced, preventing duplicate responses and promoting a higher number of earlier responses.

**Register of regulated food and feed products:** The FSA developed a service that brings together all authorised uses of regulated products in Great Britain. The European Commission publishes this information in piecemeal form, in various databases, lists and pieces of legislation. The FSA wanted to publish this information in a more coherent way, in a format that is standardised and easier to search and browse. The register is used by a range of stakeholders in industry and local government. The FSA were also able to appropriate the same technology to quickly publish the [CBD public list](#)<sup>12</sup> of validated applications. We published 4 registers, for authorisations concerning feed additives (1,579 authorisations), GMOs (234), flavourings (2,499) and smoke flavourings (10). We also published a list of 12,117 CBD products for which an application has been submitted, which tells local authorities, businesses and consumers which products have progressed towards approval and which have failed to complete the approval process.

<sup>12</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/cbd-products-linked-to-novel-food-applications](http://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/cbd-products-linked-to-novel-food-applications)

## Sampling

Sampling and subsequent analysis underpins the work of the FSA and others, such as local authorities and Port Health Authorities, in maintaining the safety and authenticity of the food supply chain. This work supports import checks and ensuring food is what it says it is. It performs an essential function as part of our strategic surveillance system – providing intelligence and evidence on the safety and authenticity of food and feed on the UK market. This supports enforcement action to protect consumers and enables the FSA to meet its statutory obligations as a regulator.

### Objectives in 2021/22



**Targeted surveillance** – testing of specific commodities for hazards which form part of the FSA’s work to consider emerging risks. Decisions on which commodities/hazards to target is based on intelligence from a variety of sources.



**Official Controls (enforcement sampling)** – taken by local authorities but funded by the FSA as part of a directed sampling approach which may be due to adverse results from targeted sampling leading to enforcement action.



**Regulatory monitoring** – Monitoring compliance with prescribed regulatory standards.



**Sampling to inform science and policy** – Undertaken, generally on a specific topic, to increase our knowledge. For example, to inform risk assessments or policy.

### Progress against objectives

The FSA’s objectives for sampling were set out in the FSA Board paper<sup>13</sup>. This set out the FSA’s future approach to sampling, with a focus on improving the impact and value for money for sampling by ensuring that priorities are informed by surveillance and intelligence activities.

Through the FSA’s cross-government sampling group, we developed internal processes for prioritisation, and improved the dissemination of sampling outcomes by making use of digital technology such as the Risk Likelihood Dashboard. This targeted and coordinated approach to surveillance sampling at both FSA and cross-government level prevents duplication of sampling activity. In addition, we carried out research on international approaches to sampling, established internal guidelines on delivering sampling and drafted internal data standards for recording sampling outcomes.

<sup>13</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/news/fsa-board-meeting-papers-published-for-november-2020](http://www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/news/fsa-board-meeting-papers-published-for-november-2020)

## Sampling results

### Summary



£3,322,409

Total spend



11,065

Samples tested



245

Non-compliances

### Targeted surveillance



£940,432

Total spend



4,070

Samples tested



147

Non-compliances

## Conclusions

The results helped identify areas of risk to food from the intelligence received. Non-compliant results are assessed, and follow-up action taken which included, sharing results with key stakeholders to improve/investigate non-compliances and, where appropriate, incorporating these foods into Official Controls (enforcement sampling).

The 'basket of foods' approach included in the targeted retail surveillance survey contributed to the joint FSS/FSA report, Our Food 2021: An annual review of food standards across the UK, published in June 2022<sup>14</sup>. **The 89% compliance rate gives reasonable confidence in food standards but highlights the need for ongoing monitoring.**

### Official Controls (enforcement sampling)



£517,446

Total spend



1,566

Samples tested



55

Non-compliances

## Conclusions

Directed local authority sampling provided funding for Official Control sampling (for which funding is low), maintained sampling capabilities, while ensuring this was targeted and based on intelligence such as targeted surveillance results. Made best use of local authority resources to ensure that food is safe/is what it says it is. Results led to guidance to businesses, further investigations and enforcement action. For example, **there were successful prosecutions, related to undeclared milk in Indian takeaway meals in Wales, arising from sampling funded by the FSA in 2021.**

<sup>14</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/our-work/annualreviewoffoodstandards2021](http://www.food.gov.uk/our-work/annualreviewoffoodstandards2021)

### Regulatory monitoring



**£1,635,167**  
Total spend



**5,204**  
Samples tested



**32**  
Non-compliances

#### Conclusions

Shellfish and associated water sampling allow for the classification of beds, ensuring that shellfish receive the correct level processing ensuring safe consumption, and prevents harvesting from beds with unsafe levels of marine biotoxins and phytoplankton.

The annual radiological monitoring programme checks that discharges from the UK nuclear sites do not cause unacceptable exposure to radioactivity through our food.

**The report covering 2020 showed that doses to the public from all sources of exposure to artificial radioactivity, were below the legal dose limit.**

### Sampling to inform science and policy



**£229,364**  
Total spend



**225**  
Samples tested



**11**  
Non-compliances

#### Conclusions

Some FSA surveys are specifically undertaken to inform FSA risk assessments and policy, in line with our guiding principles that we are science and evidence led. They also inform the work of our scientific committees.

**For example, the results of a survey undertaking chemical analysis of turmeric supplements on the UK market contributed to a Committee on Toxicology discussion paper on the risk of these products to human health and will support future advice on safety.**

## The future for UK official food and feed laboratories

Official Laboratories undertake analytical testing of food and feed samples, enabling statutory checks on imports for local authorities. The UK-based analytical test capability has declined in recent years and following the UK exiting the EU, we have lost access to EU Reference Laboratories, which develop analytical methods and undertook knowledge sharing with the UK.

### Objectives in 2021/22

- To develop the Official Laboratory Framework, which sets out the FSA's future approach to ensuring the UK has access to the testing capability it requires.

### Progress against objectives

- Commissioned an international case study of other countries' sampling and laboratory systems.
- Undertaken an internal economic analysis of the options for the future potential laboratory models.
- Increased support and funding to National Reference Laboratories following the EU transition period, especially in developing analytical methods.
- Engaged with local authorities and laboratories on the current system.
- Worked jointly with Food Standards Scotland (FSS) as they reviewed their Official Laboratory system to ensure alignment of our future models.

These insights continued to be used to develop the framework, which will set out the potential future options for the model of the OCL system. After presentation to the Board in September 2022, implementation will begin in 2022/23.

## Research and evidence

Science is integral to our work. We continue to put science at the heart of everything we do to ensure that robust evidence is used to inform decisions made by the organisation and others. The FSA remains a science-driven organisation.

To ensure that the UK has effective, post-EU food regulation in place, we have invested in a new ‘best in class’ risk analysis process. Essential to this is an expanded and enhanced risk assessment capability, designed to replace the one currently provided via the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

### Objectives for 2021/22

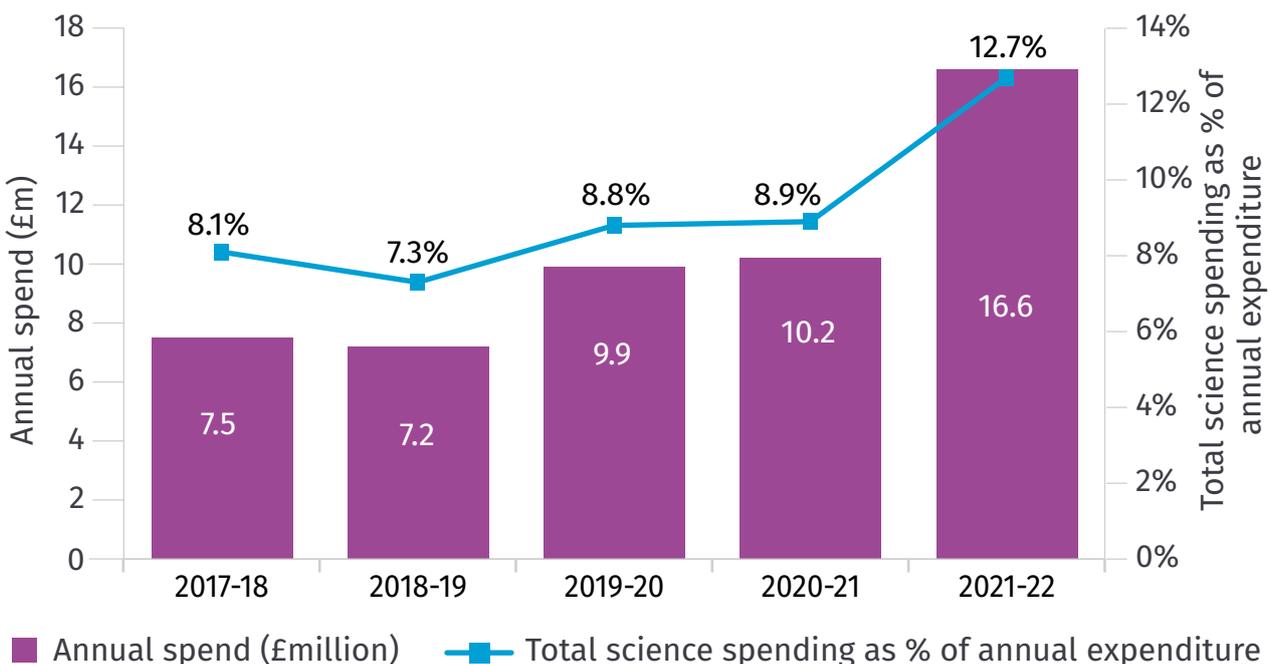
			
Making risk analysis work	Building science excellence	Prepared for the future	Growing our influence and impact

### Science Spend

We have increased investment in our capability, which has enabled us to deliver the additional post-EU Exit responsibilities and build a more strategic research function.

**£16.6 Million** total spending for science, evidence, and research in 2021/22, compared to £10.2 million in 2020/21. This means science spending accounts for **12.7%** of the Annual FSA Net Expenditure which is an increase from previous years.

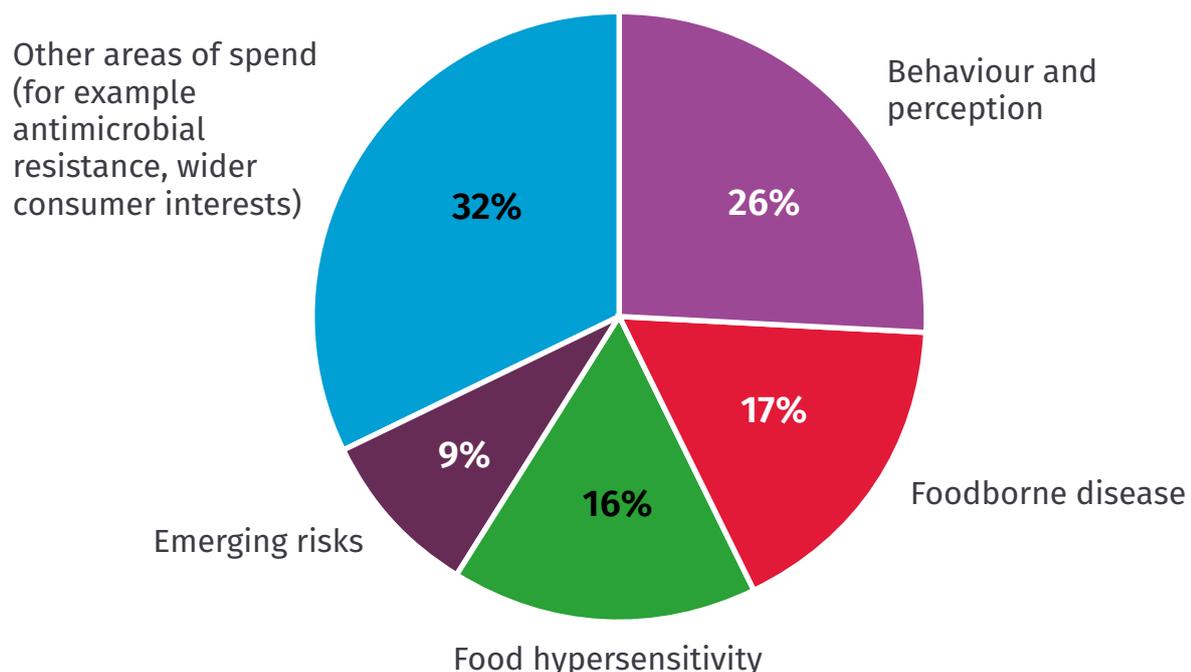
Fig. 5: Science spend



### Progress against objectives

- Increased the number of science staff by over 40% within the reporting period, ensuring capacity and capability to continue to deliver science excellence.
- Delivered the risk assessment function for food and feed in the first year post-transition, both for previously delivered work areas and the newly repatriated requirements to support the Great Britain market authorisations of regulated products and trade. The combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and working separately from the EU have not affected the ability of the FSA to deliver food and feed incident risk assessments.
- Established and embedded 11 effective research and evidence programmes to promote the prioritised, efficient, and transparent delivery of quality science and evidence.
- Published approximately 60 scientific reports produced as part of our research programmes, including 6 peer-reviewed journals.
- Leading on the cross-government PATH-SAFE research programme (detail below).

**Fig. 6: distribution of spend across the FSA research and evidence programmes**



### Risk assessment

Our work on risk assessment is delivered in the context of the risk analysis process, details of which you can find in the Risk analysis section on page 41 and the Regulated Products section on page 51. In the reporting year we:

- Increased our capability to respond to the increased demands for our service. This was both in terms of our staff and the access to experts through our advisory committees.
- Ensured robust and effective quality assurance processes were in place to ensure our work is proportionate and timely to address risk management questions.

- Applied a continuous improvement approach to our regulated products assessment processes to make best use of the available resources to meet FSA priorities in this area.

**PATH-SAFE** – The Pathogen Surveillance in Agriculture, Food and Environment ([PATH-SAFE](#)<sup>15</sup>) programme is a £19.2 million Shared Outcomes Fund (SOF) research programme which aims to develop a national surveillance network, using the latest DNA-sequencing technology and environmental sampling to improve the detection, and tracking of foodborne pathogens and AMR through the whole agri-food system. The heart of this ‘virtual’ network will be a new data platform which will permit the analysis, storage and sharing of pathogen sequence and source data, collected from multiple locations across the UK by diverse government and public organisations. The programme includes pilot studies across all four nations of the UK, with strong working relationships developing and proposals in preparation across all administrations. This single, user-friendly data system will enable rapid identification and tracking of foodborne pathogens and AMR, improving public health, and minimising the economic and environmental impact of outbreaks.

The programme started in 2021 after initial delays. Recruitment to project teams (both technical and project management) took place in earnest across all partner organisations, along with procurement activities across all workstreams. Our Advisory Boards were set up, our governance procedures, Delivery Board and Strategic Board were put in place. The programme undertook engagement opportunities to develop our stakeholder base across academia, government, business and the voluntary sector. Between November 2021 and March 2022, we focused on scoping activities across the programme to deliver our four workstreams.

### Workstream aims



Establish a curated, national foodborne disease genomic data platform.



Develop a pilot infrastructure for regular, multi-location sampling for FBD pathogens and AMR in the agri-food environment.



Understand the feasibility of using portable diagnostics as inspection tools.



Develop a pilot environmental AMR Surveillance system.

<sup>15</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/research/path-safe](http://www.food.gov.uk/research/path-safe)

## Analysis and insight

We continued to build our capability in analysis and insight, ensuring that good evidence underpins decision making across the work we do and in wider food policy, and build the FSA's capability in science. We have a unique role as the part of government that looks after consumer interests with food and a democratic responsibility to those interests. As we seek to understand consumers' interests, we need to see both the broad snapshot and the close-up to get a comprehensive picture and interpret this evidence carefully.

### Objectives in 2021/22



To support risk analysis by feeding evidence directly into policy work and our risk modelling to underpin decisions about drivers, impacts and outcomes, with analysts working closely with teams across the FSA.



To strengthen our responses through rapid consumer insights and build our capabilities in behavioural insights through reviews and trials, publishing reports on food safety and on healthy sustainable diet shift, working closely with others in civil society, and conducting innovative observed studies which will help us close the say-do gap and evidence what works.



To support the wider interests of consumers in relation to food, including affordability, health, sustainability and animal welfare through the provision of interdisciplinary analysis, including assessment of impact on the society and economy, and the legitimate factors pertinent to risk management.

### Progress against objectives



**To support risk analysis by feeding evidence directly into policy work and our risk modelling to underpin decisions about drivers, impacts and outcomes, with analysts working closely with teams across the FSA.**

- Multi-criterial decision analysis to rank thirteen foodborne pathogens in order of their detrimental effect on UK society.
- An in-depth study into what enhances and detracts from quality of life for people with hypersensitivities.
- Analysis of animal welfare breaches to support FSA and Defra's animal welfare programme and ongoing improvements in slaughterhouses in England and Wales.
- Behavioural trials and evidence reviews on more healthy and sustainable consumer choices.



To strengthen our responses through rapid consumer insights and build our capabilities in behavioural insights through reviews and trials, publishing reports on food safety and on healthy sustainable diet shift, working closely with others in civil society, and conducting innovative observed studies which will help us close the say-do gap and evidence what works.

- New waves of Food and You 2, our flagship social research survey on consumer attitudes and behaviours, which is widely used across the FSA, government and civil society.
- Public dialogues to understand consumer awareness of and attitudes towards genome edited foods, informing the Defra consultation on the issue.
- A review of how citizen science has been applied to food problems, supporting ongoing joint pilots with UK research and innovation.



To support the wider interests of consumers in relation to food, including affordability, health, sustainability and animal welfare through the provision of interdisciplinary analysis, including assessment of impact on the society and economy, and the legitimate factors pertinent to risk management.

- Research with consumers to understand their expectations of future operational delivery models which will be used to shape their ongoing development and ensure that it meets consumer expectations.
- Monthly statistics on household food insecurity, food purchasing behaviours, food habits at home, nutrition behaviours, food safety and hygiene in the home and consumers' food concerns during COVID-19.

## Risk analysis process

Risk analysis is the process of assessing, managing and communicating the safety risks within food and animal feed. It is how we ensure the UK maintains high standards of food and feed safety and protect consumers by identifying and assessing risks, providing guidance to mitigate against them. From 1 January 2021, the FSA (together with FSS) took on the responsibility for many functions previously carried out by the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority.

### Objectives in 2021/22

The aim of the risk analysis process is:

- to provide confidence that FSA advice delivers public health protection
- consider consumers' other interests in relation to food
- to be informed by science and evidence
- to be independent

Our objective for 2021/22 was to refine detailed operational procedures underpinning the process to ensure our work had these fully embedded.

### Progress against objectives

The FSA follows globally recognised frameworks for risk analysis. The stages of the risk analysis process can be seen on our published flow diagram<sup>16</sup>. Our risk analysis approach was applied as part of a new UK process to advise government ministers on authorising regulated food and feed products<sup>17</sup>.

The Board received regular reports about issues currently progressing through the risk analysis process. There are three broad categories of issue within the risk analysis process:

#### 'Self-tasked'

issues where the FSA identifies a food or feed safety issue for consideration

#### 'Externally requested'

issues where the FSA is asked to provide risk assessment and/or risk management advice by Ministers or officials in other parts of government.

#### Regulated Products

for specific categories of food and feed that must follow an authorisation process laid down in legislation.

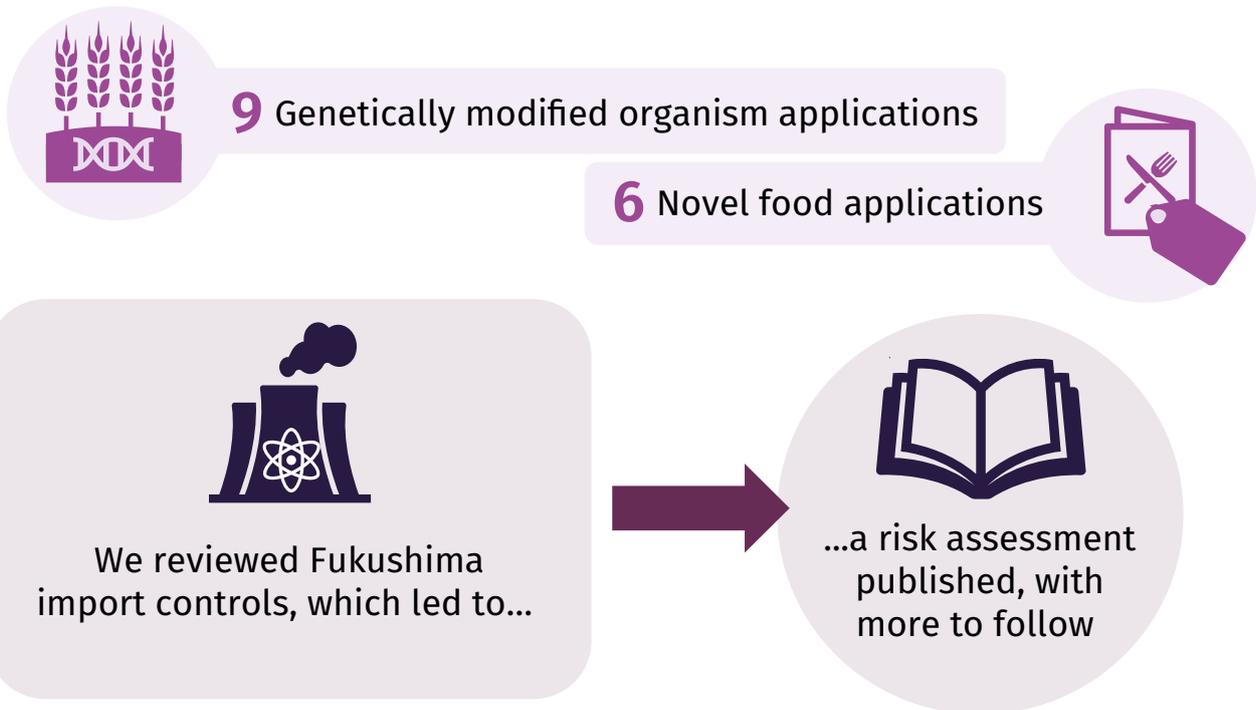
<sup>16</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-risk-analysis-flowchart.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-risk-analysis-flowchart.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/placing-a-regulated-product-on-the-market](http://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/placing-a-regulated-product-on-the-market)

In the first year of operation, we:

- Commenced risk analysis work relating to: the chemical contaminants Dioxin and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB); Perfluorinated Alkyl Substances (PFAS); and the safety of Titanium Dioxide (E 171) as a food additive. We completed a review of radiological controls on imports from Japan following the Fukushima nuclear incident.
- Received 2 requests from Defra to provide risk assessment and public health advice to support development of future borders policy.
- Progressed work on **420** live regulated products applications.

To support our commitment to transparent risk analysis, we published and regularly updated two registers which set out the applications in our regulated products service, and the issues going through the risk analysis process. Additionally, we held public consultations on:



We provided extensive training and support to industry in the run up to launch of the Regulated Products service, including a series of webinars. We provided pre-application support and input for companies making applications for CBD products and continue to communicate with industry.

Under provisional UK Frameworks and our risk analysis process we have mechanisms such as cross-government working groups in place to enable a four-nation approach, so we can deliver risk management interventions that are effective for the UK as a whole or for individual countries as needed. UK Frameworks include scope for inter-ministerial discussions on decisions if needed.

Under the Northern Ireland Protocol, Northern Ireland must comply with EU food and feed law, resulting in different regulatory arrangements applying in Northern Ireland than in the rest of the UK. We continued to consider the interests of consumers in Northern Ireland, whilst accepting that the protocol will restrict the decisions that can be taken in Northern Ireland, in respect to UK risk analysis outcomes.

For more information on regulated products, please read the Regulated products section below.

### Supporting innovation in the food industry

Since leaving the EU, the responsibility for the assessment of regulated food and feed products in the UK now sits with the FSA and FSS. We will be reviewing the authorisation processes and looking for opportunities for reform to enable us to better respond to challenges such as new developments in technology and changes in consumer demand. As part of this work, the FSA will commission a review of the novel foods regulatory framework. This will evaluate the current framework and develop proposals for new models and approaches. It will form part of a wider reform programme looking at opportunities to remove unnecessary burden from authorisation processes, support food industry innovation and deliver a world-class service whilst upholding food standards.

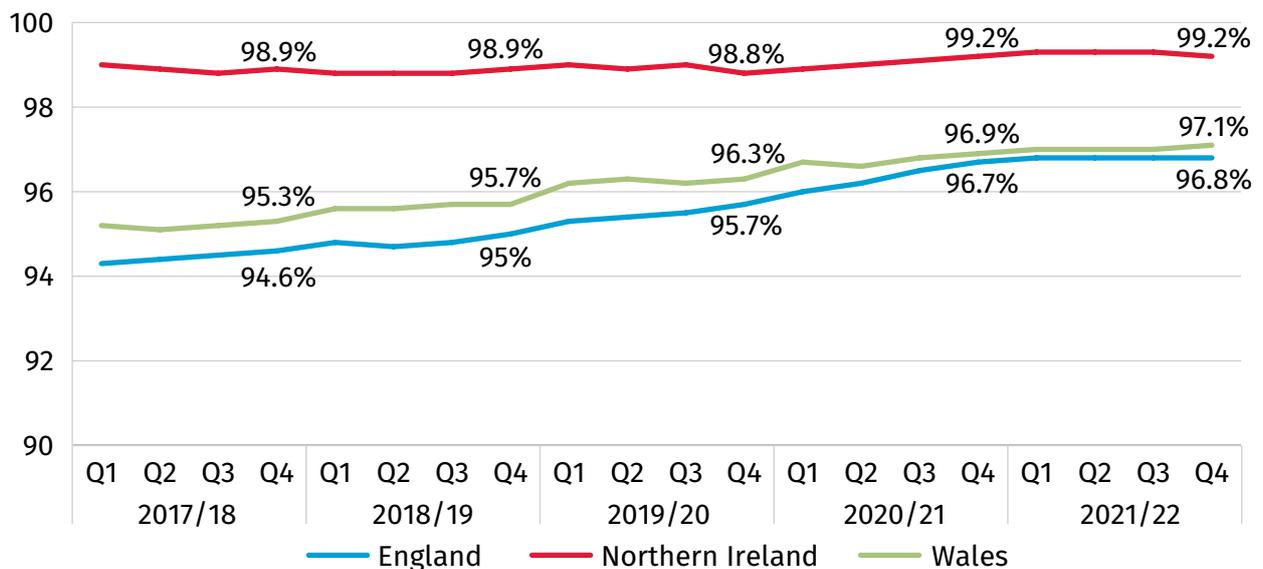
Protecting consumer interests and upholding food standards will always be our top priority in any proposed changes we make to create a transparent and effective system that is the best in the world for innovators, investors, and consumers.

## Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

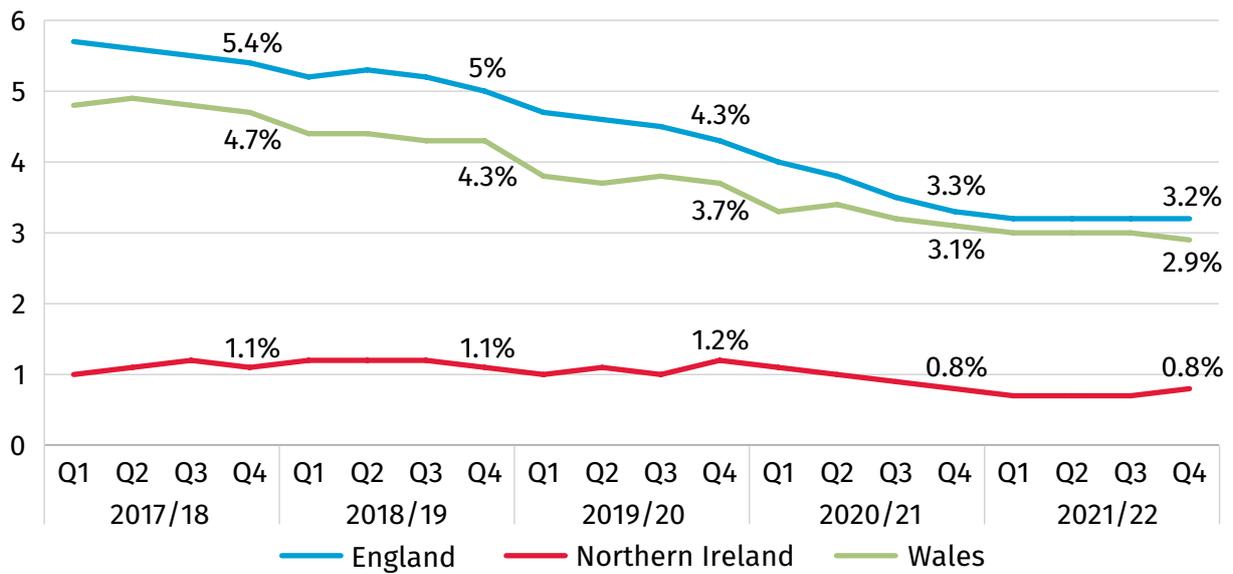
The FHRS is operated in partnership with local authorities across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The scheme provides information about the hygiene standards of food businesses at the time of local authority inspections to the public. Businesses supplying food directly to consumers, such as restaurants, takeaways, supermarkets, and hospitals are included in the scheme. In Wales, business-to-business operations, such as manufacturers, are also included.

As FHRS is underpinned by local authority inspection work, impacts to inspections during the pandemic (as discussed in the Local authority delivery section on page 53 and the COVID-19 recovery section on page 14) impacted on the FHRS. Impacts included ratings staying in place longer and the inspection date of ratings being older. There was also an increase in the number of businesses ‘awaiting inspection’ as the number of new business registrations increased. In May 2021, the FSA Board agreed a Local Authority Recovery Plan. A key objective of the plan is to enable more routine operation of the FHRS and to safeguard the credibility of the scheme. As of 31 March 2022, a total of **464,574** food hygiene ratings had been published at [www.food.gov.uk/ratings](http://www.food.gov.uk/ratings) since the scheme began.

**Fig. 7: % Food businesses with a food hygiene rating achieving rating of 3 or better**



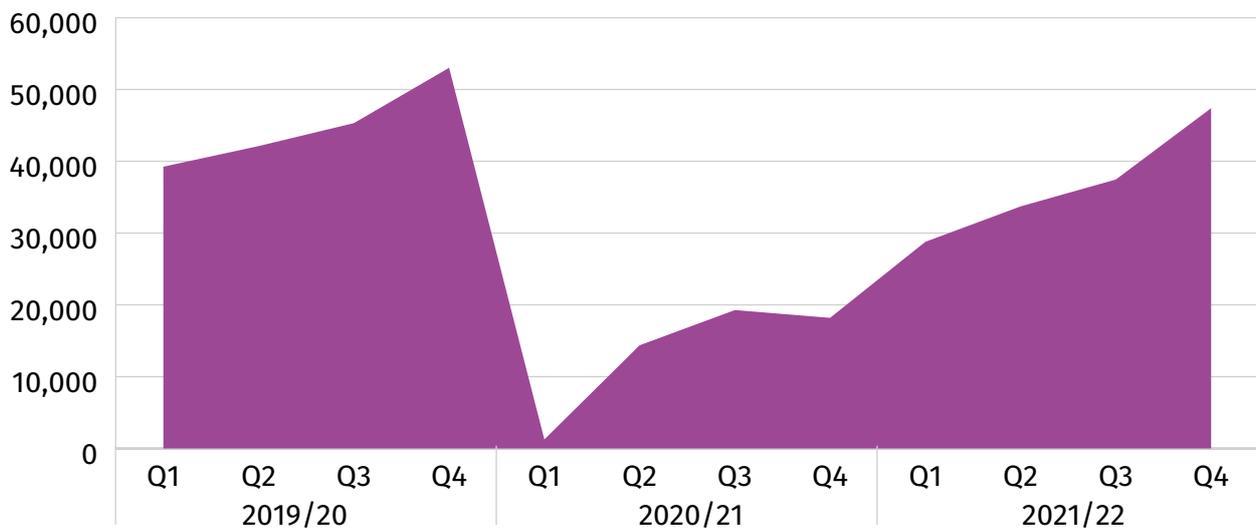
**Fig. 8: % Food businesses with a food hygiene rating achieving rating of 2 or below**



### Food hygiene ratings issued

During 2021/22 the number of businesses rated returned to pre-pandemic levels.

**Fig. 9: No. Establishments rated – England, Wales and Northern Ireland**



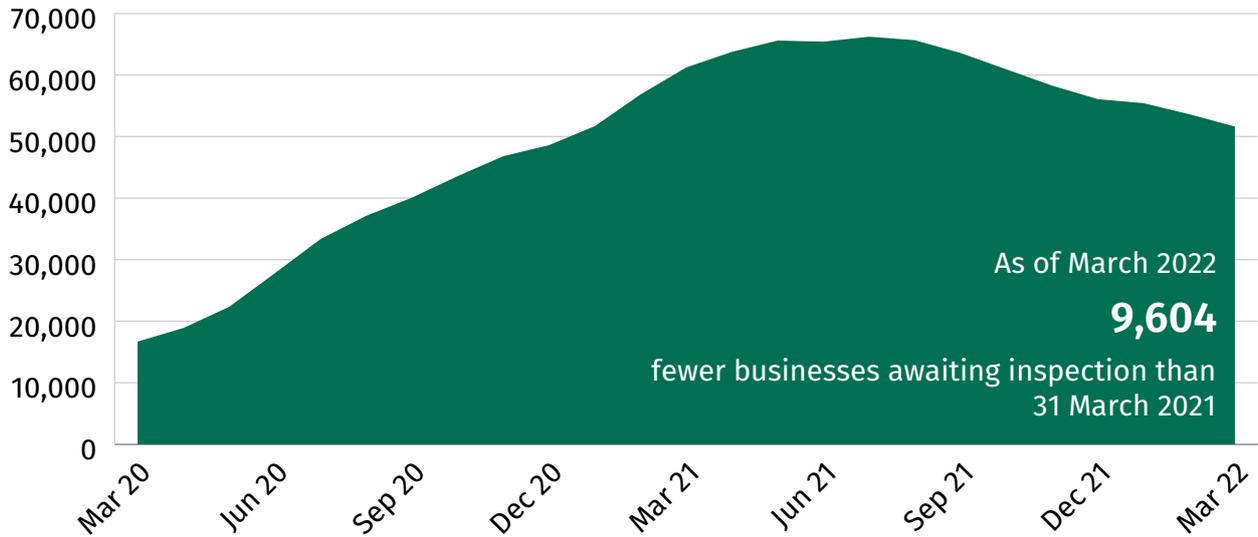
**159,881** establishments rated during 2021/22, a 179% increase on 2020/21.

The recovery was seen in all three countries, but the pace of recovery differed between each. This reflected the different impacts of the pandemic on the resources of food teams in each nation, their ability to deliver interventions in food establishments and administer the rating scheme, and the different rules and restrictions in place (for example, when businesses could open to customers as restrictions started to be eased).

### Businesses published as ‘awaiting inspection’

During the pandemic there was a sharp increase in the number of businesses published as ‘awaiting inspection’ – new businesses awaiting their first inspection. This number fell as the recovery plan was implemented and interventions carried out (see Fig. 10 below). In addition to those businesses rated, a significant number of new businesses were found to have ceased, or never commenced, trading.

**Fig. 10: Number of businesses published as ‘awaiting inspection’**



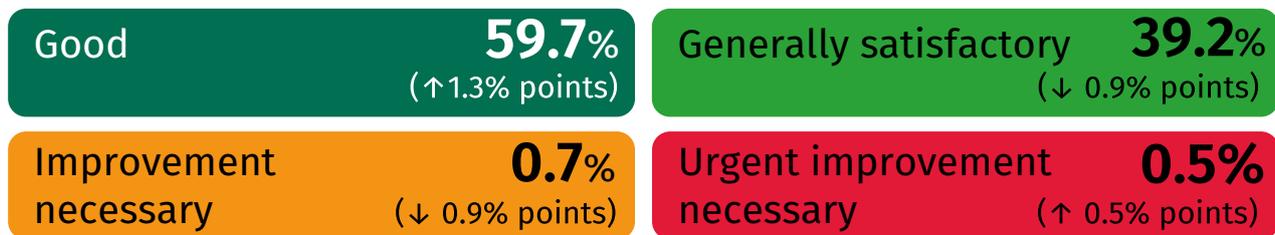
## Meat food business compliance

It is the responsibility of meat food business operators (FBOs) to comply with food safety, hygiene and animal welfare regulations. The FSA conducts official controls and food business audits to verify compliance. We work with food business operators to identify where improvements are necessary, helping to ensure that ‘food is safe’.

## Audits of meat food businesses

The FSA uses a risk-based approach when auditing meat processing establishments with audit outcomes categorised according to compliance levels.

These are the meat food business operator compliance ratings March 2022 (difference from March 2021). The compliance ratings show **98.9%** of meat FBO premises rated ‘Good’ or ‘Generally satisfactory’ and 1.2% rated ‘Improvement necessary’ or ‘Urgent improvement necessary’ as of 31 March 2022. We conducted **646** full audits of food businesses in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2021/22.



### Number of meat FBOs by compliance rating

Fig. 11: England

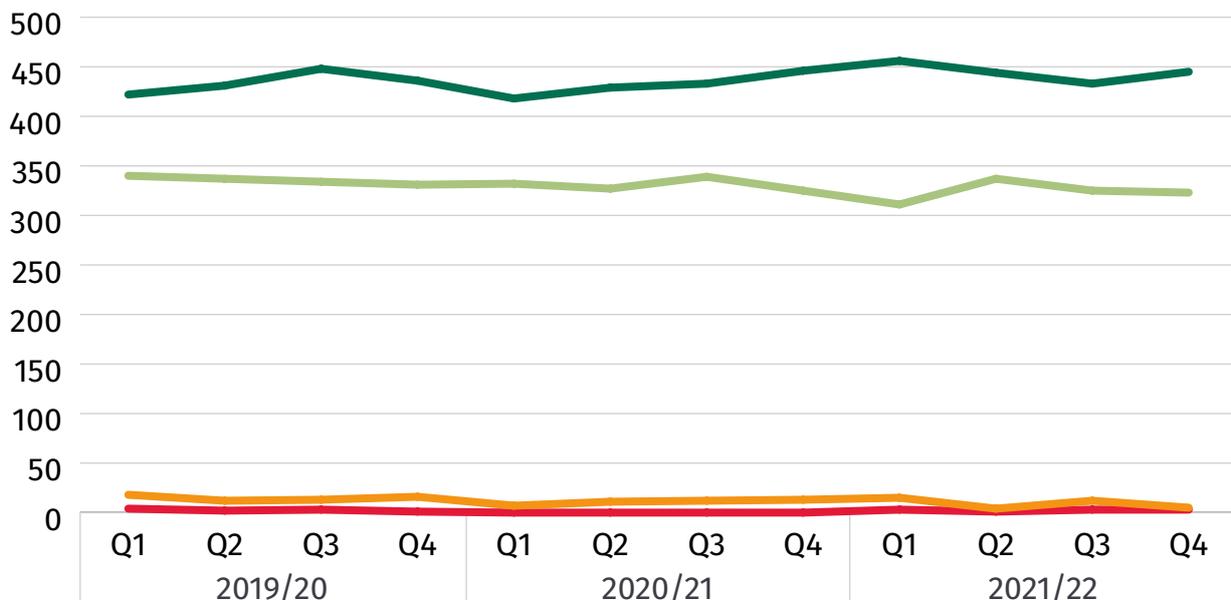


Fig. 12: Wales

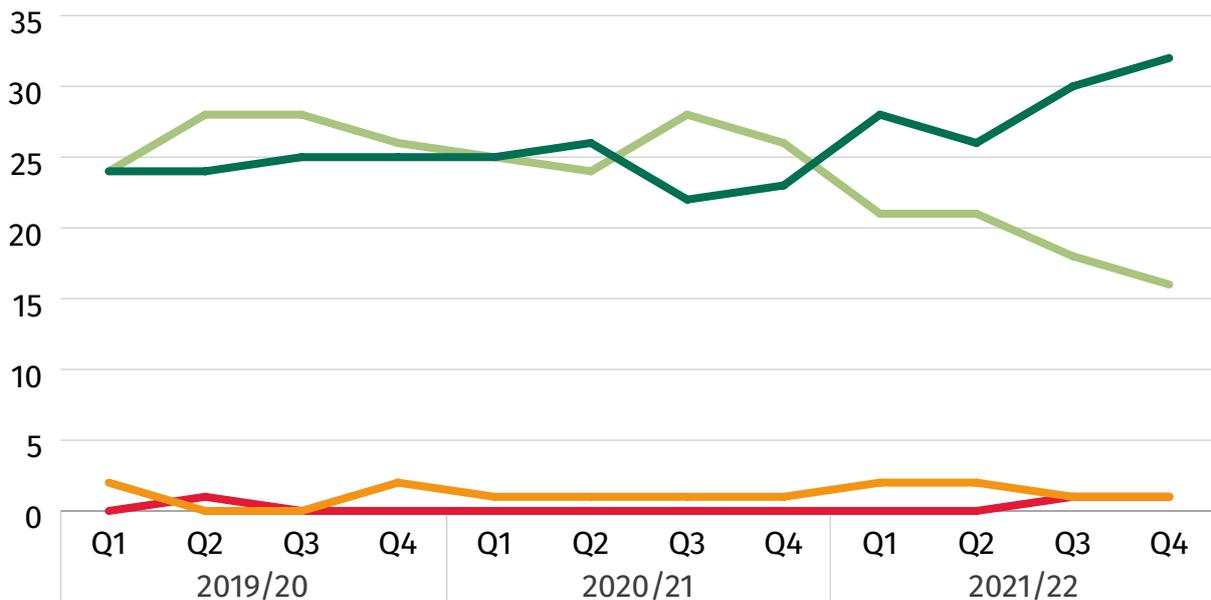
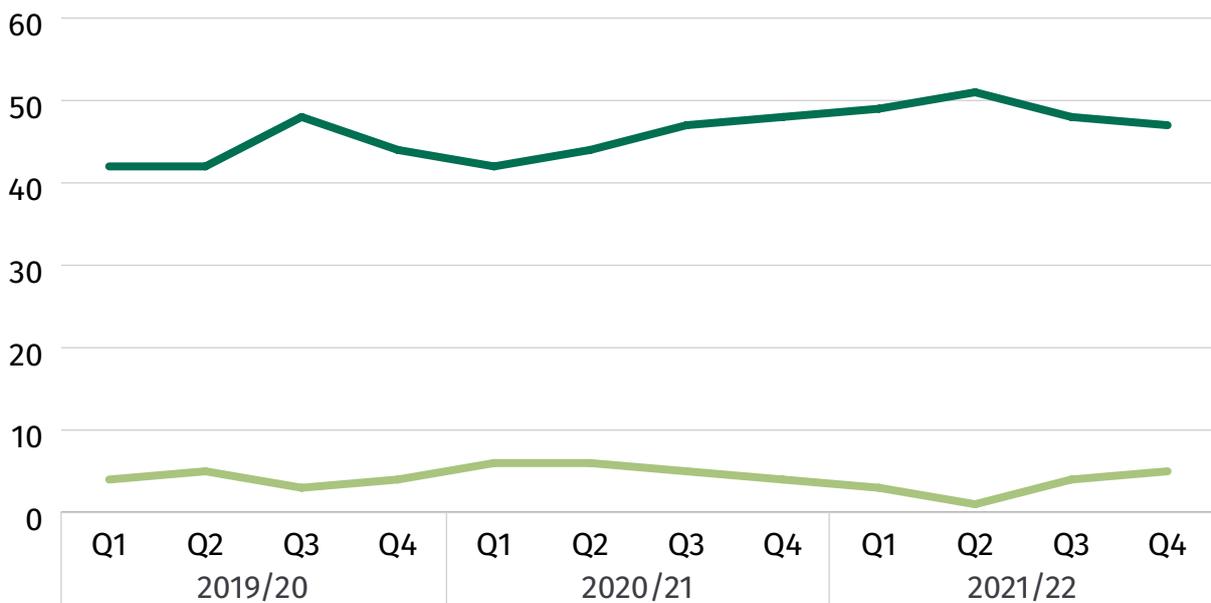


Fig. 13: Northern Ireland



Northern Ireland have recorded no ‘Improvement Necessary’ or ‘Urgent Improvement Necessary’ from Q1 2019/20 onwards.

**Audit activity**

In 2021/22, COVID-19 continued to significantly impact our audit programme for meat FBOs. Social distancing requirements, sickness, changes in industry trading conditions, establishment closures and audit staff covering gaps in frontline service delivery all reduced the volume of audits conducted. The audit programme continued with a risk-based, targeted approach to audits where necessary and any concerns were mitigated by direct communication with businesses, tailoring the approach to each circumstance. This continued to include:



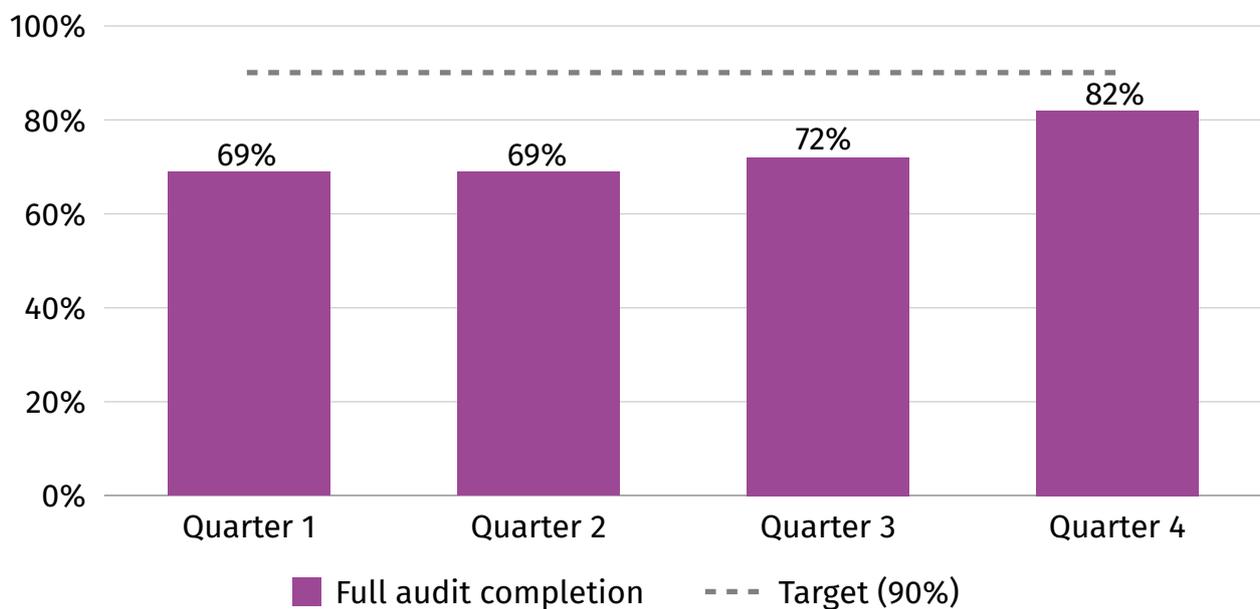
Using remote and semi-remote auditing techniques



High-risk premises remain subject to on-site audits

As a result of the FSA’s official audit programme seeing delays from April 2020 due to COVID-19 and the reasons referenced above, not all FBO audits were able to be completed at their scheduled time resulting in additional numbers of full audits requiring completion during 2021/22. The FSA Audit teams focused the limited resources on protecting consumer health and prioritised higher risk establishments falling under the ‘Improvement necessary’ or ‘Urgent improvement necessary’ categories at their latest audit. Establishments who exported to third countries as per the scheduled requirement and partial audits were also prioritised.

**Fig. 14: Full audits completed against target for England and Wales**



During 2021/22 the FSA prioritised audits previously deferred due to COVID-19 disruption completing **249** of these audits, and as a result by the end of March 2022 there were no outstanding deferred audits and the number of full audits completed against the target had returned to pre COVID-19 levels.

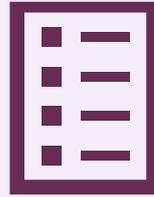
## Delivery – Our year in numbers (2021/22)

### Regulated Products



**420** regulated product applications in progress

### Local authority delivery



**0** local authorities have required escalation to deliver the post-COVID-19 recovery plan

### Food and Feed Incidents



**2,336** food, animal feed and environmental contamination incidents

### Animal Welfare



**1,036,098,739** animals inspected. **99%+** recorded compliance with animal welfare legislation in slaughterhouses

### NFCU



first conviction following an investigation led by the Unit

### NFCU



**64** Disruptions achieved and **79** NFCU outcomes accomplished

### Operations



**185,265** shifts covered across **659** food businesses

### Nutrition: Northern Ireland



**63%** increase in recipes added to MenuCal

## Regulated products

Certain food and feed products, called regulated products, require authorisation before they can be sold in the UK. The FSA with Food Standards Scotland (FSS) carry out a risk analysis process for regulated products and provide advice to ministers, who decide whether the product can be placed on the market in England, Wales and Scotland.

### Objectives in 2021/22

The aim of the regulated products process is:

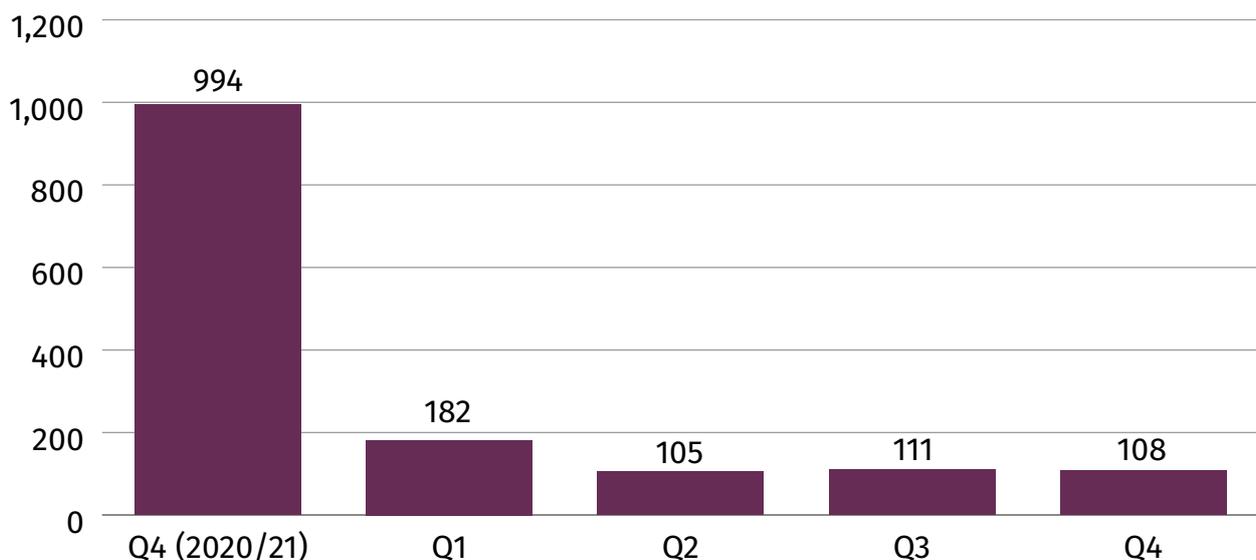
- to make timely and evidence based recommendations to Ministers, on new and existing regulated food and feed products, to enter the GB market
- to provide confidence that FSA advice delivers public health protection

Our objective for 2021/22 was to refine detailed operational procedures underpinning the process to ensure they were fully embedded in FSA work.

### Progress against objectives

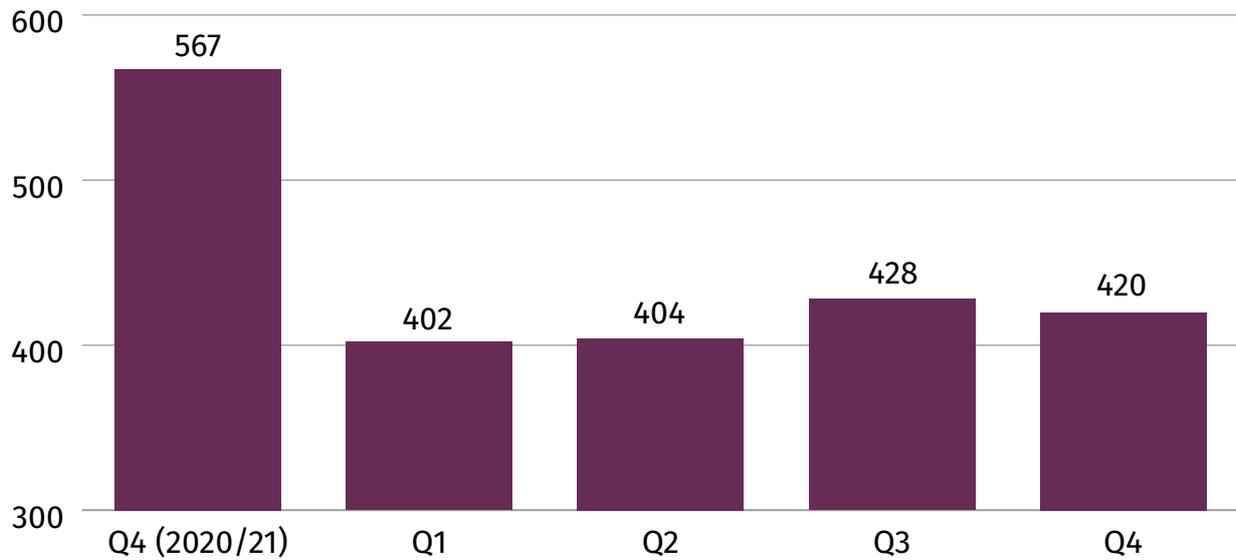
#### Operational outcomes

Fig. 15: Contacts made to the regulated products application service 2021/22



In Q4 of 2020/21, the number of individual contacts made to the service was very high due to a surge in cannabidiol (CBD) applications. There was a high volume of contacts that which could not be progressed any further.

**Fig. 16: Live applications at all stages of the application process 2021/22**



Live applications show the total of all applications in the process, regardless of stage. A high number of the contacts shown in Fig. 16 did not progress through the service as they were incomplete applications, or inappropriate for this process. The number of live applications peaked in Q4 of 2020/21, coinciding with the FSA deadline on CBD applications. The level came down in the next quarter as applications progressed.

The approval process for regulated product applications broadly comprises four stages. Fig. 17 details at which stage the live applications were being held.

**Fig. 17: Total live applications 2021/22: 420**



Regulated products applications represent the largest volume of work in the system. Our planning assumptions suggested that the FSA could expect to receive around 350 regulated products applications each year. This did not account for the impact of the regulatory approach to CBD, which led to a surge of applications around the March 2021 deadline. Other applications are in line with this planning assumption.

## Local authority delivery

COVID-19 created unprecedented challenges for local authorities across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland in delivering their statutory food function. Ultimately local authorities had to prioritise combatting the spread of the disease. In response, the Local Authority Recovery Plan, agreed by the Board in May 2021, set out our guidance and advice for local authorities on delivery of official food controls and provided a risk-based framework for restarting the system in line with the Food Law Code of Practice.

The recovery plan detailed expectations for undertaking inspections of new food establishments and high-risk and/or non-compliant establishments, whilst providing flexibility for undertaking interventions at lower risk establishments. The guidance and advice to local authorities were kept under close review.

### Objectives in 2021/22

Our objectives within 2021/22 were driven by a need to support local authorities in returning to pre-pandemic activities and reduce the backlog of work created from flexibilities introduced to free up local authority resources to combat COVID-19. These comprised three overall goals:



#### **Monitor the delivery of official food controls and recovery plan –**

Having agreed a recovery plan with local authorities we seek to monitor progress.



**Engagement with local authorities** – keep lines of communication open to quickly identify and work to offset issues arising and capitalise on successes as they emerged.



**Assisting and supporting local authorities** – Offer local authority partners support where we can to maximise the recovery plan's chance at success.

### Progress against objectives

#### **Monitor the delivery of official food controls and recovery plan**

To monitor local authority performance in delivering the minimum expectations of the plan, a programme of interim surveys, bespoke end of year returns, Food Hygiene Rating Scheme data and intelligence from Food Liaison Groups were utilised to identify those that could move at a faster pace or were struggling to deliver.

The baseline position in May 2021<sup>18</sup> gave a clear indication of the impact that the pandemic had on resources and the ability of local authorities to deliver food controls with approximately 50% of professional technical resource being diverted or redeployed to other tasks, leading to a reduction for planned interventions achieved and a rise in the number of unrated establishments reported as awaiting a first inspection.

<sup>18</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-21-05-02-local-authority-recovery.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-21-05-02-local-authority-recovery.pdf)

In October 2021, we conducted an interim survey with every local authority across all three countries providing a response. This identified that resources were returning to food teams.

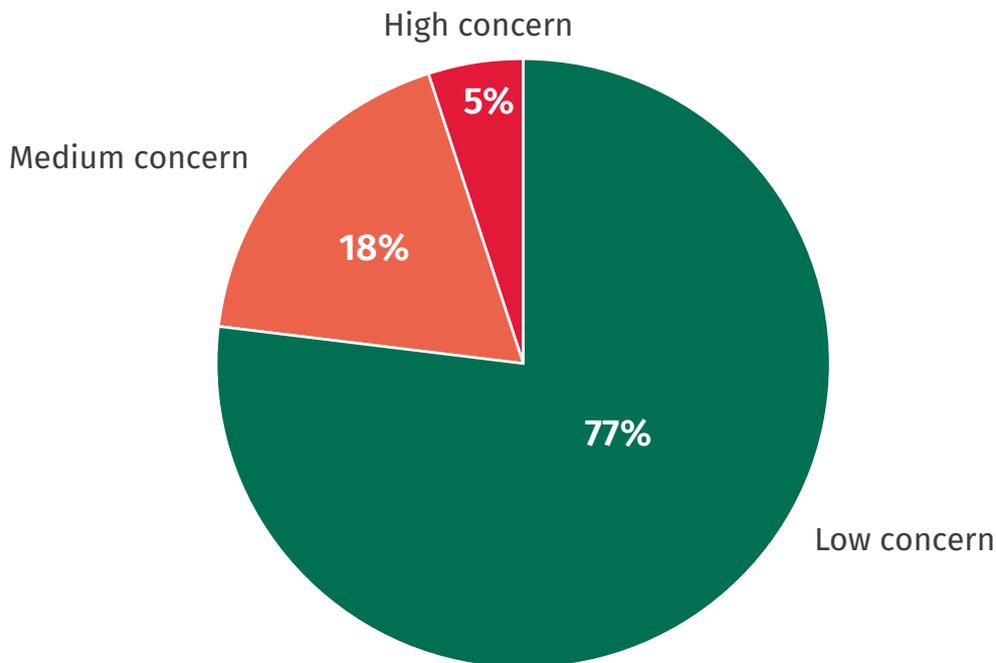


Evidence of the impact of staff returning to food teams can be seen in the **FHRS section** above. Across the three countries, all the local authority responses to the October survey were assessed utilising an agreed matrix and categorised as either **High**, **Medium** or **Low** regarding the level of concern in relation to delivering the plan’s requirements. This ensured the performance management activity by the FSA was appropriately targeted.

**Engagement with local authorities**

Following the analysis of this information, engagement was ongoing with local authorities to challenge and support performance issues to improve the situation and gain assurance that delivery against the plan was either on track or required escalation to further mitigate risk.

**Fig. 18: Local authority October 2021 Interim Survey – level of concern for food hygiene and/or food standards**



## Of those considered high concern

**64%** gave the necessary assurance that they are now meeting the minimum expectations and the cases have been closed

**36%** had open cases where active engagement was still in progress, or the local authority had submitted an action plan where implementation was being monitored. All open cases were in England.

## Of those considered Medium concern

**58%** gave the necessary assurance that they were meeting the minimum expectations and the cases had been closed.

**18%** were open cases, where the active engagement was still in progress, or they had submitted an action plan where implementation was being monitored.

**24%** remained in a pipeline for engagement.

## Of those considered Low concern

The decision was made to not routinely engage yet with these, except where information from Food Liaison Groups had led to performance management engagement.

## 0 escalations

No local authority had reached the threshold where escalation should be initiated if there were concerns that had not been addressed.

We undertook some targeted data gathering and delivery of the minimum expectations were discussed at meetings with various local authority representative groups in each of the three nations.

### Information obtained from local authority engagement



**Improvement in the delivery of official controls** compared the previous 12 months linked to the return to duty of the professionals who were abstracted to other duties.



**Local authorities able to focus on high-risk businesses and to react to identified emerging risk**, providing the necessary public protection where it is most needed.



**Local authorities remain concerned about the number of new registrations** and those outstanding to be prioritised and inspected.



**Reported deterioration in FBO compliance since reopening**, leading to more complaints, longer inspection visits and more enforcement action being required.



**Recruiting qualified staff into food teams is challenging**, exacerbated by a lack of qualified contractors to boost officer numbers on a temporary basis.

The position was dynamic and local authorities were under pressure but they followed our guidance and advice and delivered activities in accordance with the prioritisation we set, as resources permitted.

The enhanced data set obtained from the 2021/22 end of year return, subsequent quarterly milestone interim surveys and the proposed verification programme will provide us with a more comprehensive understanding of progress with implementation of the recovery plan.

### **Assisting and supporting local authorities**

Prompted by the ongoing recruitment and retention issues, we are commissioning a research project to understand the nature and scale of the problem. To support this, we collected data in the 2021/22 end of year return.

As a result of the reported drop in business compliance levels, we are looking into what additional communications activities the FSA can undertake to reinforce the message to businesses and support the work of the food teams in local authorities.

We also continued to roll out our Register a Food Business (RAFB) service.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/register-a-food-business](https://www.food.gov.uk/register-a-food-business)

## Register a Food Business

**Aims:** The campaign aimed to motivate more food businesses to register with their local authority, particularly those trading from home and online.

**When:** 24 February 2022 to 20 March 2022

**Spend:** £110,000 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)

### What we did:

The COVID-19 period has seen a huge increase in food being sold from people's homes with the internet making it easier for this type of market. According to our digital registration service, 37% of new ventures registered since the start of the pandemic (March 2020) are run from domestic kitchens at private addresses. We wanted to encourage as many of these new start-ups to register with their local authority.

We developed a suite of assets that were used across a variety of channels to try and reach and engage with those who may be operating an unregistered business, with a particular focus on those trading from home or online. This included podcasts, Facebook and Instagram, and online advertising via Google Search.

Along with the targeted channel promotion, we also worked with a range of partners all of which supported the campaign in various ways, these include the Federation of Small Businesses, the Nationwide Caterers Association and the National Federation of Women's Institutes across all three countries. The support of local authorities was integral to the success of this campaign. We developed a communications toolkit for all our partners to use, which included a template press release, suggested social media posts and access to the campaign assets.

### The results:

We reached 1.4 million potential businesses across social media, Google Search and advertising. Our food business registration landing page received over 24,000 visitors during the campaign. Across our social channels we achieved 22,658 clicks and reached 853,631 through paid social posts. The results in reach and clicks through to the website, demonstrate that we achieved the campaign objective of raising awareness of registration and educating the Register a Food Business target audience groups (through clicks for more information).

Campaign materials and toolkits were shared with 42,650 business owners and managers, with the Federation of Small Businesses directing over 7,000 visitors to our webpages.

The main goal of this campaign was to increase the number of businesses registering with their local authority. However, registration data used from local authorities that signed up before April 2021 showed that there was no significant change in the number of registrations in the weeks after the campaign. There was some form of increase in those businesses registering who had been trading for over 90 days in March 2022 than all previous months (back to March 2020). There was also an increase in restaurant registrations, however, this could have been caused by other factors and wasn't the group we were actively trying to target.



## Food and feed incidents

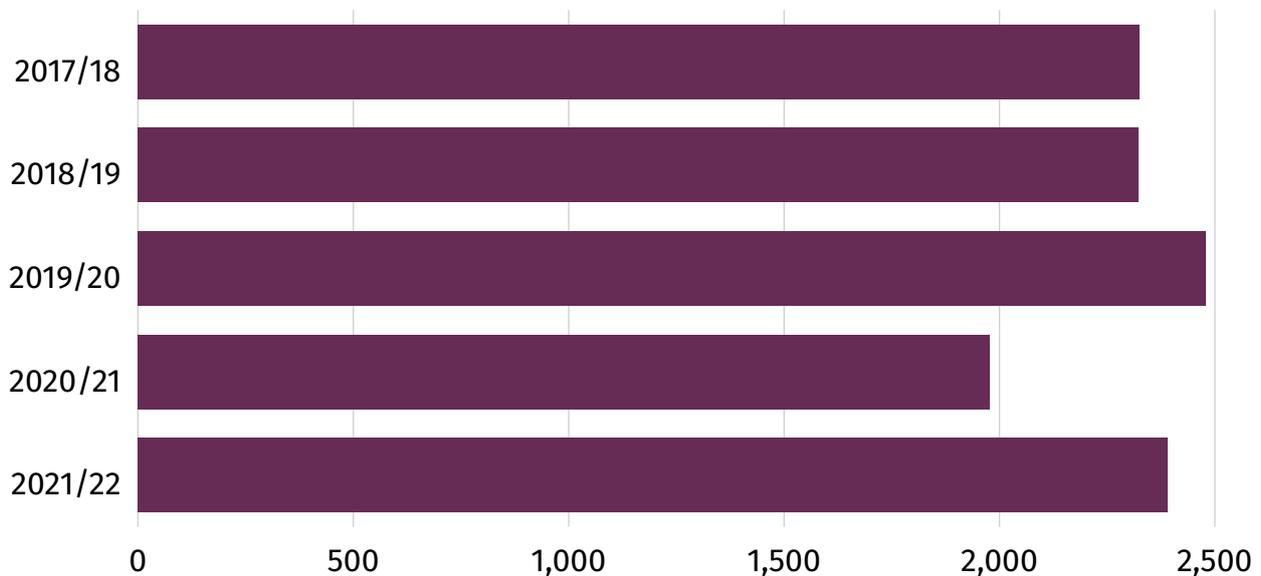
Our incident, resilience and consumer protection teams across England, Wales and Northern Ireland manage and coordinate the FSA's response to food and feed incidents and foodborne outbreaks. They work with the industry to remove from the market products not in compliance with safety legislation. This work has continued throughout the reporting period to ensure that the UK's food and feed incident response capability is as good as it can be.

### Objectives in 2021/22

- Preserve the high level of consumer protection in the UK during and post-EU exit
- Continue to provide emergency response as we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic
- Maintain the UK's world class expertise in managing food incidents as a third country

### Progress against objectives

Fig. 19: Incident notifications received by the FSA to March 2022



Notifications for food, feed and environmental contamination incidents that were investigated by the FSA in England, Wales and Northern Ireland during 2021/22. **An 18% increase from 2020/21.**

The number of incidents increased following the easing of the national lockdown and a return to pre-pandemic levels. The number of incidents in 2020/21 were lower than previous years, a trend which reflected a global fall in numbers of food safety alerts during the pandemic, particularly in 2020. We think the lower levels of incident notification were driven by changes in:



consumer behaviour



streamlining food production lines



fewer food businesses operating



reduced complexity of the product ranges

The breakdown of incidents into the top four hazards were consistent with previous years and show good levels of activity taking place to protect consumers. The top four hazard categories for incidents notified to the FSA in 2021/22 were:



615

**Pathogen microorganisms** – A leading cause of incidents. These increase by 80% from last year which linked to active surveillance carried out by FSA and local authorities following a series of related foodborne outbreaks in 2020 and 2021 linked to breaded chicken products from Poland.



320

**Allergens** – are the second largest cause of incidents. Allergen incidents increased by 83% compared with 2020/21 which is an expected continuation of the active hypersensitivity awareness-building campaigns aimed at consumers and food businesses.



209

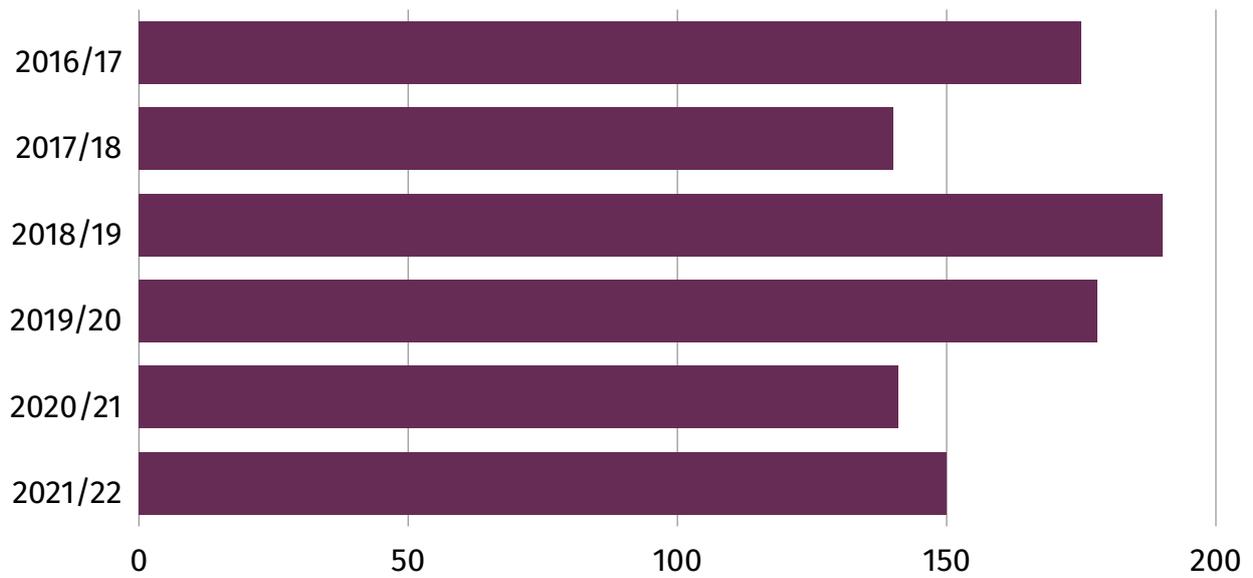
**Pesticide residues** – An increased reporting of this incident over the past two financial years is the result of the Europe-wide incident relating to the detection of non-permitted ethylene oxide in sesame products and products containing locust bean gum.



116

**Foreign body** – issues are when glass, metal or other foreign bodies present a risk to health in a food product. We are looking at root causes with industry to understand what action could prevent these incidents.

Fig. 20: Number of alerts notifications issued by the FSA to March 2022



A total of **150** alerts were published in 2021/22. This included 84 Allergy Alerts, 66 Product Recall Information Notices (PRINS) and 0 Food Alerts for Action. This represented a year-on-year increase of 6.4%, in line with data from previous years.

## Animal welfare

The 'Deter, Prevent, Detect, Enforce' programme is delivered through the FSA Animal Welfare Action Plan for England and Wales which is used to document, track, and evaluate the delivery of animal welfare improvements. We have a **zero-tolerance approach** towards animal welfare non-compliance and use a hierarchy of enforcement to stop avoidable animal suffering and prevent future non-compliance. Policy and implementation are the responsibility of Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in Northern Ireland.

The action plan aligns with the strategic objective trust in food: make it easy for businesses to maintain food safety and standards. A steering group, comprising representatives from the FSA, Welsh Government, and Defra, review outstanding actions and approve new activities.

### Objectives in 2021/22

- strengthen verification and compliance
- improve accountability and collaboration
- improve education and awareness
- improve the quality of our analysis and reporting

### Progress against objectives



#### Strengthened verification and compliance by:

- Running our fourth animal welfare themed audit
- Enhancing animal welfare documentation
- Introducing Demonstration of Life for small ruminant animals
- Triaging of potential prosecution cases
- Supporting industry during COVID-19 with exceptional circumstances guidance



#### Improved accountability and collaboration through:

- The expansion of joint working forums with industry and representatives
- Building closer working relationships and consultation across the supply chain
- Negotiating with Defra and Welsh Government to fund our animal welfare controls



### **Improving education and awareness by:**

- Enhancing guidance about certificates of competence, evidence gathering, and decision-making
- Producing industry communications and best practice guidance on a range of animal welfare themes



### **Improved quality of our analysis and reporting through:**

- Strengthening of monitoring and reporting on animal welfare standards
- Continued enhancements to the animal welfare database
- Publication of animal welfare non-compliance statistics

In 2021/22 there were more than 1 billion animals (1,036,098,739) processed in slaughterhouses. Over 99.9% (1,035,943,907) met animal welfare compliance standards and regulations. Of the 154,832 animals processed not in compliance with animal welfare regulations, 51,132 experienced some impact on their welfare.

## National Food Crime Unit (NFCU)

The NFCU is a dedicated law enforcement function of the FSA tasked with protecting consumers and industry from food crime.

The work of the NFCU plays a critical part in the FSA's objective to ensure that consumers can trust that food is what it says it is. It does this by detecting, investigating and disrupting serious fraud and criminality within food supply chains. The NFCU uses UK law enforcement's established '4P approach' to plan and deliver operational outcomes across its end-to-end counter-fraud capability. These are to:



**Prepare** – ensure the necessary capabilities exist to tackle food crime



**Pursue** – prosecute offenders and confiscate the proceeds of food crime



**Protect** – reduce the vulnerability of businesses and consumers to food crime threats and risks



**Prevent** – stop individuals/businesses from committing food crime

### Objectives for 2021/22



Planning and delivering 4P responses in line with our Control Strategy Priorities and including a greater focus on proactivity

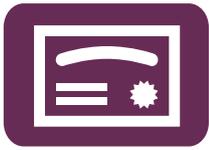


Continued progression towards securing additional investigative powers for the NFCU, to allow it to operate with increased autonomy and maximum effectiveness



Developing our people and capabilities

### Progress made during 2021/22



Outcomes have been delivered across the spectrum of the 4P response, including encouraging 242 businesses to use the NFCU Food Fraud Resilience self-assessment tool with 40% of those businesses following up with the NFCU for further detail.



The FSA achieved tangible progress with officials and ministers across government around the need for the Unit to secure additional investigative powers, including the proposed agreement of primary legislation concerning this. The absence of these capabilities remains a barrier to the unit operating with maximum effectiveness.



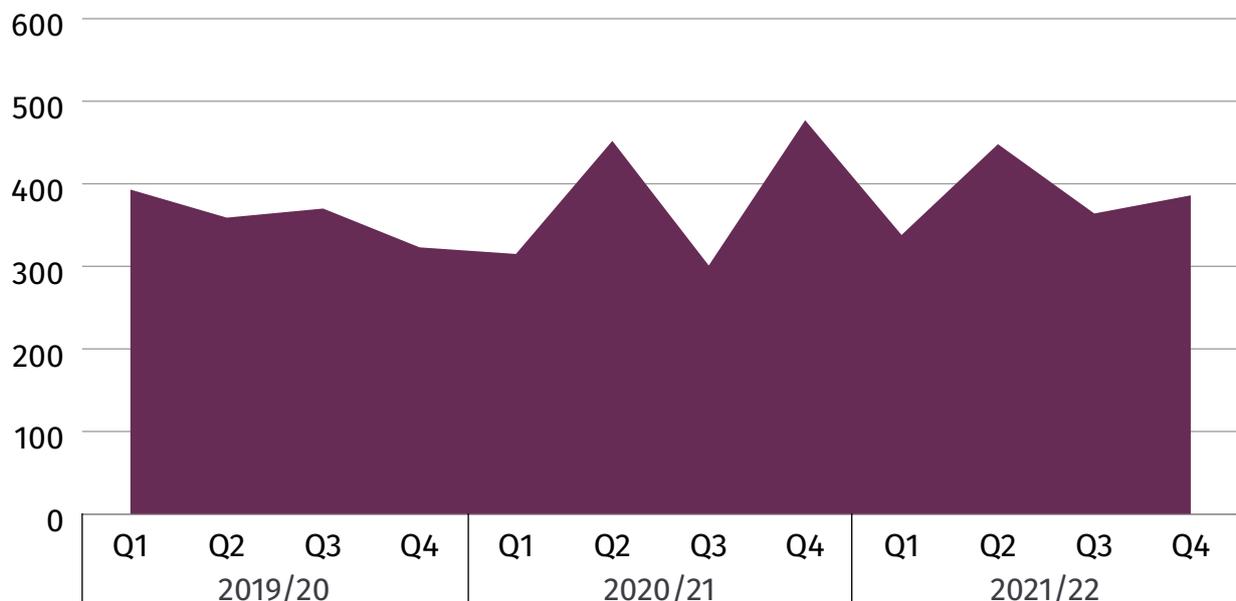
The NFCU ensured all investigators hold relevant experience or new accreditation and launched the Intelligence Professionalisation Programme for eligible staff. The FSA maintained, increased sensitive intelligence capabilities, and ensured the FSA was included on the Covert Human Intelligence (Criminal Conduct) Act 2021.

More information can be found below.

### Intelligence

Volumes of intelligence recorded remained relatively stable. There were some minor quarterly fluctuations in the number of intelligence reports received which may be associated with many factors including seasonal activity, the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns and NFCU proactivity (Fig. 21 as below).

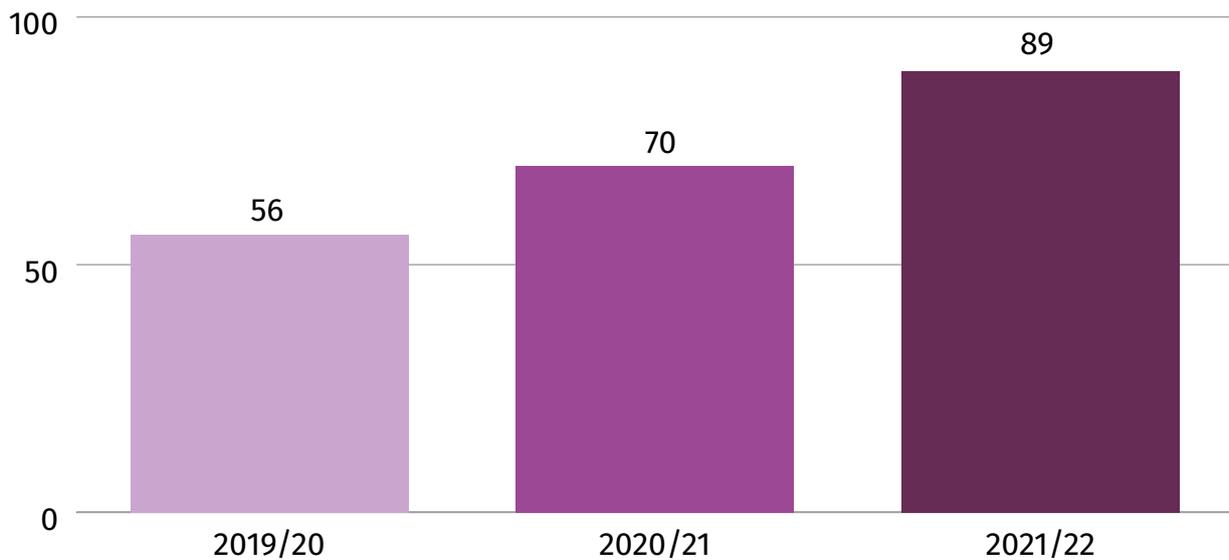
**Fig. 21: Intelligence received each quarter**



### Investigations and operations

The NFCU (as lead or supporting agency) opened 89 new strands of operational activity in 2021/22 compared to 70 in 2020/2021. This represents a 27% increase compared to 2020/21.

Fig. 22: New operational activity by financial year



The NFCU Control Strategy<sup>20</sup> outlines the Unit's current priorities, as well as the actions we have planned to prevent food crime, deter and disrupt food criminals and bring offenders to justice.

Operational activity showed **78%** alignment with NFCU Control Strategy Priorities. This operational focus demonstrated that NFCU resources were engaged in addressing and tackling issues the NFCU had identified, through its intelligence assessments, as key food crime risks. The Unit's 21/22 business plan set a target of 70% alignment.

### FSA's first conviction following an NFCU-led investigation:

A milestone achievement by the NFCU in 2021/22 was the first conviction following an investigation led by the Unit. The conviction related to the sale of 2,4- Dinitrophenol (DNP) for human consumption and alongside other offences resulted in a 28-month prison sentence.



Two investigations supported by the NFCU also led to convictions relating to offences under the Food Safety Act 1990. The Unit continues to progress three investigations towards case file submission to CPS in 2022/23.

### Financial recovery:

In 2021/22 the NFCU Financial Investigations team made significant progress in recovering the assets obtained through food crime. They successfully secured both a confiscation order for £11,037.51 made through offending and an Asset Restraining Order preventing dissipation of assets prior to a Confiscation Order.

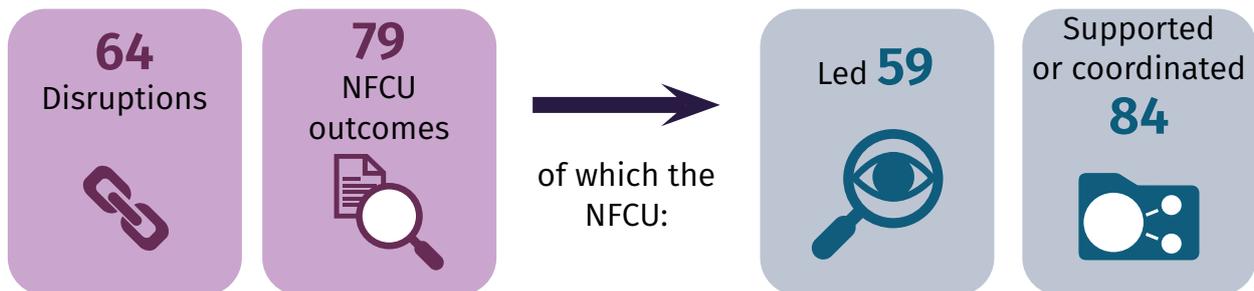


<sup>20</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/about-us/national-food-crime-unit#control-strategy-2020-21](https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/national-food-crime-unit#control-strategy-2020-21)

## Operational outcomes

Where NFCU action has had a positive impact in reducing threat, risk and/or harm by food crime, (for example where we have made a prosecution or arrest, through to direct engagement with a business to increase their resilience to food crime), the action is recorded as one of two types of operational outcomes, 'disruptions' and 'NFCU outcomes'. Both capture the work of the NFCU, but disruptions meet a higher benchmark in terms of confirmed impact. We report these to the National Crime Agency.

During 2021/22 there were:



Disruptions achieved by NFCU this financial year have included:



The indefinite suspension of a person's approval to handle Animal-By-Products (ABP) following the identification of ABP being diverted back into the human food chain. This disrupted the activity of a multi-million-pound business.



The takedown of 28 websites or marketplace listings which were selling DNP for human consumption.



NFCU enquiries helped to locate and secure the arrest of a suspect and ensured the issuing of bail conditions which impeded the suspect's ability to continue offending within the food industry.



The NFCU, alongside our Imports team, supported Border Force in the development of an operation which took place at an airport in January leading to the seizure of 525.77 kg of illegal imports of Product of Animal Origin (POAO).

### FSA priority programmes

These areas of work were the FSA’s priority areas of delivery for 2021/22.



## Achieving Business Compliance



Our aim is to make sure consumers continue to have food they can trust in the future in a rapidly evolving food sector. We need to regulate in a smarter way to make sure that food is safe and is what it says it is.

### Our vision

The changes designed by the Achieving Business Compliance (ABC) programme should lead to a future in which:

- Regulation evolves with the rapidly evolving food system, so all food is safe for consumers regardless of where and how it is bought.
- The FSA collaborates with local authorities and industry to make sure that food regulation is data driven, and that resources are targeted at the areas of highest risk. FSA tools and services make it easier for food businesses to provide food that is safe and is what it says it is.

### The programme will develop a set of regulatory approaches which:



Make it easier for businesses to provide safe and trusted food for consumers.



Target regulatory resources at the areas which pose the greatest risk.

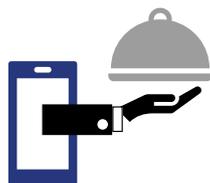


Improve compliance across the system by working with and through others, including regulatory partners and influential businesses.

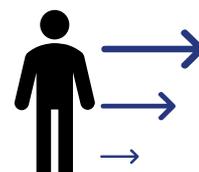
The ABC programme has three workstreams:



Targeted and proportionate regulation



Assurance of online food sales



Enterprise level approaches

## Progress against objectives

We saw progress across all the three workstreams following multiple research and discovery activities undertaken through 2021, setting the evidence base to develop the programme delivery.



### Targeted and proportionate regulation

We completed the new food standards model pilot, and the evaluation and assessment of scalability will be used to plan amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice in the second half of 2022/23. The change will be rolled out in England through 2023/24 with similar plans for Wales.

We continued to develop systems that will support local authorities to deliver an intelligence-led approach. We continue to work with partners on digital, training and support solutions to overcome any potential barriers.

In collaboration with local authorities, we developed an approach to modernise the food hygiene delivery model and principles to evaluate success. In 2022/23 we will analyse the impact on the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.



### Assurance of online food sales

We worked with the three most popular online aggregators who came to the FSA with a the proposal of a Food Safety Charter. Online aggregators are third-party online platforms that consumers can use for food ordering and delivery. We worked with them to develop four headline areas which add assurance in regards to food safety. We will work with the aggregators to develop the detail of these headline areas with an aim to developing a framework to apply this assurance and visibility beyond these online aggregators.

We researched the implications of the new innovations on the UK food buying and selling system. The findings recommended the FSA should adopt a 'highly proactive anticipatory role' in supporting industry to ensure food you can trust as novel business models and processes increasingly replace traditional ones.

Our commissioned research to understand how consumers interact with food sold online, and where they perceive risk, was completed in spring 2022. We have since published the findings.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/research/qualitative-research-to-explore-consumer-attitudes-to-food-sold-online](http://www.food.gov.uk/research/qualitative-research-to-explore-consumer-attitudes-to-food-sold-online)



## Enterprise-level approaches

We identified, engaged and discussed with large retailers (supermarkets) as a candidate for a new regulatory approach, what this would look like and the impact.

Following the ‘Shaping Large Retailer Regulation’ event in England, we secured 5 retailers and their relevant Primary Authorities (PAs) to undertake a proof of concept trial. This will include developing a new food safety management assurance framework, and creating a new relationship manager role for FSA. Trials are expected to commence in second half of 2022/23.

Qualitative research commenced, to understand key stakeholder views of the value of FHRS, which explored consumers views of possible changes to regulatory approaches in the future. This was fed into ABC-led projects.

We continued discussions with retailers to allow the FSA/PA to access their enterprise level data. We continued to build trust with the retailers to ensure their information is safeguarded.

We tested the above model and frameworks regulatory ‘sandbox’ environment – this was outside and in parallel to the current regulatory model, which will continue as normal, until evidence shows the new model provides the same or improved assurance. Testing in the safe environment removed consumer risk and allowed quicker, more flexible testing as actual regulation was not impacted.

### Next steps

Our intention is to develop regulatory approaches which are deliverable within existing food law, but that the programme will also identify and investigate any areas in which legislative change could support our objectives and could make recommendations for change.

## Operational transformation

### OPERATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

The Operational Transformation Programme (OTP) is modernising the way the FSA directly delivers Official Controls in the meat, dairy and wine sectors. We underpin this work by principles which will continue to increase standards across industry. Central to this programme, is our dedication to ensuring that food is safe and is what it says it is, and to keeping consumer trust and safety at the heart of everything we do.

### Our vision

The overall ambition of the programme is to move towards a more proportionate and evidence-based approach to regulation in order to optimise inspection and assurance activities, to promote economic growth and support trade, to provide value for money but, above all, to continue to protect consumers and support the delivery of animal health and welfare outcomes, as we adapt to a changing landscape of food production.

Fundamental to taking a new approach is a Future Delivery Model (FDM) which aims to introduce a more proportionate risk and evidence-based approach to regulation, introducing clearer accountability between Industry (as food producer) and FSA (as regulator) in order to optimise regulatory activities by targeting them based on rigorous evidence, analysis and insight to ensure that they are more focused on areas of higher risk and non-compliance.

### The impact of the new FDM on the FSA and food producers:



More efficient collection and use of data due to more reliance on digital capability.



A more risk-based, segmented approach to routine engagement with industry based on risk and compliance levels.



Changes to operational processes and tasks undertaken by Meat Hygiene Inspectors and Official Veterinarians to ensure they are adding the maximum value to food safety and animal health and welfare where there is room in current legislation for us to do so. Significant changes to roles and responsibilities is dependent upon future legislative change.

### Objectives during 2021/22

During 2021/22 the aspirations and proposals outlined in the initial FDM were developed and tested with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that the proposals were supported and were flexible enough to ensure a range of delivery options. Having sought and gained support for the FDM, a number of specific early deliverables were identified, agreed and progressed following the FSA Board approval.

## Progress against objectives



### Legislative requirement discovery

Under the OTP, a dedicated legislative strategy team has been established and undertook a gap analysis of current regulations versus the ambitions of the FDM to determine which areas of legislation would need to be changed and reviewing potential pathways for delivering legislative changes in the future.



### Launch the pilot for the initial Segmentation model

We set out to create a data engine that will be used to better target FSA resources and interventions based on risk. This recognised the efforts of highly compliant businesses by taking a more proportionate approach to regulation.

Segmentation has been used in a targeted and limited way to determine audit frequency and unannounced inspection activity. This targeted approach allowed us to carefully test and track the accuracy of the scoring in the segmentation tool. The targeted approach will start in Q1 2022/23 and evaluation will be undertaken before beginning to explore additional data indicators and wider use of the approach in coming years. Pilot data indicators include enforcement data, investigation/prosecution history, animal welfare breaches and audit outcomes.



### Develop a FDM for Operations to present to the FSA Board

In May 2021 the Future Delivery Model was presented to the FSA Board<sup>22</sup> and having secured support for ongoing engagement with stakeholders, a public consultation exercise was undertaken to gather a wide range of views from Consumer Groups, Industry and Industry Bodies, Government Departments and Devolved Administrations. The consultation findings were presented to the Board in September 2021 and the Board endorsed the Operational Transformation Programme's proposals for the Future Delivery Model and agreed the Programme's work programme for the following 12 months.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-21-05-04-development-of-the-operational-future-delivery-model.pdf>



## Digital technology improvements

We aimed to exploit technological advances to support the more effective delivery of Official Controls, ensuring we use robust methods to inspect, verify, assure, and gather the data. As a result, several digital projects were developed, including:

A successful trial of video streaming technology for use during remote audits. Looking forward, work is planned to undertake a market scan to identify a suitable permanent software solution.

A new web-based digital solution was implemented to support the approvals process for FSA regulated meat premises.

Other innovations began development such as improving how we collect inspection results and food chain information; improve evidence gathering and report production for audit and inspection activity.

Discussions began to consider the potential use of Artificial Intelligence linked to CCTV to improve animal welfare monitoring.

### Next steps

Our intention for 2022/23 is to continue to review legislative opportunities to help support OTP objectives and make recommendations for change. The programme will also continue to focus on several digital opportunities, such as updates to the audit and inspection digital space and a review on Food Chain Information (FCI) and Collection and Communication of Inspection Results (CCIR).

## Speak Up For Allergies (second phase)

**Aims:** Support and encourage 18 to 21 year olds to speak up about their food allergies when eating out in restaurants and to normalise the conversation amongst peers by encouraging them to support a friend when ordering. For food businesses to highlight the importance of their role in responding to people with food allergies.

**When:** 9 March 2022 to 30 March 2022

**Spend:** Business campaign £90,000 Young People's campaign £90,000 (England Wales and Northern Ireland)

### What we did:

We delivered two campaigns one targeting food businesses and one young people. Insight shows that young people with food allergies are less likely to speak up about their food allergy in a busy restaurant, or if front-of-house staff are unhelpful. It also demonstrated that friends play an important role in encouraging a young person to speak up about their allergies and tell the restaurant when dining out, therefore this was a pivotal focus of the campaign.

The food business campaign highlighted the important role that they have in protecting people with food allergies. It focused on how the response from a food business really matters. We launched the food business campaign first and supported food businesses to do the right thing by directing them to our online resources, including online allergen management training. We developed a [Speak Up For Allergies video](#)<sup>†</sup> which was promoted to businesses using YouTube and Facebook.

The second campaign targeted young people themselves using a digital first approach. We used a [video](#)<sup>†</sup> specifically targeting young people to show the impact a supportive friend can have for someone with allergies when ordering food. This video was promoted across YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook with a link to our [Speak Up for Allergies campaign page](#)<sup>‡</sup>. All resources were bilingual and paid content in Wales was promoted equally in both English and Welsh language.

We worked with two social media influencers to deliver the content on TikTok and Instagram in a way that would engage our target audience.

### Results

The total reach of the paid spend for the young people's element of the campaign was 1,024,844, the most efficient channel being Snapchat. The influencer content reached over 83,000 people. The [Speak Up For Allergies webpage](#)<sup>‡‡</sup> which included advice to young people received 14,862 visits.

We provided businesses with over 1.5 million opportunities to see this campaign and generated 23,470 visitors to the [Allergen checklist page](#)<sup>\*</sup>. We worked with over 120 partners organisations to deliver messages to over 200,000 businesses and saw a 700% increase in downloads of resources.

<sup>†</sup> <https://youtu.be/4c4hhbFCjsA>

<sup>††</sup> <https://youtu.be/9TTHzreGA-4>

<sup>‡</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/advice-for-teenagers-and-young-adults-with-a-food-allergy](http://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/advice-for-teenagers-and-young-adults-with-a-food-allergy)

<sup>‡‡</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/advice-for-teenagers-and-young-adults-with-a-food-allergy](http://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/advice-for-teenagers-and-young-adults-with-a-food-allergy)

<sup>\*</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/allergen-checklist-for-food-businesses](http://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/allergen-checklist-for-food-businesses)



## Food hypersensitivity



The FSA has a long-term ambition to improve the quality of life for people with food hypersensitivities (food allergies, food intolerances and coeliac disease). We work with partners inside and outside government to deliver a step change in how food hypersensitivity (FHS) is understood and managed. We focus our work on developing policy, research and evidence, informed by consumer and business engagement, and supporting enforcement.

### Our vision

#### Our work aims to:



Improve quality of life for the estimated 2.6 million people with FHS.



Reduce the burden and cost to the National Health Service (NHS)



Increase workplace productivity by reducing FHS illness incidence



Increase economic activity of food hypersensitive people within the food and hospitality sectors.

### Objectives for 2021/22



Examine the potential options for developing a food allergy safety scheme that would enable people with food hypersensitivities to make safer choices when dining out.



Explore the 'data gap' as to the extent and nature of allergic reactions, particularly when buying food outside the home. To test this through a 'proof of concept' process for a Food Allergic Reaction Reporting Mechanism (FARRM) tool.



Gain stakeholder insight and input into FSA's work on FHS and build the strong stakeholder relationships and alliances needed to affect the cultural and behavioural changes.



Support businesses and local authorities to prepare for the implementation of prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) legislation from 1 October 2021.



Improve understanding of the current causes and impacts of the increased usage of Precautionary Allergen Labelling (PAL) through gaining feedback from food industry stakeholders to inform policy development and potential interventions.

## Progression of key areas



### Examining options for developing a food allergy safety scheme and review of evidence on allergen information for consumers

We developed our work looking at how food businesses can improve provision of FHS information to consumers when eating out or ordering takeaway food, so they can make safer choices.

We examined the potential of creating an allergy safety scheme which would provide consumers with information they could use to decide where to eat. Alongside this, we developed our research base on whether the presentation of allergen information could be improved by examining consumer preferences and how businesses compile information for their customers.



### Explore the 'data gap' in allergic reactions and to test through a 'proof of concept' for a FARRM

The FARRM project was initiated to consider the feasibility and design of a mechanism to improve the FSA's understanding of the nature and extent of food hypersensitivity reactions and near-misses, particularly those which do not require hospital treatment and often go unreported.

A FARRM 'proof-of-concept' platform was hosted on the FSA website from November 2021 to February 2022 and generated a total of 498 reports of adverse reactions. Whilst this level of response broadly aligned with expectations, it demonstrated significant issues with maintaining public awareness, consumer motivation to place a report and data validity. Consequently, the FHS Programme Board decided not to progress FARRM and instead focus on alternative ways of capturing the scope and type of data required.



### **Gain stakeholder insight and input into FHS and build strong stakeholder relationships and alliances**

We established an expert panel which allowed us to collaborate with charities, trade bodies, academics, clinicians and local authorities.

We also held our third FHS Symposium, gathering a range of stakeholders to discuss perceptions of FHS and how best practice can improve outcomes, attracting over 600 delegate registrations.

We ran our second iteration of the ‘Speak Up For Allergies’<sup>23</sup> campaign, aimed at 18-21 year olds, in March 2022.



### **Support businesses and local authorities to prepare for the implementation of the PPDS Legislation**

New allergen labelling requirements came into effect in all four UK nations from 1 October 2021. The FSA implemented the prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) legislation and have supported businesses and local authorities to successfully implement the new rules. The PPDS legislation requires food businesses to label this type of food with the name and ingredients list, with the 14 major allergens emphasised within the list. We provided additional resources on a dedicated hub on the FSA website including sector guides and help with the labelling of PPDS products.

We also produced two well-received webinars aimed at local authorities and businesses respectively which were recorded and are available as training resources. We continued to publicise the changes through industry events aimed at small and larger businesses and produced more tailored advice for local authorities in resources available to them via our dedicated communications platform.

In the run up to the implementation date, we delivered targeted advertising to ensure the message was reaching businesses on their need to prepare. We achieved widespread media interest, including coverage on major news programmes, and strong public engagement, which contributed to raising consumer awareness achieving over 105,000 page views on the PPDS hub during 2021/22.

<sup>23</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/advice-for-teenagers-and-young-adults-with-a-food-allergy](http://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/advice-for-teenagers-and-young-adults-with-a-food-allergy)



### Improve understanding of the current causes and impacts of the increased usage of PAL

PAL refers to voluntary labelling to indicate that one or more regulated allergens could be unintentionally, but unavoidably, present in a product, and thus pose a risk to susceptible consumers. This is often present on labels in the form of ‘may contain...’ or other similar statements. There is consumer and business concern that these statements are used inconsistently, and consumers often feel this form of labelling does not provide reliable information on which to base their choices.

We launched a public consultation from December 2021 to March 2022, to gather a broad range of stakeholder views to inform our work. This consultation received over 2,500 responses and was supported by 14 targeted workshops with businesses, local authorities and consumer groups. The findings from this consultation will inform our work as we develop our approach to this issue in partnership with the food sector, local authorities and consumers.

#### Next steps

During 2022/23, we will focus on key topics agreed by the FSA Board as outlined below:

- Improving the provision of information for consumers, with a priority focus on the accuracy of information.
- Achieving a step change in the knowledge, skills and food safety culture of staff in the non-prepacked sector.
- Continuing work on Precautionary Allergen Labelling (PAL) to improve the way it is applied by industry and to improve its effectiveness as a consumer information tool.
- Evaluation of the implementation of the PPDS legislation by surveying consumers, food businesses and local authorities. We will assess if businesses and local authorities need additional support from the FSA.

# Allergen labelling change on pre-packed for direct sale foods (Natasha's Law)

**Aims:** The main aims were to promote the new regulations through an awareness campaign targeting both businesses and consumers; provide helpful advice to food businesses who sell prepacked for direct sale food and ensure they were supported to make the necessary changes to be compliant; and to make sure that consumers, particularly those with a food hypersensitivity are aware of the changes.



**When:** March 2021 to October 2021

**Spend:** £85,000

## What we did:

This activity followed on from work conducted in 2020/21. During the reporting year the campaign was split into stages to help focus the messaging and ensure that businesses were targeted in a timely manner with relevant messages.

Below are some highlights from the campaigning and promotional activity.



## Dedicated information hub

A dedicated hub was created on food.gov.uk in February 2021 to support food businesses implementing the new regulations. The hub provided resources for businesses including a decision tool, labelling guidance, sample labels, technical guidance and sector specific guidance. The decision tool proved to be popular with over 67,000 visits from 1 January to 31 October 2021.

## Online advertising

We ran online advertising on Google, Facebook and Instagram for two weeks in March 2021 and September 2021. This promotion secured a total of 9.3 million impressions and generated 83,000 click throughs to the dedicated information hub.

## Webinars

In July and August 2021, three webinars were held to help engage with food businesses and local authorities. The food business webinar was attended by almost 400 people and has since had over 2,800 views on YouTube. A total of 800 local authority officers attended the live webinar from across England, Wales and Northern Ireland with an additional 1,500 views on YouTube. 90% of businesses who attended the webinars rated the overall experience as excellent or good.

The FSA in Northern Ireland (NI), along with the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Environment (CAFRE) and district councils, held a webinar for NI businesses. Over 160 local food businesses and caterers attended the event.

## Implementation day – 1 October 2021

We used the implementation day as an opportunity to reach food hypersensitive consumers to let them know how the changes in the allergen labelling law will impact them. In collaboration with the Natasha Allergy Research Foundation (NARF), we secured 89 pieces of coverage which included 10 national newspapers, 21 media interviews and generated 876,767,128 opportunities to see for Natasha's Law which potentially exposed everyone in the UK to an FSA mention an average of 4 times during that day.

## Nutrition: Northern Ireland (NI)

In NI, we are responsible for the delivery of some nutrition and dietary health policy. The aim is to improve nutrition and health outcomes by making healthier food products available and increasing consumers' understanding of nutrition, allowing the healthy choice to be the easy choice. Our Dietary Health team lead and develop dietary health policy through working collaboratively with other government departments, district councils, academia, community groups, the food industry, and others.

### Objectives for 2021/22



Take forward key objectives of dietary health & nutrition policy in NI (within [draft Programme for Government, A Fitter Future for All, Making Life Better](#)<sup>24</sup>) in partnership with NI government departments, the NI food industry and other stakeholders.



Deliver actions within the Eating Well Choosing Better (EWCB) programme by working with the retail, manufacturing and out of home sectors to achieve industry targets for [sugar, salt](#),<sup>25</sup> and [calories](#)<sup>26</sup> set by UK government.



Improve insight and understanding through surveillance of the NI population's nutrient intake, food consumption, purchasing, knowledge, behaviours, and attitudes in relation to healthy eating and communicating this widely to stakeholders.

### Progress against objectives



The FSA in NI, Public Health Agency (NI) and safefood<sup>27</sup>, in partnership with Health and Social Care (HSC) colleagues, jointly produced Nutritional Standards<sup>28</sup> to ensure the provision of healthier food choices for staff and visitors in HSC settings. Revised standards were published in March 2022.



The FSA in NI worked with local food manufacturers, retailers, and the out of home sector on the 4-5-year Eating Well Choosing Better (EWCB) programme. We support small and medium sized enterprises with reformulation and reducing portion sizes to make healthy choices easier. We align our action and delivery plan with UK governments targets.

During 2021, our face-to-face engagement with businesses was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Dietary Health team connected with businesses by hosting a reformulation webinar for the bakery sector. 55 delegates from the manufacturing, retail, catering, and education sectors in NI were in attendance. The objective of the webinar was to motivate the bakery sector in NI to think positively about reformulation

<sup>24</sup> [www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/making-life-better-strategy-and-reports](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/making-life-better-strategy-and-reports)

<sup>25</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/sugar-reduction-report-on-first-year-progress](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sugar-reduction-report-on-first-year-progress)

<sup>26</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/sugar-reduction-report-on-first-year-progress](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sugar-reduction-report-on-first-year-progress)

<sup>27</sup> [www.safefood.net/advisory-committee](http://www.safefood.net/advisory-committee)

<sup>28</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/hsc-nutritional-standards-executive-summary](http://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/hsc-nutritional-standards-executive-summary)

and communicate the wide range of support available. Post-webinar, all delegates were sent information on reformulation and a link to the recorded webinar<sup>29</sup> which has been viewed **1,142** times since posted online.

Within the out of home sector, the [Calorie Wise](#)<sup>30</sup> scheme continued to be delivered in partnership with the eleven district councils. The scheme encourages food businesses to voluntarily calorie label food and drink items on their menus, supported by the FSA's free online calorie calculator and allergen management tool, [MenuCal](#)<sup>31</sup>. Due to COVID-19, promotion of the scheme has been limited over the past two years.

Despite this since March 2021 to March 2022, there was:



A **63%** increase in recipes inputted into MenuCal among all users (Fig. 23)



**181%** increase in recipes placed on MenuCal

There was a noticeable increase in user numbers and recipes inputted since March 2022. This appears to be driven by new users from England seeking to comply with new mandatory calorie labelling laws which came into effect in England in April 2022. Since April 2021, 1,004 'allergen only' recipes were inputted into the tool. The number of these recipes increased considerably prior to the implementation of Natasha's law in October 2021.

**Fig. 23: Number of recipes inputted into MenuCal March 2021 – March 2022**

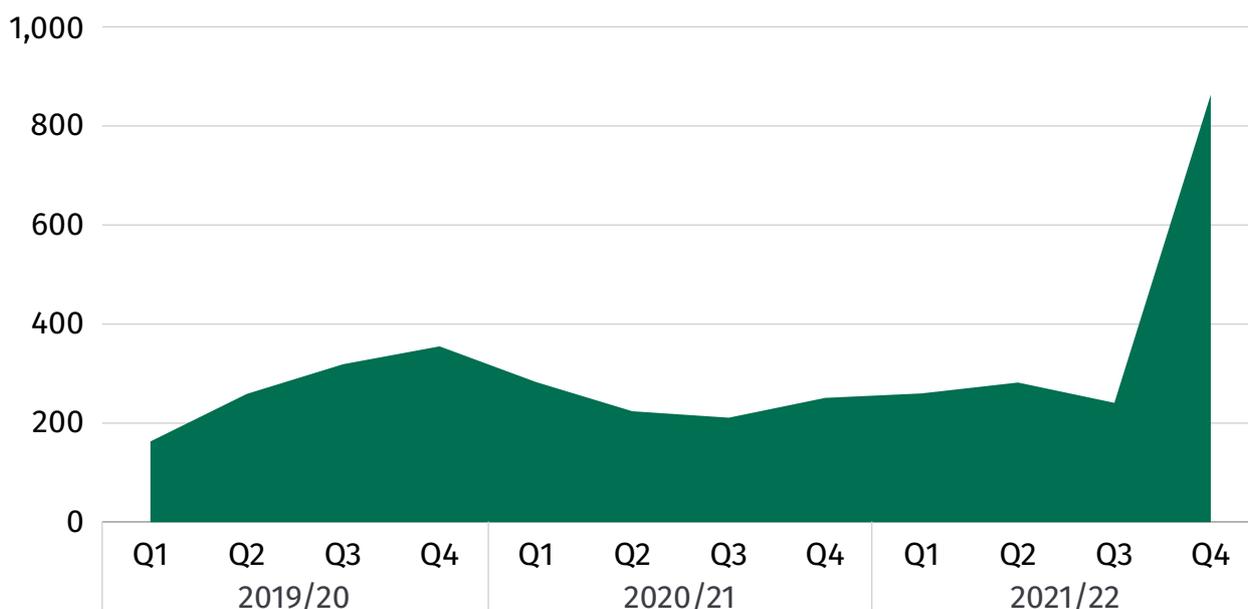


<sup>29</sup> [www.youtube.com/watch?v=DbkPctoR9Fw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DbkPctoR9Fw)

<sup>30</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/calorie-wise](https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/calorie-wise)

<sup>31</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/menucal-calorie-and-allergen-tool](https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/menucal-calorie-and-allergen-tool)

Fig. 24: Number of logins to MenuCal March 2021 – March 2022



The Dietary Health team continued to monitor NI consumers' understanding and knowledge of recommended daily calorie intake, use of traffic light labels, attitudes towards reformulation and calorie information, and awareness of campaign communications through the FSA's EWCB Tracker Survey. Data collection for the seventh wave of the survey was completed in October 2021, and a [report](#)<sup>32</sup> of the findings was published in March 2022.

#### Key Findings for 2021 (Wave 7) include:



**87%** of respondents in 2021 recognise the traffic light label which has remained high and consistent throughout each wave

**42%** of respondents in 2021 use the traffic light label, a **14% point** decrease from 2020 (Wave 6)

**79%** of respondents in 2021 understand the traffic light label, an increase of **12% points** from 2019 (Wave 5). Data from wave 6 is not available

In developing our dietary health policy, we ensure that our work is based on robust evidence. During 2021, we worked with Kantar Fast Moving Consumer Goods to monitor take home food and drink purchasing in NI from 2016, 2019 and 2020. This data was collated into a report<sup>33</sup> examining key trends and identifying food and drink categories that are of concern to dietary health. The report was shared with stakeholders and had 110 page views since publication in December 2021 to February 2022.

<sup>32</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/research/wider-consumer-interests/eating-well-choosing-better-tracking-survey-wave-7](http://www.food.gov.uk/research/wider-consumer-interests/eating-well-choosing-better-tracking-survey-wave-7)

<sup>33</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/Northern%20Ireland%20Take%20Home%20Food%20and%20Drink%20Purchases%20%282016%2C%202019%20and%202020%29\\_0.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/Northern%20Ireland%20Take%20Home%20Food%20and%20Drink%20Purchases%20%282016%2C%202019%20and%202020%29_0.pdf)

## Our people – Our year in numbers

### Civil service people survey



**68%** Employee engagement index score

### Civil Service People Survey



**35<sup>th</sup>** out of **101** organisations

### Culture enquiry



**22%** increase in people's understanding of our guiding principles

### Culture enquiry



**79%** of staff feel that leaders have a clear vision of the future

### Staff



**56%** of eligible staff are now on work from home contracts

### Diversity & inclusion



**70+** diverse panel members trained

### Social mobility index



Ranked **90<sup>th</sup>** out of **203** in our first social mobility index submission

## Staff engagement

The Civil Service People Survey (CSPS) gives our people a voice and an opportunity to let senior leaders know what helps them perform at their best and what more we can do to better communicate and collaborate. We conducted the survey in September/October 2021 and 77% of staff responded. The overall FSA employee engagement score was 68%, our second highest engagement score and above the Civil Service (CS) benchmark of 66%, although our first decrease (2% since 2020) since 2016.

Our culture enquiry bolstered staff survey feedback, which aimed to provide an understanding of our current culture. The enquiry was comprised of a survey and staff workshops. 293 staff (21% of our workforce) took part in workshops conducted and 268 responded to the Civil Service Culture Survey. The outputs provided a rich source of data which allowed us to identify themes that describe our culture.

We also published our new FSA strategy 'food you can trust' this year. As part of strategy development, we engaged with staff to hear their feedback and start to shape implementation activities.

### 2020/21 objectives from the 2020 Civil Service People Survey

The FSA identified three priority areas arising from 2020 People Survey:



Discrimination, bullying  
and harassment



Inclusion and fair  
treatment



Learning and  
development

### Progress against 2020/21 objectives

#### A number of related workstreams were progressed including:



the introduction of a new Dispute Resolution Policy



the introduction of Fair Treatment Champions



the development of an 'Understanding the Unacceptable' initiative in collaboration with the Trade Unions

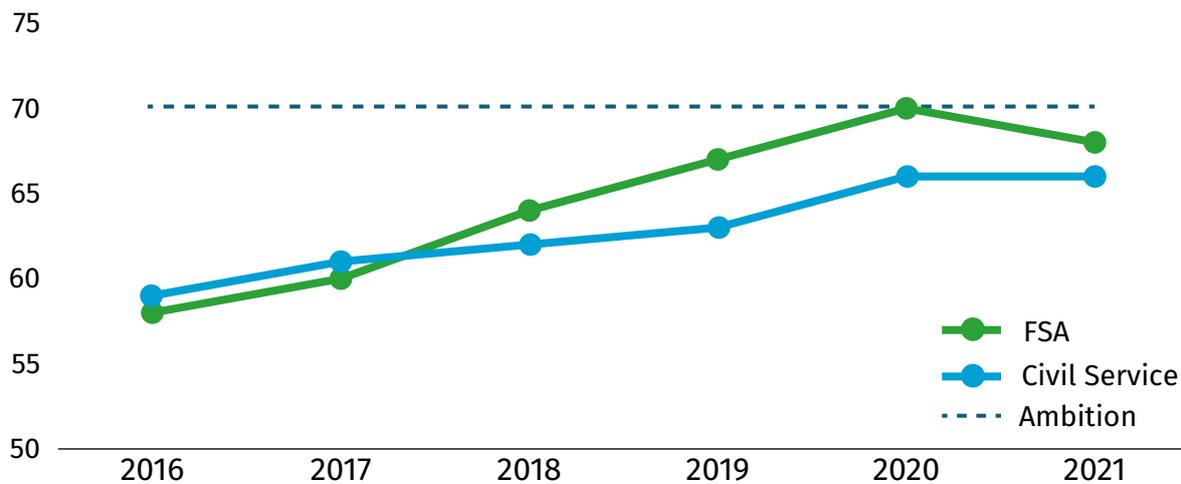


the launch of a revised 'one stop' Intranet site on the subject of 'Speak Up'

Our concentrated effort throughout the year encouraged people to engage with the comprehensive learning offer available to colleagues in the FSA. We held a dedicated week of ‘Spotlight on Learning’ lunch and learns during May 2021. These were well received by staff. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we worked with our training providers to move courses onto an online platform, where possible. We also participated several cross-Government talent initiatives including Future Leaders and Beyond Boundaries. In addition, we launched our newly developed FSA Accelerate programme for underrepresented groups.

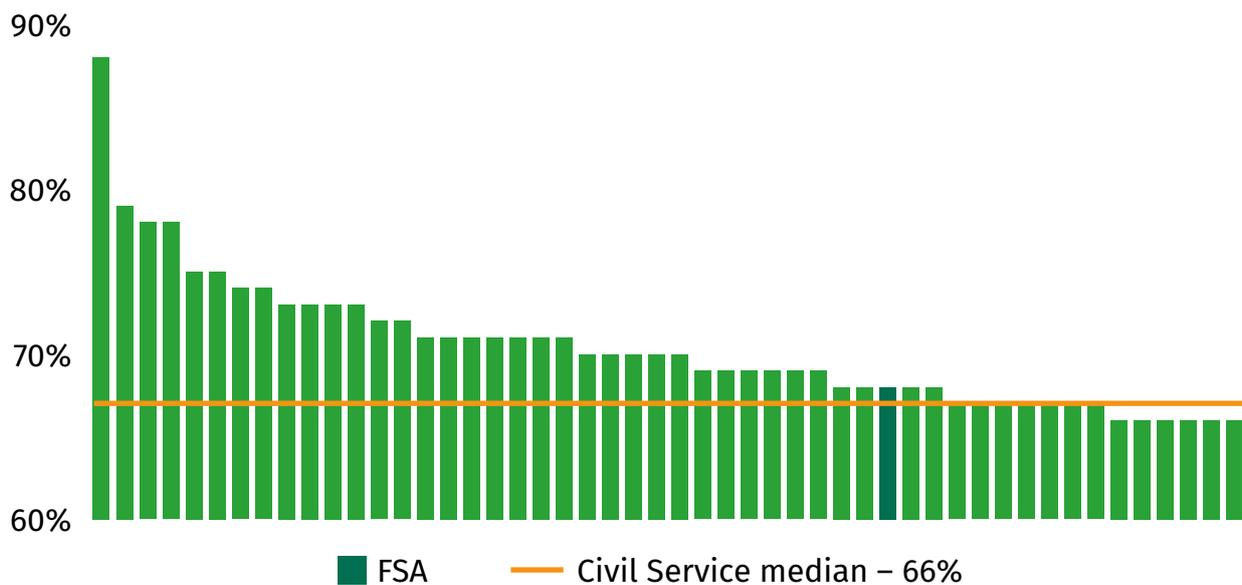
### Civil Service People Survey results 2021

Fig. 25: People Survey engagement

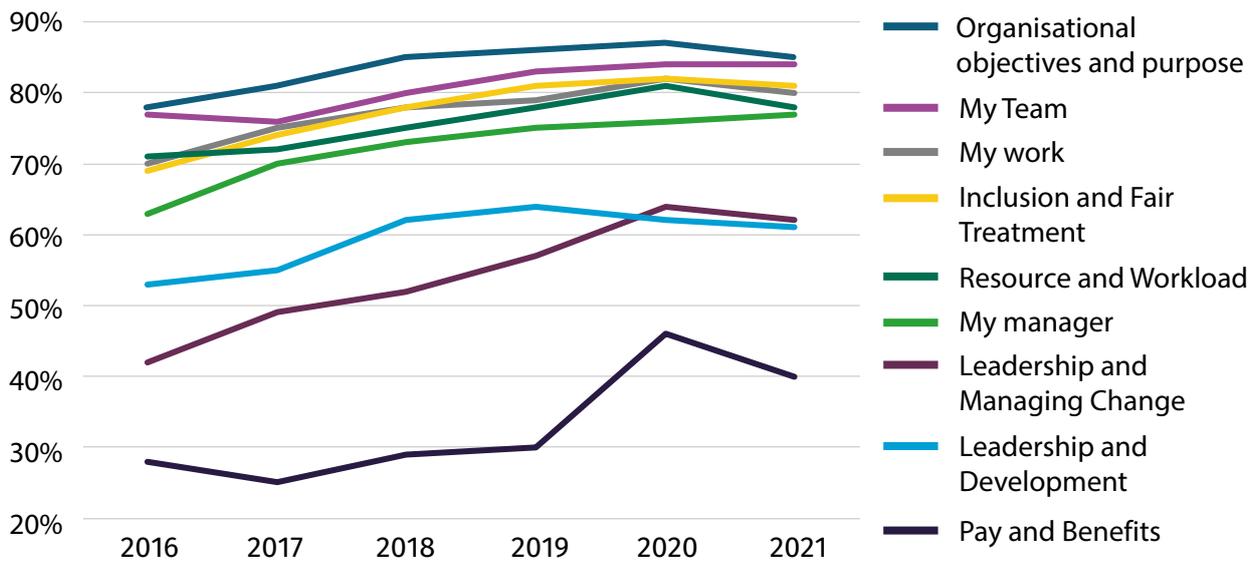


Of 101 organisations who took part in the Civil Service people survey, the FSA ranked 35th. Fig. 26 shows how the FSA compared to the most engaged Civil Service organisations.

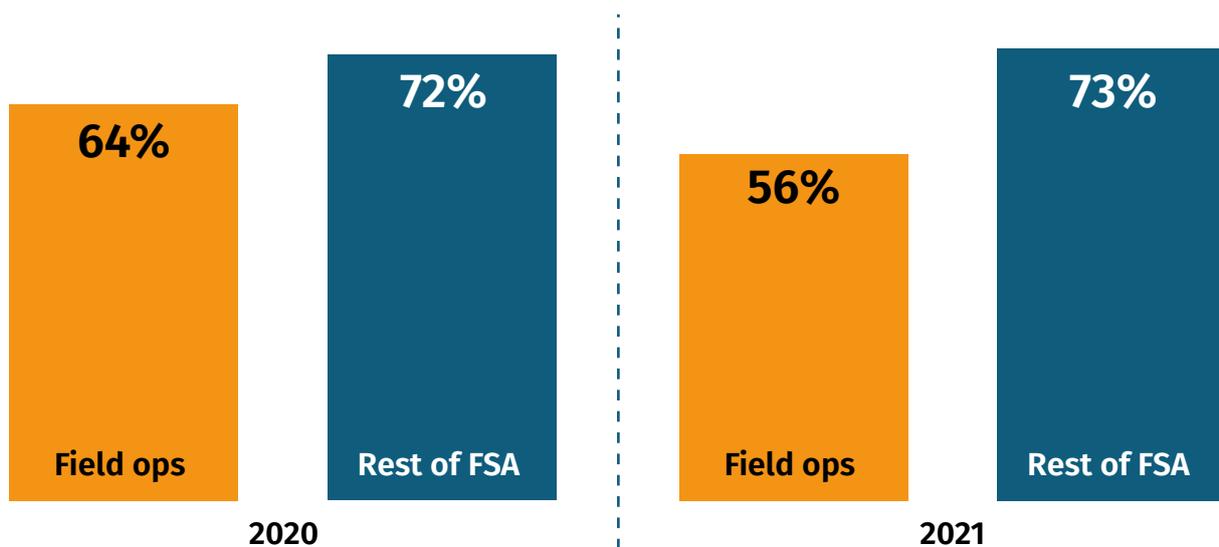
Fig. 26: CSPS engagement score – top 50 Civil Service organisations



**Fig. 27: The FSA’s Civil Service People Survey scores 2016-2021**



**Fig. 28: Operations vs the rest of the FSA Staff Engagement**



The CSPS scores for frontline versus non-frontline staff differ significantly, with lower CSPS scores in Field Operations regarding senior managers, change management, choice on how work is carried out, support to adapt ways of working, pay and prioritising time for learning and development. We considered these differences when agreeing our organisational People Priorities and will factor in our forthcoming People Plan.

**Findings from our strategy and internal quarterly surveys**

We completed our fourth internal quarterly survey (IQS) which acts as a health check between the CSPS. The results showed an increase in our overall engagement score from 68% in the 2021 CSPS to 71%.

### Other findings in our IQS:



Significant increases in key CSPA benchmarks



Big leaps in people's understanding of guiding principles and strategy



Overall comfort with strategy at encouraging levels



Work to do around explaining pay and how the process works



Still low scores around people feeling like they have a say in our organisation

### Strategy survey findings:

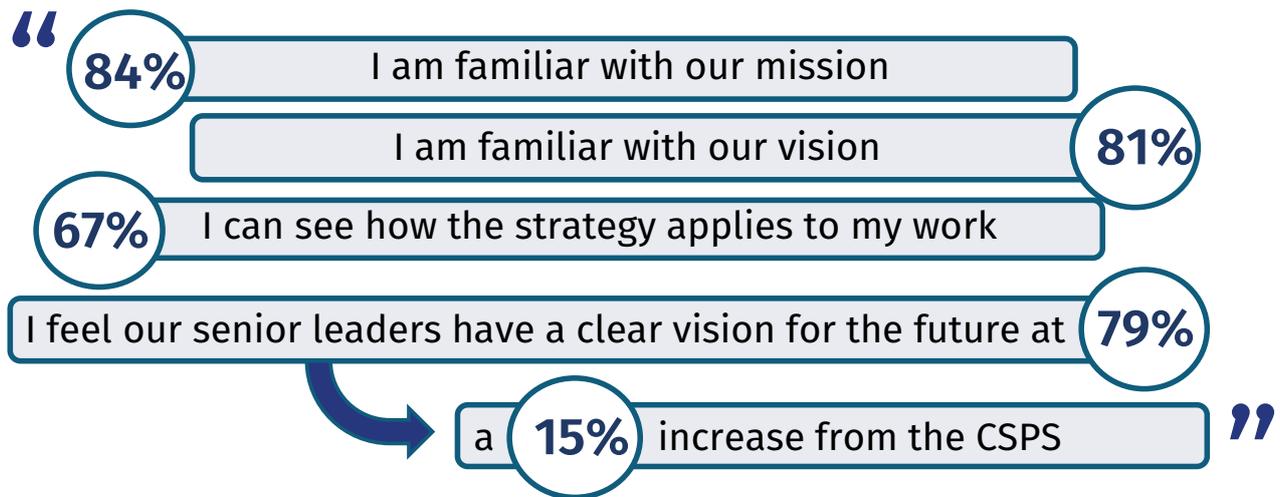
**22%**

increase in people's understanding of the strategic narrative/guiding principles

**16%**

increase in people seeing how they could apply the guiding principles to their work when compared to the IQS a year previous.

Other results (correct as at 31 March 2021) were:



During development of our new strategy, over 70 teams held meetings to discuss the strategy and provide their comments. We used these results, alongside other outputs, to help inform and update the strategy, and to help develop our people plan and action areas.

#### Brief next steps for our People Plan and action areas following results

There are two main routes through which we will act on staff feedback received through the People Survey and our culture enquiry. The first is through our three people survey priorities which we have decided to focus on at an organisational level:



Wellbeing



Inclusion and fair treatment



Leadership visibility and future

Actions taken to support our people priorities will have a short to mid-term focus, allowing us to respond to staff feedback and to make an impact. The second route will be through the development of our three-year People Plan, through which we will be able to focus on longer-term change to support the FSA strategy.

The People Plan is due to launch late in the 2022/23 reporting period.

## Supporting our staff

### COVID-19 pandemic response

The health, safety and wellbeing of our staff continued to be of utmost importance throughout the pandemic. Due to the nature of the pandemic and the ongoing additional demands placed on staff, we continued to implement a variety of support measures to enable staff to protect themselves and others, including:

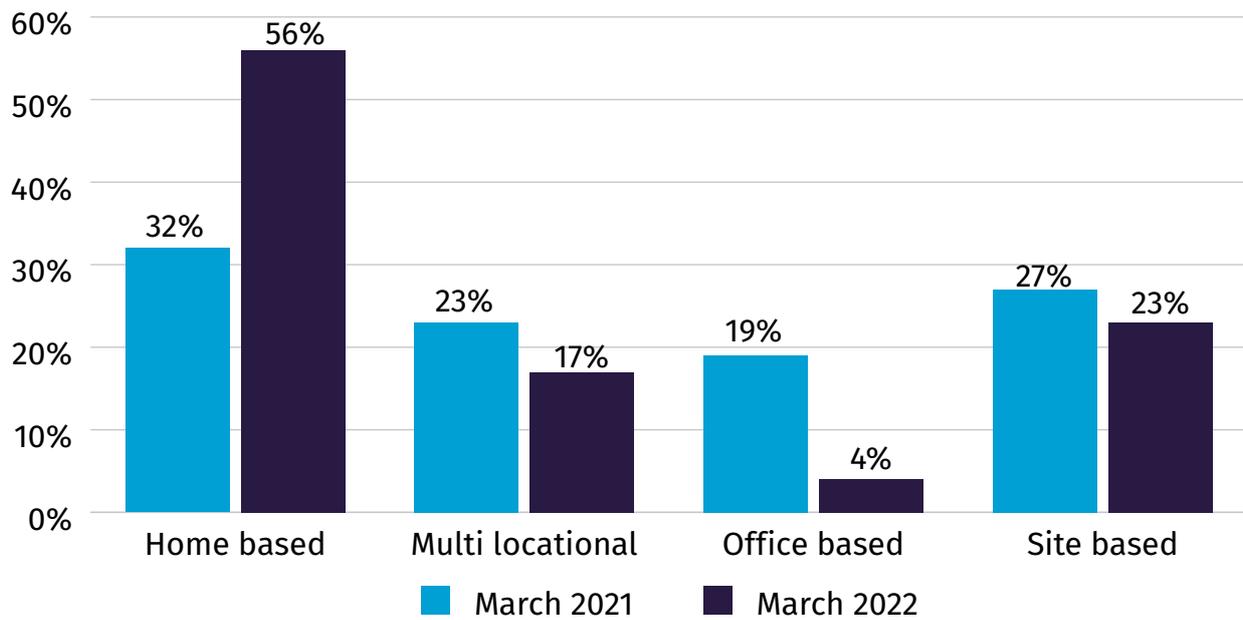
- Provided an internal staff and manager information pack and Q&A to keep staff updated on information such as government advice and support available.
- Utilised existing Our Ways of Working flexibilities to support staff to balance work and home commitments with any health and safety concerns.
- Continued to conduct recruitments using online tools.
- Continued providing a range of measures to enable staff to temporarily isolate to control the spread of COVID-19.
- COVID-19 risk assessments, for our delivery of official controls in food premises and in our own offices, were kept under review and promptly amended as needed.
- Made offices available for staff to utilise, in line with Government guidance, using a priority rating approach with a reduced occupancy limit.

### Our Ways of Working (OWOW) for non-frontline staff

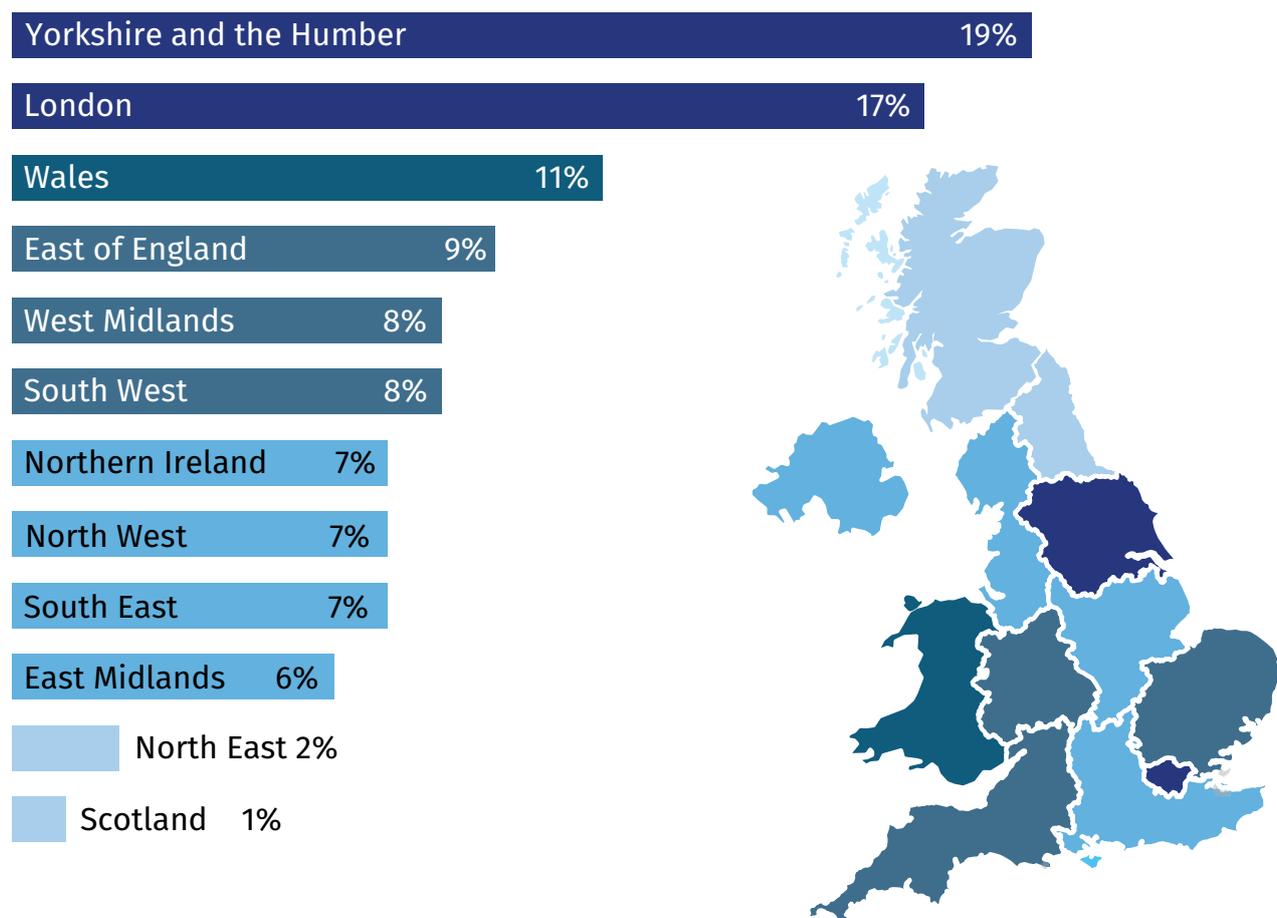
We introduced our award-winning flexible working programme in 2017. In June 2021, we began to update the 'OWOW' offer to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and provides us with a competitive edge for recruitment campaigns. The main change in June 2021, was to decouple roles from specific offices and empower staff and new joiners to decide which contract type worked best for them out of multi-site and homeworking (with office-based contracts remaining available to existing office-based staff and new joiners with a health safety and wellbeing reason). This location agnostic approach to recruitment has resulted in successful campaigns, which quite often result in multiple appointable candidates, strengthening our reserve list.

The Executive Management Team agreed to revise the multi-location offer to allow staff to attend their contractual workplace between 40-60% of their working week. Previously this was a 50/50 split. Following the pandemic and the changes to the OWOW offer, 65% of non-frontline staff eligible for OWOW have chosen a home-working contract, 25% multi-site, and 10% office-based.

**Fig. 29: OWOW contract choice split for all FSA staff**



**Fig. 30: Geographical distribution of all FSA staff (as at 31 March 2022)**



# Diversity and inclusion

At the FSA, we commit to being a workplace where staff feel that we can be ourselves and our unique contribution is recognised, respected and valued. More detail can be found in the FSA’s Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) report<sup>34</sup>.

## Objectives in 2021/22



Attract and retain a diverse workforce



Champion inclusivity across our leadership and management community



Develop and support staff networks in strengthening our diverse and inclusive culture

## Progress against objectives

Our Diversity Council reviews progress and our Diversity Networks have helped deliver our D&I achievements.



### Attract and retain a diverse workforce

**Progression** – Launched and completed cohort 1 of the FSA Accelerate programme, a 12-week targeted development programme for staff from underrepresented groups.

**Inclusive recruitment** – Established and trained a pool of 70+ diverse panel members and made a commitment that all recruitment panels would include at least one diverse panel member. We undertook a pilot to remove hiring managers from selection panels to reduce potential recruitment bias.

We commissioned an inclusive recruitment review to assess our recruitment processes, policies and practices and to make recommendations (due in June 2022).

Hosted interns through the Autism Exchange Internship Programme and Summer Diversity Internship Programme.

Our job vacancies are all listed on the diversity and inclusion platform [Vercida](https://www.vercida.com/uk)<sup>35</sup>.

**Representation** – Carried out a Diversity Data Matters campaign to increase declaration rates. Following the campaign, the declaration rate for all characteristics increased. Declaration rates for Sexual Orientation increased from 69% to 83%. We have added new diversity questions to our HR People System, covering socioeconomic background; carers; gender identity and disability categories.

<sup>34</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1018745/FSA\\_Diversity\\_Report\\_2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1018745/FSA_Diversity_Report_2020.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> [www.vercida.com/uk](https://www.vercida.com/uk)

### FSA workforce representation by protected characteristic (31 March 2022 compared to 31 March 2021)



Further detail including trend data and benchmarks on workforce proportion is provided in the Staff report on page 156.



### Champion inclusivity across our leadership and management community

**Reverse mentoring** – Established a successful reverse mentoring scheme, which resulted in 21 partnerships representing a range of protected characteristics.

**Training** – Introduced new Disability Inclusive Management training including a pilot of neurodiversity training for line managers.



### **Develop and support staff networks to strengthen and support our diverse and inclusive culture**

**Provide training on best practice** – We supported our Diversity Network Chairs through the Radius Employee Network Leadership Programme.

**Established several new networks** – Such as Age, Neurodiversity, Carers and Faith & Belief and Social Mobility.

**Benchmarks** – Recognised as a family friendly UK employer by work life balance charity ‘Working Families’ for the 2nd year running; listed in the top 15.

**Completed the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index** – Our first application, in which we achieved a bronze award, will allow us to benchmark our progress and form an action plan to take forward.

**Completed the Social Mobility Index** – our first application, ranking 90 out of 203 organisations.

**Completed the Disability Confidence Scheme Employer level** – and subsequently submitted the leader level submission.

**Completed the Disability Smart Audit** – and are currently working with Business Disability Forum to develop actions.

# Principal risks and uncertainties

The food system is evolving rapidly with developments such as: new technologies around food production; logistics; shifting consumer habits; and a massive growth in online sales. We are also establishing ourselves and evolving following EU Exit: we are taking on new responsibilities within the UK and seeking to continue to be influential on an international scale. These both mean that FSA has taken, and continues to take on, ownership of new risks.

## Delivering food you can trust

Keeping people safe and reducing/eliminating food risk is a fundamental purpose of the FSA. Doing this relies upon:

- the FSA understanding the complex food landscape and the risks that may arise
- having the scientific capability to make professional and timely risk assessments
- having the policy capability to provide appropriate risk management advice

**To deliver our mission ‘food you can trust’ whilst managing reducing resources and external uncertainty, we have an appetite to take considered risks and exploit opportunities and innovation. Our approach to innovate can differ depending on the nature of the risk, therefore, we align risks to themes which can be seen below:**



Food we can trust



Reputational/  
Credibility



Compliance/  
Legal regulation



Operational/  
Policy delivery



Financial/  
Value for money

The FSA works to protect public health and consumers' wider interests in relation to food. This means that risk considerations are always front of mind across the whole department. Our work protects people, reduces the economic burden of foodborne illness, and supports the UK economy and trade by ensuring that our food has a strong reputation for safety and authenticity both in the UK and abroad.

We set out our approach to managing risk as part of the FSA Governance Statement 2021/22 on page 121. FSA risks are **Identified, Assessed, Managed, Reviewed and Recorded** at the appropriate level across the FSA.

Risk management in the FSA is a continuous process, enabling us to make informed decisions and ensure we are operating within our agreed risk appetite. Alongside this, we review our strategic risks, quarterly (and monthly by exception), ensuring that the level of risk exposure is monitored closely in the changing environment we operate in.

### Our vision – four goals



Food is safe



Food what it says it is



Consumers can make informed choices about what to eat



Consumers have access to an affordable diet, now and in the future

### Direction of risk change



Increasing



Stable



Decreasing

Being able to identify, assess and act on a food risk to prevent harm to consumers



#### Context:

Leaving the EU means the FSA is now responsible for many of the combined risk analysis functions previously performed by the European Food Safety Authority and the European Commission. Have in place a risk analysis process to capture capabilities and process by which risk is identified, assessed and mitigated now that the FSA has increased responsibilities for many of the combined risk analysis functions since leaving the EU.

#### Mitigations:

- Evolving and reviewing our risk analysis process, to ensure we maintain a high standard of food safety and consumer protection and ensure regulatory effectiveness.
- Established a flexible, responsive, data-enabled science, evidence and surveillance approach to identify emerging risks before they become risks to public health.
- Delivering and implementing more robust and proactive planning, listening and horizon scanning, working with consumers and industry representatives to track their views.

<p>Maintaining public confidence and trust in the FSA, sustaining our ability to deliver our strategic objectives to protect consumers</p>		
<p><b>Context:</b></p> <p>People trust us because we use science and evidence to make decisions, and we are seen to be honest, open and inclusive. Maintaining this trust is central to us achieving our outcomes for consumers.</p>		
<p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We ensure we use science and evidence for decision making, and are seen to be open, honest, independent and inclusive.</li> <li>● Utilise structured and proactive stakeholder management to reduce the chance of any loss of trust resulting from public criticism.</li> <li>● Our ABC programme seeks innovation in regulatory reform and utilises opportunities to discuss and provide assurance to industry bodies.</li> <li>● We work with consumers and representatives from the food business industry to discover their views and opinions on what constitutes an excellent modern regulator.</li> </ul>		
<p>Maintaining informative and influential relationships across government and internationally to advance consumer protection</p>		
<p><b>Context:</b></p> <p>The FSA has had a new role to play in UK trade policy, both in discussions across Whitehall and in wider international fora. The FSA Board set out a clear set of principles to guide FSA officials' input to trade policy and trade negotiations in early 2020.</p>		
<p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review stakeholder plans and work with government departments to contribute to and influence thinking on key priorities.</li> <li>● Monitor international developments, providing early intelligence and analysis on issues which could have an impact on food safety risks for consumers.</li> <li>● Participate in established forums and have a seat in cross-Whitehall chaired meetings on various policy issues.</li> </ul>		

Being adequately resourced and support our people to deliver the FSA Strategy	   	
<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To maximise the benefits to consumers, the FSA has lent even greater importance to minimising both the costs of our own work and that which is delivered by others. Understanding our performance gives us the opportunity to see where we can improve and further achieve value for money over what we do.</li> <li>● As our approach becomes focused on delivering impact from our expertise and influencing others, we become increasingly dependent on the quality, skills, motivation and alignment of our people.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Our budget was agreed in the government-wide Spending Review 2021 and have set our Business Planning priorities for 2022/23.</li> <li>● We have developed our people plan and a strategy to create an environment in which our people are highly capable, effectively supported, and consistently choose to make outstanding contributions to protecting, informing and empowering consumers, to ensure that it reflects the requirements of the FSA post-EU Exit and our strategy.</li> <li>● Implemented measures to reduce recruitment time and address gaps while we fill permanent vacancies.</li> <li>● Planned the FSA's estates strategy and to further build on our digital infrastructure.</li> <li>● We have refreshed and enhanced our flexible working offer to widen FSA's access to talent and support the government's Places for Growth Agenda.</li> </ul>		

Working effectively and cohesively across multiple UK nations and administrations to ensure consumers are well protected despite potential divergence between systems



### Context:

Now the UK is outside the EU's harmonised system, divergence can occur between the regulatory systems of different UK nations. The FSA needs to have strong, collaborative working processes across the UK to help anticipate and respond appropriately to cases of divergence.

### Mitigations:

- We work with UK regulatory partners, Wales and Northern Ireland governments and with Food Standards Scotland and the Scottish government to ensure that the UK regulatory regime continues to provide strong protection for consumers.
- The FSA is involved in three cross-government UK Frameworks, provisionally agreed in 2021, that commit to joint ways of working and seeking consensus on changes across the UK, while recognising that businesses trading across the UK require consistency and that consumers require consistent levels of protection.
- The FSA continues to maintain effective engagement with UK Ministers to widen understanding, expectations and cocreate requirements. A regular review process is in place to provide opportunity for four-nation consideration of any required changes to ways of working.

<p>Being able to provide an adequate response to a major food incident</p>		
<p><b>Context:</b></p> <p>We must put in place effective contingency and resilience arrangements to manage major food safety incidents to ensure our ability to minimise consumer detriment and maintain consumer confidence in the food sector</p>		
<p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The FSA has well-established contingency and resilience arrangements to respond to a major food safety incident. We adopt a comprehensive approach to strengthening our resilience and emergency preparedness to cover all aspects of our incident response arrangements and continue to enhance our capabilities and capacity to manage a major food incident.</li> <li>● Learning is reflected in our updated incident management plan; the continual improvements to our accompanying standard operating procedures and is used to inform our annual exercise and training programme that supports the continual improvement of our incident response capacity, capability, and organisational resilience.</li> <li>● Involved in multi-agency exercises that provide an opportunity to emphasise the role of the FSA to those involved, as well as share best practice.</li> <li>● The impact of this approach is measured through our increased capability and capacity to invoke our incident response and emergency protocols efficiently; deliver a proportionate response to a food incident; and enable the organisation to return to our normal operations as quickly as possible.</li> </ul>		

Supporting Local and Port Authorities in delivering against legislative requirements		
<p><b>Context:</b></p> <p>Through our regulatory role, the FSA interacts with those producing and selling food to make sure consumer interests are protected, local authorities are responsible for delivering food official controls. We need to ensure we are as effective a regulator as possible and that the local authorities are able to carry out the required activity.</p>		
<p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Through the ABC Programme, we aspire to focus more on outcomes, collaborate with local authorities and industry to ensure food regulation is data driven, and that resources are targeted at the areas of highest risk.</li> <li>● Reviewed and revised processes for supporting local authority delivery and performance against FSA expectations.</li> <li>● Increased the capacity and capability of the Imports Delivery Team to enable an increase in support to the port health community.</li> <li>● Implemented a recovery roadmap to help local authorities navigate and recover from the exceptional circumstances posed by COVID-19.</li> </ul>		
Managing our delivery partners to support the FSA in delivering Official Controls		
<p><b>Context:</b></p> <p>The FSA's approach to direct delivery of regulatory controls involves a split between FSA-employed people and contractors via a Service Delivery Partner (SDP).</p>		
<p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Through contract management arrangements, the FSA needs to continually monitor the capacity and capability of the SDP to undertake their contractual arrangements and use Key Performance Indicators to identify non-compliances and service failures (for which there are financial penalties).</li> <li>● The Operational Transformation Programme has been developed to support the FSA in evolving the food regulatory system, while keeping consumer trust and safety at the heart of everything we do.</li> <li>● Implemented and continue to monitor the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons policy decision to allow temporary registration of vets.</li> </ul>		

# Performance Analysis

## Enforcement action in approved meat establishments (England, Wales)

In accordance with the requirements of the Food Standards Act 1999, we report each year on enforcement action taken by the FSA in meat establishments that require veterinary control (slaughterhouses, cutting plants and game handling establishments). Statutory notices may be served for failures in hygiene, unsatisfactory structural matters, to stop the use of particular types of equipment, to impose conditions on the meat production process, to close down the operation completely, or to stop a particular practice that contravenes the hygiene provisions of the legislation. Statutory notices must accurately reflect the non-compliance, refer correctly to the relevant legislation, and be clearly legible and unambiguous, to be legally valid.

### England and Wales: formal and informal enforcement action taken during 2021/22

Formal action	Number of notices 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022	Number of notices 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
<b>Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice</b> , served under the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006, giving a food business operator a day's notice of the intention to apply to a court for the granting of a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order which would result in an immediate cessation of business	0	0
<b>Hygiene Improvement Notice</b> served under the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006	32	50
<b>Remedial Action Notice</b> served under the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006	42	107
Informal action	Number of notices 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022	Number of notices 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
Written advice	1,417	1,277

## Northern Ireland: formal and informal enforcement action taken in approved meat establishments during 2021/22

The level of NI enforcement action was lower than in England and Wales. This is partly because the number of FSA meat approved establishments in NI is relatively low at 55. Of these, only 19 (slaughterhouses and game handling establishments) required constant veterinary presence during operations. Most of the slaughterhouses are very large, high throughput establishments driven by export markets, where requirements tend to be even higher than EU compliance. In terms of audit outcomes, NI has recorded no 'Improvement Necessary' or 'Urgent Improvement Necessary' from Q1 2019/20 onwards (see Fig. 13). The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is responsible for the meat operations delivery on behalf of the FSA in NI. We monitor performance of DAERA as part of the service-level agreement, and there is a system of verification visits in place where levels of enforcement at the establishment are assessed against the observations made on the day; there have been no concerns in relation to this.

Formal action	Number of notices 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022	Number of notices 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
<b>Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice</b> , served under the Food Hygiene Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006, giving a food business operator a day's notice of the intention to apply to a court for the granting of a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order which would result in an immediate cessation of business	0	0
<b>Hygiene Improvement Notice</b> served under the Food Hygiene Regulations (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2006	0	0
<b>Remedial Action Notice</b> served under the Food Hygiene Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006	1	0
Informal action	Number of notices 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022	Number of notices 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
Written advice	28	11

## Prosecutions

Following an investigation referral and full criminal investigation, prosecutions of offences committed at approved premises can be taken by the relevant enforcement authority.

In England and Wales, prosecutions for food hygiene breaches are taken by the FSA. Cases in relation to alleged breaches of animal welfare, animal by-products and some transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) requirements are prosecuted by the Crown Prosecution Service (acting on behalf of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) or the Welsh Government. In 2021/22, the FSA Legal Investigation Branch accepted 37 referrals from Operations Directorate for investigation with a view to prosecution. The outcome of these investigations are subject to evidential and public interest tests.

The timescales for prosecutions mean that it is rare for a case to progress from referral to a final court hearing within the same reporting year. Therefore, many of the cases referred for investigation in 2021/22 have yet to be concluded.

During 2021/22, 11 cases investigated by the FSA were concluded at court with convictions secured against 14 defendants. A further 8 cases are currently being prosecuted.

There were 36 recorded investigation referrals in England and Wales during 2020/21.

The outcomes or status of those referrals are as follows:

Outcomes/current status	Number of referrals
Convictions	7
Warning letters issued	4
Ongoing prosecutions in Court	4
Acquittals	0
Withdrawn prosecutions	1
No prosecution taken	20

## Complaints including those made to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The FSA will always seek to address and learn from any issues identified through its Complaints Policy. We aim to resolve all complaints quickly and as close as possible to the point of delivery. For this reason, complaints are normally handled at the 'local' level in the first instance. Where the complainant is dissatisfied with how the FSA has responded to their complaint, they can escalate the matter through to the 'central' level of our process. This level effectively offers two stages of 'appeal' firstly through the office of the Complaints Coordinator and secondly, through the office of the Chief Executive. Although there may be occasions when it is necessary for a complaint to commence at the 'central' level of the process.

Launched in April 2019, details of our Complaints Policy can be found online: [www.food.gov.uk/contactconsumersfeedback/complaints-and-comments-about-the-fsa](http://www.food.gov.uk/contactconsumersfeedback/complaints-and-comments-about-the-fsa)

Where a complainant remains dissatisfied having exhausted the FSA's process, at both the 'local' and 'central' levels, they can refer their case to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO). Further details about the PHSO are available online: [www.ombudsman.org.uk/](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/)

During the calendar year 2021:

- 10 cases were responded to at the 'local' level. 5 cases were not upheld, 3 were partially upheld and 2 were upheld in full.
- 1 case was responded to at the 'central' level of our process through the office of the Complaints Co-ordinator, where it was partially upheld.
- 1 case was escalated to the office of the Chief Executive and this was partially upheld.
- 0 cases were referred to the PHSO.

This compares to 2 complaints progressed beyond the level of a local response, to the Complaints Co-Ordinator, during 2020. Of these:

- 1 case was not upheld.
- 1 was partially upheld.

One further case, which initially commenced in 2019, was referred to the PHSO in 2020 and was partially upheld.

## Budgeting framework

The Department of Finance (DoF) is responsible for management of the NI Executive Budget process in line with a budgetary framework set by Treasury.

The total amount a department spends is referred to as the Total Managed Expenditure (TME); which is split into:

- Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)
- Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL)

Treasury, and in turn DoF, do not set firm AME budgets. They are volatile or demand-led in a way that departments cannot control. The Department monitors AME forecasts closely and this facilitates reporting to DoF, who in turn report to Treasury.

As DEL budgets are understood and controllable, Treasury sets firm limits for DEL budgets for Whitehall departments and Devolved Administrations at each Spending Review. The NI Executive, based on advice from the Finance Minister, will in turn agree a local Budget that will set DEL controls for Executive departments.

DEL budgets are classified into resource and capital.

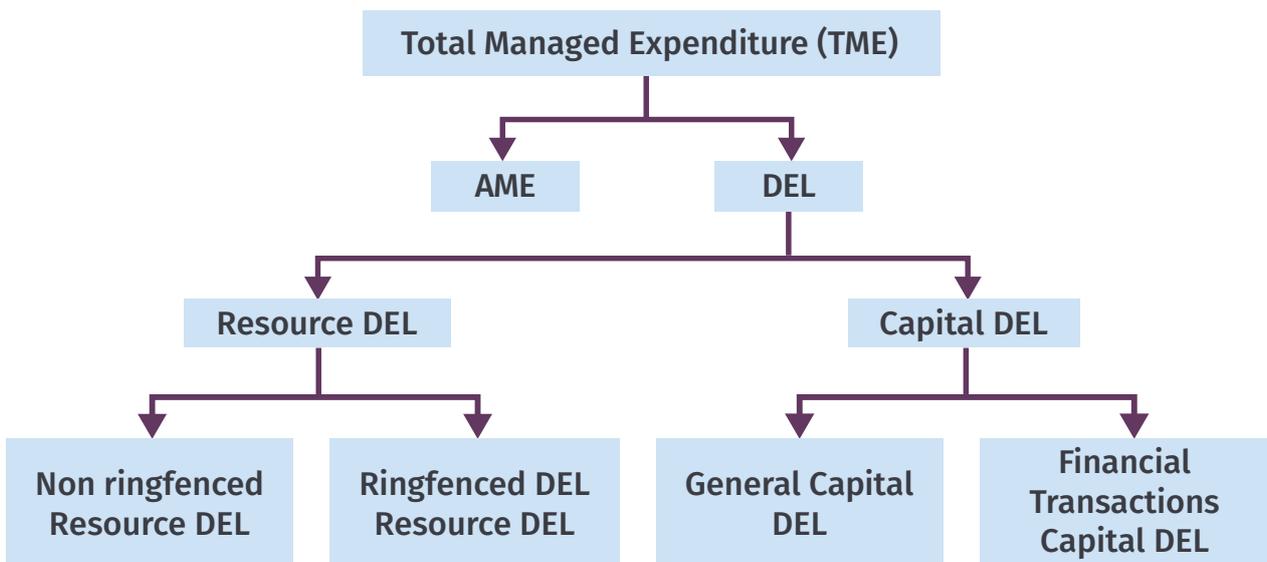
- Resource budgets are further split into non-ringfenced resource that pays for programme delivery and departmental running costs, and separately ringfenced resource that covers non-cash charges for depreciation and impairment of assets.
- Capital DEL is split into ‘financial transactions’ for loans given or shares purchased and ‘general capital’ for spending on all other assets or investments.

Further detail on the Budgeting Framework can be found in the Consolidated Budgeting Guidance published by Treasury.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/consolidated-budgeting-guidance-2021-to-2022](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consolidated-budgeting-guidance-2021-to-2022)

The information contained within budgetary controls does not currently read directly to financial information presented in Financial Statements due to a number of misalignments. It is intended that the Executive’s Review of Financial Process (RoFP) will help address these differences and improve transparency. RoFP is due to be implemented in 2022-23. Further information on the Executive’s Review of Financial Process can be found on the Northern Ireland Assembly website.

## Budget structure



## Budgetary performance

Details of the Department's performance against Budgetary Control totals is set out in the table below.

	Final Plan 2021/22 £000	Outturn 2021/22 £000	Underspend / (Overspend) £000
<b>Resource DEL</b>	13,365	12,603	762
<i>including</i>			
<i>Non-ringfenced</i>	13,310	12,554	756
<i>Ringfenced D/I</i>	55	49	6
<b>Capital DEL</b>	50	7	43
<i>including</i>			
<i>General Capital</i>	50	7	43
<i>FTC</i>	–	–	–
<b>Total DEL</b>	13,415	12,610	805
<b>AME</b>	300	-14	314
<i>including</i>			
<i>AME Resource</i>	300	-14	314
<i>AME Capital</i>	–	–	–
<b>Total Managed Expenditure</b>	13,715	12,596	1,119

## Explanation of variances

The Resource DEL underspend was mainly due to expenditure on EU Exit, meat hygiene inspections and staff costs being less than expected. The COVID-19 pandemic and uncertainties on the operationalisation of the Northern Ireland Protocol were major factors contributing to the underspend.

The FSA in NI carries £300,000 AME budget cover (this is non-cash) in the event of default on payments.

## Reconciliation of Resource Expenditure between Estimates, Accounts and Budgets

	£000
<b>Net Resource Requirement (Estimates)</b>	<b>12,603</b>
<i>Adjustments to include:</i>	
Non-voted expenditure in the SoCNE	–
Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts in the SoCNE	–
<i>Other adjustments (please state meaningful descriptions)</i>	
<b>Net Operating Expenditure (Accounts)</b>	<b>12,603</b>
<i>Adjustments to remove:</i>	
Voted resource expenditure outside the budget	-14
Capital grants and community asset transfers	–
Research and Development (R&D) expenditure	–
Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts (CFERs) outside the budget	–
<i>Adjustments to include:</i>	
Other Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts	–
Resource consumption of NDPBs or other bodies	–
<i>Other adjustments (please state meaningful descriptions)</i>	
<b>Resource Budget (Budget)</b>	<b>12,589</b>
<i>of which:</i>	
Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL)	12,603
Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)	-14

## Climate change adaptation

We have made considerable progress towards improving our understanding of climate change, how it will impact on the UK food system and how it will impact our daily operations as a government department with a strong commitment to sustainability and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Our Climate & Environment Action Group (CEAG, an internal staff network) has now formulated and successfully published an environmental sustainability strategy as a public-facing document. This important document educates staff about our

environmental goals and sets out our action plan for achieving these goals. It also defines our commitment to sustainability and the protection of the environment to the public that we serve.

In November 2021, we were also successful in achieving ISO 14001 (Environmental Management) certification, being one of the first Civil Service organisations to do so. This internationally recognised accreditation provides a structural system for the FSA to analyse and improve its environmental protocols in a practical way. The FSA Procurement team has begun to integrate social responsibility protocols in its decision making, which include significant sustainability parameters to be considered when making procurement decisions.

We have placed greater emphasis on our working practices, promoting hybrid working methods which use a blend of virtual and on-site capabilities. We have given our staff the opportunity to work from home where possible, and many new entrants to our organisation are given a choice between on site, multi-site or home working as their substantial place of work. This contributes strongly to a reduction in utilities use in our estate and a reduction of carbon emissions required for commuting or official travel.

At the request of the CEAG, the FSA executive management team has also approved the creation of a full time Sustainability lead within the organisation to help maintain and improve our environmental approach in the long term. Further to this, we are conducting a communications campaign to raise staff awareness of the importance of environmental mindfulness in our everyday work.

## Sustainability reporting

The effects of climate change will be globally devastating without genuine commitment from governments, organisations, and individuals to act. The FSA have identified areas where we believe we can make a difference and advance the green agenda by taking actions to improve our environmental sustainability through our policies and business practices, and where we can seek to influence our stakeholders and partners to do the same.

We have increased our focus on sustainability in the reporting year with the development of a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy<sup>36</sup> which was published in January 2022. The strategy outlines how we will support the government's green agenda, delivering against the Greening Government Commitments for 2021-25, with details of how we will achieve, measure and report against these targets. The strategy focuses on:

- reducing our carbon footprint
- conserving natural resources
- prioritising sustainable procurement
- enhancing awareness of green initiatives

<sup>36</sup> [www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-environmental-sustainability-strategy](http://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-environmental-sustainability-strategy)

Additionally, we are ISO 14001 (Environmental Management) certified, which will enable us to effectively monitor how we manage our estate and mitigate negative environmental factors using a robust reporting framework. This holds the FSA to an internationally recognised high standard, as the accreditation is externally audited by a UKAS-approved certification body.

**Greenhouse gas emissions – Scope 2 (indirect)<sup>37</sup>**

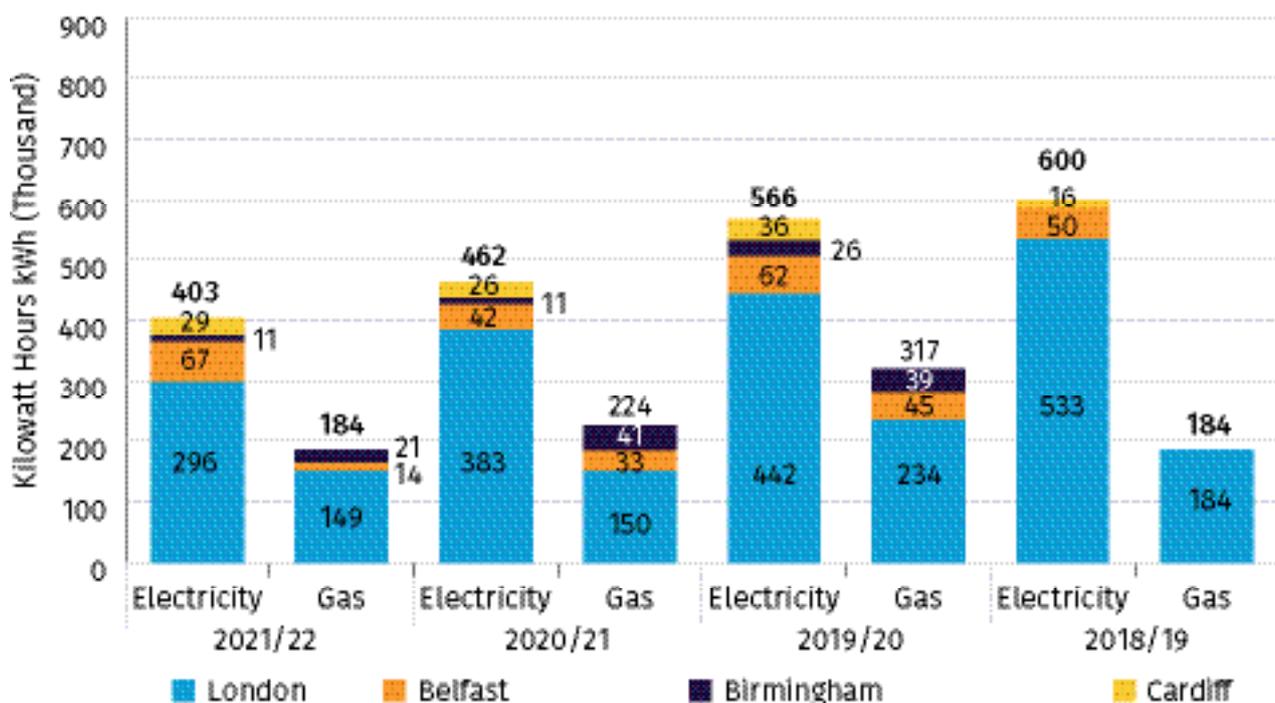
We have learnt the lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic and continued to encourage a switch to remote working for all our office-based staff. This has driven a positive impact on our carbon emissions due to reduced travel.

There has, however, been less of a reduction in energy consumption in our offices, as our energy consumption and the associated carbon emissions are calculated pro rata using the total building consumption emission and the FSA percentage area occupied. This has led to minimal reductions, particularly where other tenants have continued to operate out of those premises. We are currently exploring options to reduce our emissions, including closer working with the landlords, or possibly the installation of meters on the floors we occupy to help provide greater control over our consumption and increase the accuracy of our emissions data.

We are working with our landlords and co-tenants, seeking to switch our energy tariffs to greener energy. We will continue engaging with our government landlords via sustainability forums to explore value for money measures that we can introduce across our estate.

We will be appointing a new Environmental Sustainability Manager who will be a central point of contact, to lead and develop our work in this space.

**Fig. 31: Energy consumption across our estate**



<sup>37</sup> Data relates to FSA London, Birmingham, Wales and Northern Ireland only. Data for office in York is accounted for by Defra.

### Greenhouse gas emissions – Scope 3 (indirect)<sup>38</sup>

As we adapt post-pandemic, we plan to seize the opportunity to embed environmental sustainability into the way we think and work.

We have reviewed our workplace strategy and how this can support a reduction in our carbon footprint. We are maximising our flexible working offer to office-based staff, supported by our suite of digital collaboration tools, and keeping travel to a minimum. This includes a move away from issuing office-based contracts which will help us to shrink our office footprint and help reduce energy consumption.

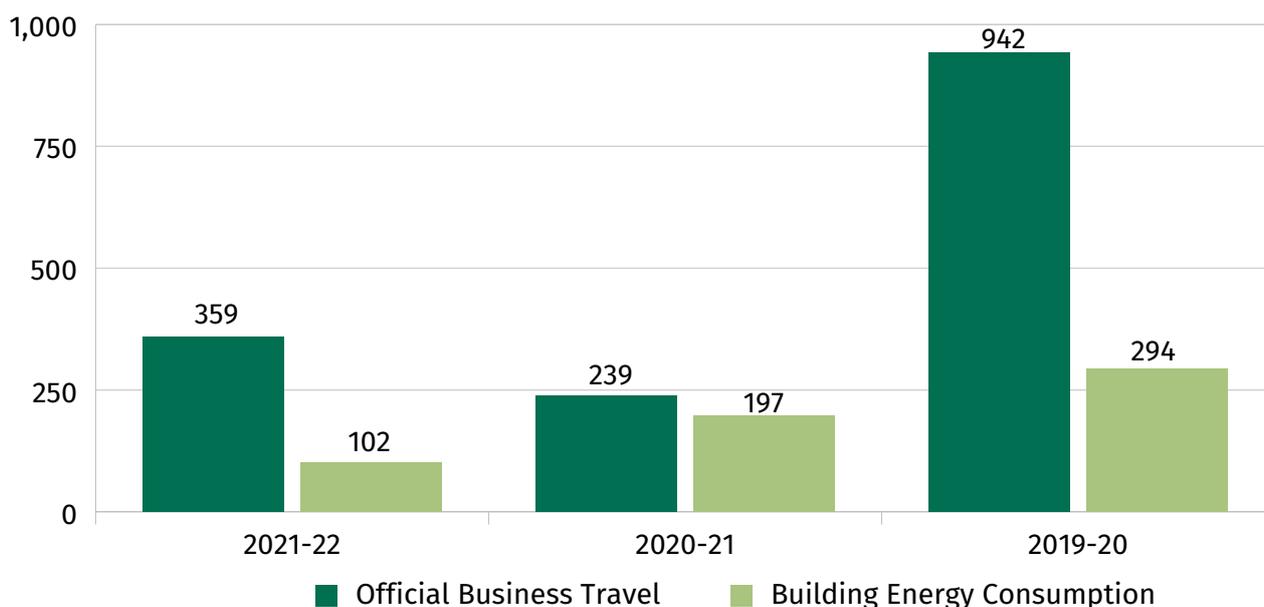
Road travel will still be required due to the critical business need for field-based staff to deliver front line services, with staff needing to travel to sites in remote rural areas. We have successfully negotiated with its suppliers to reduce road CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by transitioning its fleet of lease cars to a combination of ultra-low emission and electric vehicles only. All new lease cars are ULEV or electric by default.

To further strengthen this, we are encouraging travel by public transport wherever possible, and continuing to support hybrid working so that our staff have a choice as to whether they need to travel or not.

Although there was a small rise in overall carbon emissions (6%), we saw a significant reduction in energy consumption in our estate (48%) which provided counterbalance for our increase in business travel emissions (50%).

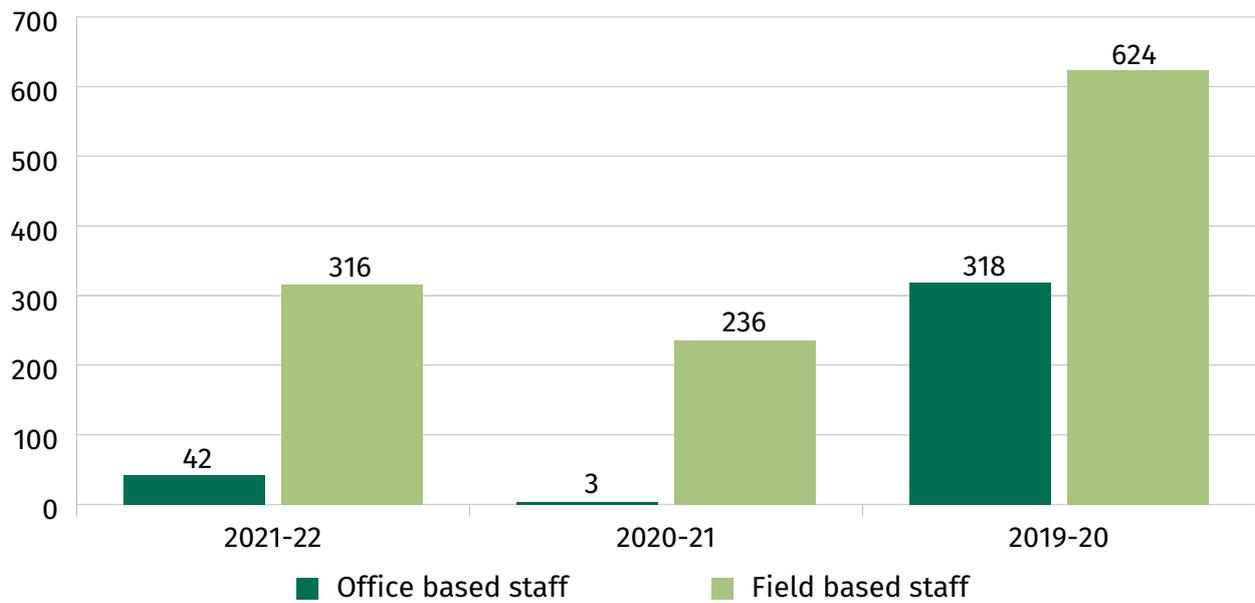
Our emissions have risen for field-based staff to meet critical business needs, but we remain steadfast in encouraging hybrid methods of working for field-based staff where possible to keep these emissions to a minimum. The fact that the figures have not returned to pre-pandemic levels confirms that the changes to hybrid working methods are having a positive impact.

**Fig. 32: Total CO<sub>2</sub>e tonnes by travel and total building consumption**



<sup>38</sup> UK-wide data.

**Fig. 33: Breakdown of CO<sub>2</sub>e tonnes by travel**

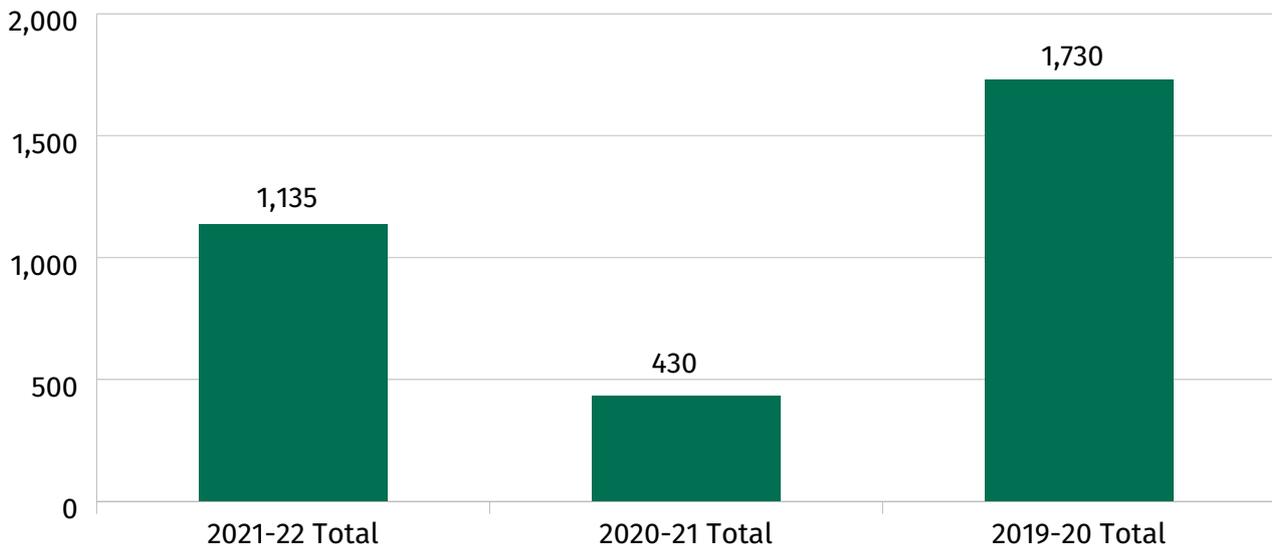


**Finite resource consumption**

**Water consumption (m<sup>3</sup>)<sup>39</sup>**

Total water consumption has unfortunately increased as our staff have returned to offices following the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns. The FSA is aware of this issue and will be looking to raise awareness among our office-based staff to mitigate future rises and encourage responsible water consumption in our premises.

**Fig. 34: Water Units (m<sup>3</sup>)**



<sup>39</sup> Due to an issue with the water usage figures provided by the Landlord for Clive House, the 2021/22 figures included above are an estimate based on the 2021/22 charges.

## Waste minimisation and management

### Waste (Tonnes)

Total waste consumption has further decreased in this reporting year by 33%. An additional significant result is that we have not sent any waste to landfill for two years. We have also proudly participated in a charity project which enabled our obsolete ICT equipment to be recycled and repurposed for charity, helping with the education of children without access to ICT. This has effectively wiped out the emissions caused by ICT waste for this accounting year.

Through a government forum, we were introduced to an organisation providing a national register of charities and data wiping services for equipment. This enabled us to pilot a transformation programme to upgrade and recycle our devices and provide social value.

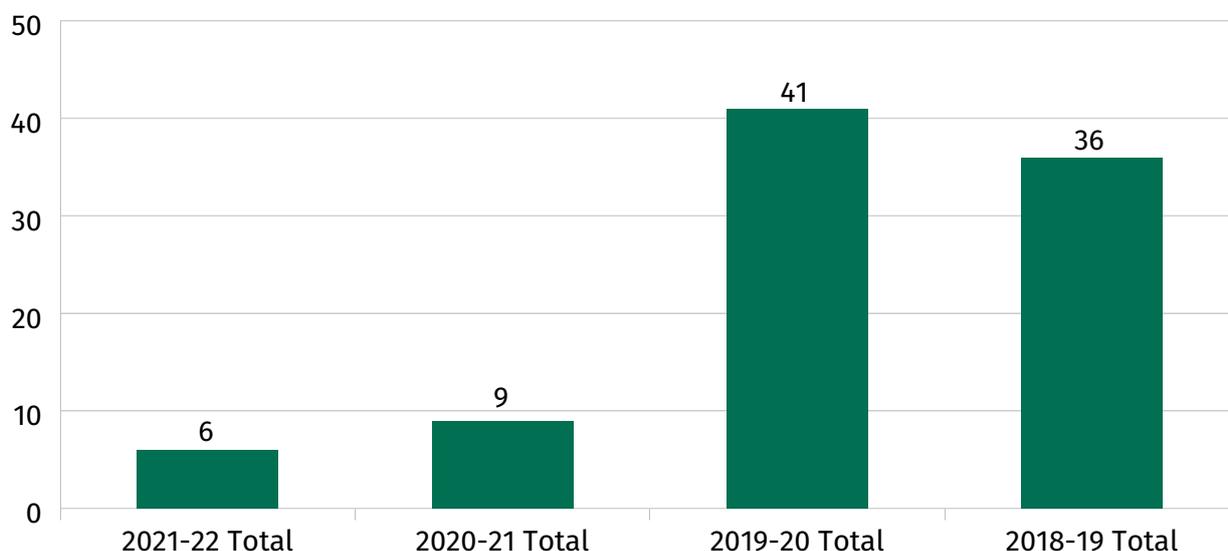
Working with HM Treasury, we successfully negotiated to gain approval to proceed. We awarded via the national register to 16 charities selected based near our 5 office locations. Collections of ICT equipment were arranged from home addresses.

Having become a pioneering government department, this has generated a great deal of interest from other departments. We are now embarking on a further collaboration Pilot with the Crown Commercial Service to request information from suppliers on the framework to enable a fair and open competed 3-year contract. This project to recycle our ICT has made a huge contribution to the FSA's social value and sustainability strategy by helping people in need and have saved 75 tonnes in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. We are also working to obtain waste reports from our ICT supplier.

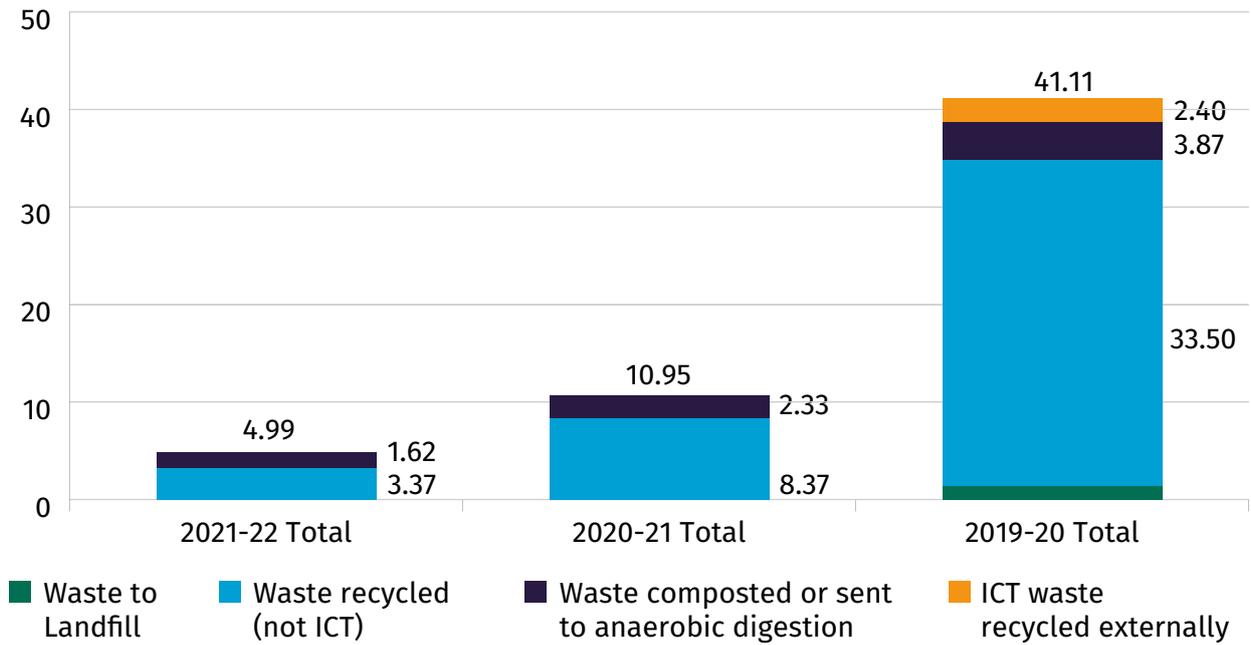
Our Climate and Environment Action Group (CEAG) continues to work on a dedicated workstream for waste and recycling and at how we can improve our existing processes which are already effective.

We are working with our government landlords to reduce the overall amount of waste generated.

**Fig. 35: Waste (tonnes)**



**Fig. 36: Waste Recycled and Landfill (tonnes)**

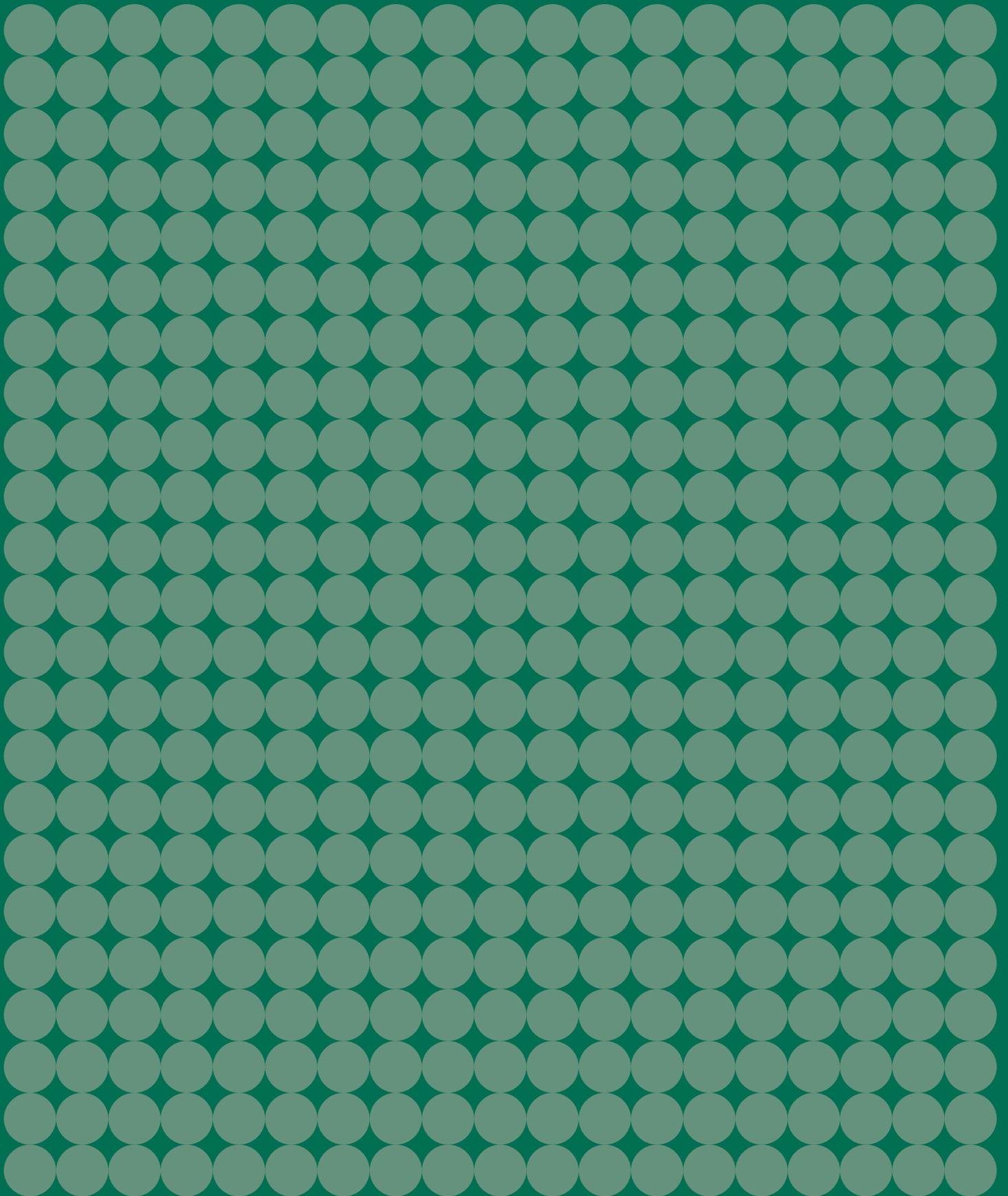


*Emily Miles*

**Emily Miles**

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer  
9 January 2023

# Accountability report



## Directors' report

The requirements of the accountability report are based on the matters required to be dealt within a Directors' Report, as set out in Chapter 5 of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and Schedule 7 of SI 2008 No 410, and in a Remuneration Report, as set out in Chapter 6 of the Companies Act 2006 and SI 2013 No. 1981.

The FSA is a non-Ministerial Government Department. Staff are accountable through a Chief Executive to the Board, rather than directly to ministers. The Board consists of a Chair, Deputy Chair and up to 12 members. The Chair and Deputy Chair are appointed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care in agreement with health ministers in Wales and Northern Ireland. The Board is mainly appointed by the Secretary of State for Health, with one member appointed by the Welsh Health Minister and one by the Northern Ireland Health Minister.

The Board is responsible for the overall strategic direction of the FSA, ensuring that it fulfils its legal obligations so that its decisions or actions take proper account of scientific advice, the interests of consumers and other relevant factors. Day-to-day management of the FSA is delegated to officials through the Chief Executive. In addition to the FSA Board, the FSA has advisory committees, chaired by Board members, in Wales and Northern Ireland. The role of the committee in each country is to advise the Board. The Board is required by statute to take account of their advice in its work.

### Details of the Board and Directors

#### The FSA Board

During the year, the membership of the non-executive FSA Board was:

Member name	Member name
Professor Susan Jebb OBE, PhD, FRCP (Hon), FMedSci (Chair)	FSA Chair from July 2021
Dr Ruth Hussey CB OBE	Interim Chair from February 2021 until June 2021 Deputy Chair from July 2020
Peter Price	Chair of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee from September 2020
Colm McKenna	Chair of the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee (reappointed September 2020)
Margaret Gilmore	Board member
Mark Rolfe	Board member
Timothy Riley	Board member
Fiona Gately	Board member from June 2021
Lord Blencathra	Board member from June 2021

## Executive Management Team

During the year, the membership of the Executive Management Team was:

Member name	Member name
Emily Miles	Chief Executive
Steven Pollock	Acting Director of Strategy, Legal & Governance from January 2021 until July 2021
Professor Robin May	Chief Scientific Adviser
Dr Colin Sullivan	Chief Operating Officer until December 2021
Simon Tunnicliffe	Interim Director of Operations from December 2021 until March 2022
Chris Hitchen	Director of Finance and Performance until July 2021
Julie Pierce	Director of Openness, Data, Digital and Wales
Maria Jennings	Director of Regulation, Compliance, People and Northern Ireland
Rebecca Sudworth	Director of Policy
Craig Thomas	Interim Director of Finance and Performance from August 2021 until October 2021
Pam Beadman	Director of Finance and Performance from September 2021
Katie Pettifer	Director of Strategy, Legal, Governance and Communications from July 2021

All senior officials have been appointed under the rules laid down by the Civil Service Commissioners. Salary and pension details of the Board and the EMT are disclosed in the Remuneration Report.

### FSA advisory committees

During the year, the membership of the food advisory committees was:

Northern Ireland member	Position
Colm McKenna	Chair
Fiona Hanna	
Lorraine Crawford	
Cathal McDonnell	
Ellen Finlay	
Greg Irwin	
Dr Lynne McMullan	
Ciaran McCartan	

Wales member	Position
Peter Price	Chair
Alan Gardner	
Dr Philip Hollington	
Georgia Taylor	
Christopher Brereton OBE	
Helen Taylor	
Jessica Williams	
Dr John Williams	

### Audit and risk assurance committee

Membership of the FSA Audit and Risk Assurance Committee:

Non-executive members	Position
Colm McKenna	Chair
Dr Ruth Hussey CB OBE	
Timothy Riley	
Margaret Gilmore	
Peter Price	

# Management commentary

## Preparation of accounts

The Consolidated Resource Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the direction given by HM Treasury. They are presented to the House of Commons pursuant to Section 6(4) of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000. The costs of FSA offices in Wales and Northern Ireland are funded through the relevant devolved authority.

## Supplier payment policy

It is FSA policy to pay all invoices not in dispute within five days of receipt. During 2021/22, 85% of all invoices were paid within this target. The policy is to remain the same for 2022/23, and we aim to improve the results.

## Financial instruments

The FSA has no borrowings. It relies primarily on departmental grants for its cash requirements, and is therefore not exposed to liquidity risks. It also has no material deposits. All material assets and liabilities are in sterling, so the FSA is not exposed to significant interest rate risk or currency risk.

## Going concern

The FSA has significant net liabilities relating to the pension liabilities of staff who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The accounts, however, are prepared on a going concern basis since, as a government department, all liabilities will be met by future funding from Parliament.

## Pensions

FSA employees are civil servants. Most are members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) and Civil Servant and Other Pension Scheme (CSOPS). These are central government unfunded pension schemes. Pension payments are made through the resource account. Board members are not civil servants therefore they are not members of these schemes. However, some previously had similar pension arrangements independent of them.

Some employees are members of the LGPS. This is a defined benefit scheme governed by the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1995. It is administered by the London Pension Fund Authority (LPFA), whose financial statements are prepared for the whole LGPS.

## Disclosure of Board members' interests

Board members are appointed to act collectively in the public interest, not to represent specific sectors. Provisions for declaration of interests and withdrawal from meetings are intended to prevent the Chair, Deputy Chair, and members being influenced or appearing to be influenced, by their private interests in the exercise of their collective public duties. All personal or business interests which may, or in the judgement of the member may, be perceived by a reasonable member of the public to influence their judgement, should be

declared. Such interests include, but are not limited to, involvement in the agriculture, food, and related industries. The Code of Conduct for Board members includes a guide to the categories of interest that must be declared. Details of Board members, their register of interests, and the Code of Conduct are on our website: [www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-board-meetings](http://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/fsa-board-meetings)

## Auditors

The accounts have been audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General in accordance with Schedule 4 of the Food Standards Act 1999. The audit fee for all the FSA's accounts for the year was £97,000 (2020/21 £96,000). I have taken all necessary steps to make myself aware of relevant audit information and to ensure that information is made available to the auditors. No payments have been paid to the Comptroller and Auditor General for non-audit work in 2020/21 (2019/20 £nil).

## Important events which have occurred since the end of the financial year

No events have occurred since the end of the financial year.

## Departmental core tables – Westminster only

This information can be found on our website: [www.food.gov.uk/about-us/reports-and-accounts](http://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/reports-and-accounts)

## Performance in correspondence with public and MPs including Parliamentary Questions

The FSA does not centrally record all incoming and outgoing correspondence and contact with members of the public. Contact details for FSA business areas are available on the FSA website for members of the public and food businesses to contact directly. During 2021/22, the FSA's general enquiries helpline handled 5,542 emails and 5,347 phone calls from members of the public (in 2020/21, 7,279 emails and 3,550 phone calls were handled).

Additionally, FSA Private Office managed 127 items of correspondence, including items sent by members of the public to members of Parliament, the FSA Chair, FSA Chief Executive or other, replying to 97% within target (in 2020/21, 134 items of correspondence were managed and 97% were replied to within target).

The FSA also drafted answers for 15 Parliamentary Questions, returning 80% on time to the Department of Health and Social Care to answer via their ministers.

## Better regulation

Better regulation is an integral to our regulatory approach and we apply the principles of good regulation to all our regulatory activities. The FSA strives to take a clear, proportionate and risk-based regulatory approach to protecting public health. Excessive or unclear regulations place unnecessary burdens on business and hinder the intended regulatory benefits to consumers and business.

We support the government's Better Regulation agenda and the ambitions of the Industrial Strategy, including on innovation, where we strive to identify and remove unnecessary barriers to new technology and support industry advancements in the

interest of consumers. All new regulations are subject to post-implementation reviews to ensure the objectives are being met and the regulations remain necessary.

### **Business Impact Target (BIT) reporting**

The FSA introduced no qualifying regulatory provisions under the BIT in the last Parliament. In line with our statutory reporting requirements the FSA published details of its regulatory activities in December 2021, as well as contributing to the Government's End of Parliament BIT Report. Details of the FSA BIT reporting are published on our website at [www.food.gov.uk/about-us/regulatory-approach#business-impact-target-reporting](http://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/regulatory-approach#business-impact-target-reporting)

# Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities

Under the Food Standards Act 1999, the Department of Finance has directed the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to prepare, for each financial year, resource accounts detailing the resources acquired, held or disposed of during the year and the use of resources by the department during the year. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the FSA and of its net resource outturn, resources applied to objectives, changes in taxpayers' equity and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

1. observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Department of Finance, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
2. make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
3. state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts; and
4. prepare the accounts on a going concern basis.

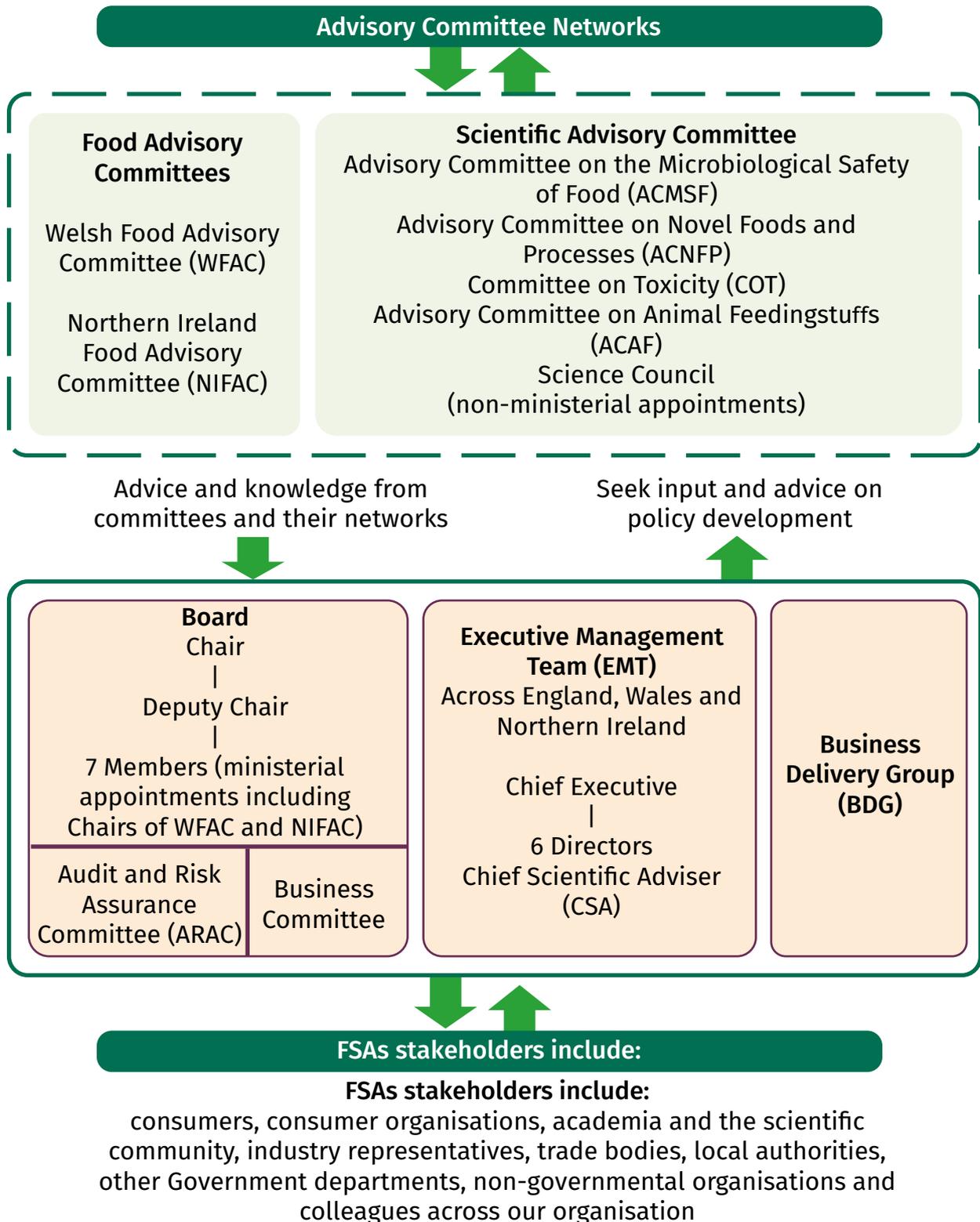
HM Treasury has appointed the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer of the FSA. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records, and for safeguarding the FSA's assets, are set out in *Managing Public Money* published by the HM Treasury.

The Accounting Officer is required to confirm that, as far as she is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the entity's auditors are unaware, and the Accounting Officer has taken all the steps that she ought to have taken to make herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the entity's auditors are aware of that information.

The Accounting Officer is required to confirm that the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and that she has personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgments required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

# FSA Governance Statement

## Governance structure



1. As an independent, non-Ministerial Government Department, the FSA has a statutory obligation to protect public health and consumers' wider interests in relation to food. The FSA consists of a non-Executive Board which complies with the relevant requirements of the Corporate Governance Code for central Government Departments. In line with the FSA's culture of openness, the Board holds its decision-making meetings in public, and they are broadcast live via the FSA's website. The agendas and minutes of Board and Business Committee meetings are also published on the FSA website, where recordings of all meetings are also accessible.
2. Board members including the Chair and Deputy Chair are appointed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with Devolved Administration approval. One Board member is appointed by Welsh Ministers, and one Board member by Northern Ireland Ministers.
3. The Board has two Committees: The Business Committee comprises the full Board and members of the Executive, and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) comprises a smaller number of Board members.
4. Board members review the impact and outcome measures set for the FSA strategic priorities, to track delivery of the annual business plan through the quarterly Performance and Resources Report to the Business Committee.
5. The Board takes advice from Food Advisory Committees (FACs) in each of the Devolved Administrations. The Chairs of these Committees report formally to each Board meeting on issues considered.
6. The Chair of ARAC provides the FSA Board with a written report following each Committee meeting and reports formally in writing annually.
7. As Accounting Officer, I attend all Board and Business Committee meetings, and I am invited to attend all ARAC meetings. Ruth Hussey was appointed Interim Chair of the FSA Board as of 1 February 2021. With the appointment of Professor Susan Jebb as FSA Chair as of 1 July 2021 for three years, Ruth returned to her substantive role as FSA Deputy Chair and re-joined the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.
8. Fiona Gately and Lord Blencathra were appointed members of the FSA Board as of 1 June 2021 for three years.

### **FSA Board performance and effectiveness review**

9. Every year, the FSA Board reviews the effectiveness of the Board. In November 2021 consultant Jo Clift Consulting Ltd was appointed through a competitive and open tender process to undertake a formal external Effectiveness Review of the Board. The Review was concluded by the end of May 2022 and the Report published thereafter.
10. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, in line with Government advice on working from home, arrangements for Board meetings were adapted to ensure the continuing effectiveness of the Board. Our commitment to openness and transparency was maintained by live streaming the Board and Business Committee meetings which were conducted online in June 2021 and as hybrid meetings in

September and December 2021 and March 2022. Questions from the public continued to be welcomed, addressed during meetings and written replies published on our website.

11. During its annual discussion of Governance in September 2021, the Board confirmed they were content with the adjustment to the wording in the Terms of Reference for the Board to increase the number of Board members required for quoracy which was a reversal in the reduction of quorum for the Board introduced during the pandemic. The Board also confirmed updates to the Terms of Reference for the Business Committee and the ARAC, gave feedback on the induction process for new Board members and welcomed the external Effectiveness Review.
12. The Board urged the Chair to pursue continuity in Board membership in discussions with Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), where possible, to ensure that experience accumulated throughout tenure was not lost earlier than would be desirable. The Chair said that this issue had already been raised with DHSC, citing the complexity of the issues that the Board of the FSA tackles; the need for thorough induction of new members and the limits to the contribution Board members were able to make during the pandemic. Competitions are expected in 2022/23 for new NEDs and for a Deputy Chair.
13. In addition to the Science Council, the FSA is lead sponsor for five Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs): the Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS); the Committee on Toxicity (COT); the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF); the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP); and the Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF). The Science Council and the ACSS are Departmental Expert Committees of the FSA, and the other four SACs are Advisory Non-Departmental Public Bodies (ANDPBs). All the SACs continue to provide an independent expert advice, challenge and assurance function.
14. Julie Hill, Deputy Chair of the Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS), updated the Board on committee activities at the Board meeting in December 2021. Professor Sandy Thomas, Chair of the Science Council gave her annual formal report to the FSA Board at the March Board meeting in 2022.
15. The Board agreed the FSA's priorities and high-level budget for the financial year 2022/23 at its March 2022 meeting.

### **Attendance at Board and ARAC meetings 2021/2022**

16. Records of each Board member's attendance at Board meetings and at ARAC meetings are detailed below.

### Record of Attendance FSA Board and Business Committee Meetings 2021/22

Board Member	May 2021 (Extraordinary Board)	June 2021 (Board and Business Committee)	September 2021 (Board and Business Committee)	December 2021 (Board and Business Committee)	March 2022 (Board and Business Committee)
Susan Jebb OBE, PhD, FRCP (Hon), FMedSci	–	–	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ruth Hussey CB OBE DL	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Colm McKenna	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Timothy Riley	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mark Rolfe	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Margaret Gilmore	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Peter Price	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fiona Gately	–	Yes	Apologies	Yes	Yes
Lord Blencathra	–	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

### Record of attendance ARAC meetings 2021/22

Board Member	May 2021	June 2021	August 2021	September 2021	November 2021	January 2022	March 2022
Colm McKenna	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ruth Hussey CB OBE DL	–	–	Yes	Yes	Apologies	Yes	Yes
Timothy Riley	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Peter Price	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Margaret Gilmore	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

### Audit & Risk Assurance Committee

17. ARAC is responsible for reviewing, in a non-executive capacity, the reliability of assurances on governance, risk management and the control environment. It is also responsible for reviewing the integrity of financial statements and the Food Standards Agency Annual Report and Accounts.
18. ARAC continued to meet, as scheduled, during the year with all meetings held remotely since the March 2020 meeting which met in person. ARAC considered a range of issues in the year including: the FSA's consolidated accounts for 2020/21; the National Audit Office's (NAO) Audit Completion Report; the Head of Internal Audit's annual opinion; and the audit assurance plans for 2021/22.

19. The Committee discussed the Corporate Risk register at full meetings. Members' discussions focused on the Executive's assurance to ARAC that new and rapidly moving risks caused by the pandemic continued to be managed effectively, challenging Executives' actions when needed.
20. Committee members had bilateral meetings with representatives of the FSA's external auditors, the NAO and their contractors Mazars, and with the Head of Internal Audit to ensure a clear understanding of expectations and current issues.
21. Committee members completed a self-assessment on the effectiveness of the ARAC in line with HM Treasury guidance which advises that a self-assessment is completed annually. Agreed actions from that assessment were implemented during the year. ARAC sought to comply with the requirements of HM Treasury's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Handbook whilst undertaking its duties.
22. In the Committee's annual report to the FSA Board relating to 2020/21, the ARAC Chair noted that sufficient and comprehensive work was undertaken by ARAC and that internal and external assurances were received during the year to adequately inform the Committee's assessment on the effectiveness of FSA risk management control and governance arrangements. Based on this, he concluded that the arrangements in place during the year 2020/21 were satisfactory.
23. Throughout the year ARAC reviewed and considered the management of risks associated with the FSA pandemic's response, the audit team's response and work. Regular communication between scheduled ARAC meetings took place between the ARAC chair and Head of Audit.
24. Ruth Hussey returned to her role on the ARAC in September 2021 following the end of her term as Acting Chair of the FSA Board and Margaret Gilmore, a member of the FSA Board was appointed to the ARAC in May 2021.

### **The Leadership Team**

25. The Executive Management Team (EMT) provides corporate leadership to the FSA and supports me, as the FSA's Accounting Officer, in delivering the FSA strategy, directing the day-to-day business of the FSA and championing the values of the FSA. EMT met weekly throughout 2021/22 and in addition, each Director had fortnightly check-ins with me.
26. On 31 March 2022 membership of the EMT comprised six Directors, including a suitably qualified Finance Director, the FSA's Chief Scientific Adviser and myself, Emily Miles as Accounting Officer.
27. Chris Hitchen, Director of Finance and Performance left the FSA on 31 July 2021 to join UK Infrastructure Bank as Finance Director. Craig Thomas took on the role of Interim Director of Finance and Performance from 3 August 2021 to 5 September 2021. From 5 September 2021 to 18 October 2021, Craig Thomas remained on temporary promotion during the handover to the new Director of Finance and Performance Pam Beadman, who joined the FSA on 6 September 2021 as the new Director of Finance and Performance.

28. From 3 August 2020 to 10 December 2021, Colin Sullivan undertook the roles of Chief Operating Officer and Incident Director, before leaving the FSA to become the new Chief Executive Officer at the Human Tissue Authority. From 10 December 2021 Simon Tunnicliffe took on the role of Interim Director of Operations.
29. From 20 January 2021 to 31 July 2021 Steven Pollock took up post as Interim Director of Strategy, Legal, Governance and Communications on temporary promotion. Katie Pettifer then joined the FSA as the new Director of Strategy, Legal, Governance and Communications on 19 July 2021.
30. EMT discuss the FSA's performance in public alongside Board members at the Business Committee meetings, which gives assurance over the FSA's delivery of the strategic plan, key objectives and value for money.

### **Business Delivery Group**

31. The Business Delivery Group (BDG) oversees and, where appropriate, actions the delivery of the FSA's priorities as set out in the annual business plan. The BDG meets fortnightly and is primarily made up Deputy-Directors representing each Directorate. The group is chaired by an EMT member (the Director of Strategy Legal, Communications and Governance), and joint agenda planning sessions are established between both BDG and EMT. Its purpose is tactical, leading in developing the FSA's Business Plan, taking forward the implementation of key EMT decisions and ensuring and the delivery of day-to-day business.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

32. The FSA has a conflicts of interest policy in place for all staff for the declaration and management of interests in adherence to the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code (section 4.3). All individuals must consider their personal interests upon joining the FSA and at all times if their business or personal circumstances change. Individuals should declare any interests to the FSA whereupon it will be decided if any further action is required and if so, what that action might be. Biannual staff communications serve as a reminder to staff. The Chair and Accounting Officer declare any external meetings on a quarterly basis.
33. The review of any personal interests declared by an individual is considered against a number of criteria. Following discussion and consideration of the declaration of interest the outcome may be that the declared personal interest(s) is acceptable within the individual's current position in which case the risk should be assessed annually at a minimum; or the declared personal interests are not acceptable. Managers must consider and identify any changes to mitigate the risk. These might include a change of duty/responsibility, redeployment to another workplace, local protocols regarding communication and contact and/or regular and documented management checks.

### **Business Appointment Rules**

34. FSA employees who intend to leave the organisation are reminded of their obligations under the Business Appointment Rules. In compliance with Business Appointment Rules, the FSA is transparent in the advice given to individual

applications for senior staff. Any advice given regarding specific business appointments for senior civil servants is published at <https://data.food.gov.uk> on a quarterly basis.

## Post-EU transition

35. The FSA's priority remains to ensure that there continues to be a robust and effective regulatory regime for maintaining the safety of food and feed for the benefit of UK consumers and of the UK food industry. We are working closely with other government departments and the Devolved Administrations of the UK in order to ensure we continue to fulfil this objective.
36. Following the end of the European Union Transition Period, many of the post-EU changes were implemented at the beginning of 2021. However, there remain some key areas of ongoing work requiring a phased implementation, most notably within imports and the implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocol. The FSA is working with the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), the Devolved Administrations and other relevant departments, to progress the remaining work and continues to provide technical input into the work led by Cabinet Office and Defra to secure EU agreement to changes to the Northern Ireland Protocol on agri-food movements. In order to oversee these remaining changes and be in a position to provide ongoing oversight and coordination whilst the range of changes fully embed, a new governance structure was established from 1st April 2021; Transition Delivery, Trade and Assurance Group. The group continues to provide the joined-up governance that is needed.
37. Since leaving the EU, the FSA has taken on responsibility for a range of previous EU functions. This includes a core responsibility for the FSA in managing risks in the food chain, by assessing food and feed safety risks through a joint FSA-FSS risk analysis process. The output of which now forms the basis for much of our independent advice to consumers, health ministers and other Senior officials. The FSA has sought efficiencies in the risk analysis process in line with international best practice to take on the additional volume of work for which the FSA has responsibility.
38. The FSA has provisional UK Frameworks in place across policy areas, which allows a collaborative four nation working throughout the policy development process and establishes dispute resolution processes for managing areas of disagreement. A final review process by the UK Government and Devolved Administrations of the provisional Food and Feed Safety and Hygiene Framework and Nutrition-related Labelling, Composition and Standards Framework will take place in early 2022. The Food Compositional Standards and Labelling Framework was provisionally agreed in 2021 and will be subject to parliamentary scrutiny in 2022 before being finalised
39. Regarding EU import control changes, these will largely occur during 2023. The initial change, being that since 1 January 2022 businesses have been required to pre-notify High Risk Food and Feed products from the EU upon entry to Great Britain. Pre-notification allows the FSA to monitor imported high-risk food and feed and have sufficient traceability to mitigate health risks in the event of a food safety

incident. The FSA has seen a significant increase in notifications moving into 2022. This is a positive early indication that many importers are complying with the notification requirements and reflects the significant amount of work done to prepare industry for the changes.

40. The FSA continues to undertake both internal analysis of the many post-EU changes and impacts and working across other government departments to ensure FSA is aligned to relevant approaches and continues to play a central role where decision making may impact food safety. This includes monitoring proposed EU changes and taking a consistent approach to determine the actions the FSA takes in response.

### **COVID-19**

41. In 2021/22 the FSA followed its incident management plan for non-routine incidents when forming a Winter Plan in response in part to the pandemic and other resourcing pressures. This was stood up on 5 November 2021 with an Incident Management Coordination Group (IMCG) meeting weekly to coordinate actions around operational pressures.
42. A Briefing Cell was established from 6 December, which was responsible for collating all relevant information, developing briefing documents including regular situation reports, producing standard lines to take and drafting correspondence as required.
43. On 27 January 2022 the IMCG took the decision to de-escalate both the Winter Plan and the Briefing Cell, agreeing that outstanding pressures could be handled within current resources. Mechanisms are in place to enable issues to be re-escalated to IMCG if the situation changes.

### **Select Committees**

44. There were no Westminster Committee enquiries to which the FSA provided written or oral evidence during 2021/22.

## NI Assembly

Statutory Committee	Topic	Written briefing	Oral evidence
Committee for Health, Northern Ireland Assembly	Briefing on The Food and Feed Hygiene and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021	Committee previously received the SL1 letter and short accompanying brief to explain the policy background and impact of the SR	Maria Jennings and Elvira Diez Alarcia, 10 June 2021
Committee for Health, Northern Ireland Assembly	Briefing on the Food Compositional Standards and Labelling Common Framework	Committee previously received a copy of the provisional Common Framework and a copy of the opening statement	Emily Miles and Maria Jennings, 22 March 2022

## External Assurance Reviews

45. The FSA has undergone a number of external reviews. These reviews have contributed to assurance on the effectiveness of our governance framework and also identified some opportunities for improvement, which have been implemented.
46. These included the House of Lords Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee and Northern Ireland Committee for Health recommendations of the Food and Feed Safety Hygiene Framework and the Investigatory Powers Commission's Office (IPCO) inspection of the National Food Crime Unit.
47. Other external reviews covered a simulated ransomware incident, website accessibility monitoring, IT health checks on internal and external infrastructure, web-based vulnerability health-check of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, Activity based costing and hourly charge rate for official controls and the ISAE (International Standard on Assurance Engagements) 03402 Report on SSCL, the FSA's Shared Services Provider.

## Internal management

### FSA risk management framework and capacity to handle risk

48. The FSA has a well-established risk management framework that is used to provide assurance to the FSA Board, ARAC and me as Accounting Officer that risks to achieving business objectives are being effectively identified and managed and that those involved understand their roles and responsibilities.

49. The framework is founded on a Risk Management Strategy, which outlines our plans for continuing to embed a risk management culture across the FSA and further raise the FSA's maturity in risk management as set out in HM Treasury's (HMT) Risk Management Assurance Framework. HMT guidance on risk, the 'Orange Book' has been reviewed and updated. The FSA's current approach is already well aligned to the new guidance, and we are using this revised guidance as an opportunity to further enhance our approach.
50. BDG's regular discussions of risk drive mitigating actions that reduce the level of risk, with strategic oversight by EMT. In addition, ARAC reviewed progress at their quarterly meetings. There was a joint Board and Executive workshop in January 2022 which considered the strategic risks the organisation faces. The Board reviewed and set the FSA's risk appetite which, as Accounting Officer, I find helpful when making key decisions throughout the year.
51. The high-level focus during the year by EMT and Board members on the corporate level risk register was complemented by systematic risk management at different levels across the FSA. We have an established network of risk advisors, who engage with cross-Government risk management networks and who share best practice and help ensure that good risk management practice and processes are consistently embedded across the FSA.
52. Corporate level risks are defined by the FSA as those which:
  - a. materially alter our ability to achieve our strategic outcomes; and/or
  - b. fundamentally damage the ability of the FSA to operate (including reputational risks); and/or
  - c. cannot be managed or mitigated at a lower level within the organisation
53. As Accounting Officer, I have overall responsibility for risk management, and each of the risks on the corporate risk register has an executive 'owner' and a mitigation plan. At the end of the financial year, the risks on the FSA's corporate level risk register included:
  - a. Being able to identify, assess and act on a food risk to prevent harm to consumers.
  - b. Being able to provide an adequate response to a major food incident.
  - c. Maintaining public confidence and trust in the FSA, sustaining our ability to deliver our strategic objectives to protect consumers.
  - d. Supporting local authorities and port authorities in delivering against legislative requirements
  - e. Managing our delivery partners to support the FSA in delivering Official Controls
54. The Board considered Strategic Risk in its March 2022 meeting, recognising that the FSA is a risk-based organisation with our primary purpose being to protect consumers from unacceptable food safety risk.

55. Due to the unique risks that arose over the 2021/22 period, the FSA faced new challenges. Maintaining the usual high levels of food standards, whilst managing the emergency response to COVID-19 and navigating the EU Transition process required high staff resource, at a time when working itself was a challenge for some. We implemented measures to ensure staff were properly equipped and supported to maintain service delivery.

### Director assurance statements

56. In March 2021 the FSA Board approved the FSA budget, and the Accounting Officer notified Directors of their budget delegation to deliver the priorities agreed. Throughout the year I, as Accounting Officer, ensured that the FSA has been on track to deliver its priorities within budget through performance management, monthly financial forecasting, and risk management, which is underpinned with corporate governance.
57. We have continued to increase our focus on performance management, and further improved the EMT performance report which is used to ensure key performance indicators are met.
58. Quarterly 'in-year' reviews are held to ensure key milestones for our corporate priorities are delivered and progress made each quarter in delivering our business plan. The reviews also identify any potential areas in need of extra support to deliver business objectives.
59. The FSA Investment Board has continued to improve the value for money of the work the FSA delivers. It considers all material discretionary expenditure, in particular the strategic alignment, benefits and costs and priorities for each business case. Investment Board reports back to EMT on decisions made regarding programmes of work to start, or where programmes have changed or stopped, and continuously re-prioritises our work to align to our priorities.
60. To support the Governance Statement, we have continued to undertake an annual assurance review of each directorate. The assurance review is a structured means of identifying and assessing the main sources of assurance in the organisation. It provides a holistic view, aids identification of where assurance is duplicated or absent, and provides a mechanism for identifying potential areas for improvement.
61. The assurance review process has strengthened the FSA's existing assurance arrangements by providing a consistent, comprehensive overview of assurance provision across the organisation. The review process has supported Directors in completing their end of year assurance statement by setting out how an effective system of internal controls has been maintained. All the end of year assurance statements produced by my Directors were reviewed and I can confirm that no serious issues have been reported in relation to the effectiveness of our internal controls.

### Functional Standards

62. UK Government Functional standards set expectations for the management of functional work and the functional model across government. They were mandated

for central government bodies in September 2021 and during 2021/22 the FSA has established plans to comply with the UK Government Functional Standards with the aim of embedding the standards into ways of working, ultimately driving coherence, consistency and continuous improvement.

### **Information security**

63. The Director of Openness, Data and Digital is responsible for Information Security. Ensuring resilient security and safeguarding our services, technology and information assets against an evolving and changing cyber risk landscape continues to be a priority. We implement a risk-based approach to security based on the nature of our business, the information we handle, our risk appetite, and our approach to transparency.
64. All staff are required to complete the Responsible for Information e-learning course annually which is provided by Civil Service Learning. We also conduct an ongoing Security Education and Awareness programme.
65. We maintain cyber, personnel, physical and incident management governance and controls to enable FSA priorities, protect FSA services and to comply with HM Government Standards.
66. The conflict in Ukraine resulted in an increased risk to cyber security. The FSA teams took steps to ensure all staff remained vigilant and practised good security behaviours, by providing guidance to staff and supporting the Civil Service-wide campaign, Working Securely During Unsettling Times.
67. There were no incidents that required reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) in 2021/22.

### **Effectiveness of the FSA whistleblowing and raising a concern policy**

68. As Accounting Officer, it is important to me that the FSA has in place effective and trusted 'Speak Up' arrangements, through which members of staff feel able to raise concerns. I want our people to have confidence that they will be heard and that their concern will be properly responded to. This includes a qualifying disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and/or a breach of the Civil Service Code ('the Code').
69. During 2021 the use of our Policy, revised and re-launched the previous year, helped identify a small number of further improvements to our processes. This includes how we manage a case review being completed by a senior manager when requested by the individual. We will continue to use our experience of real cases together with feedback from individuals to inform the continual improvement of our arrangements.
70. Once again, we hosted our annual 'Speak Up' campaign in September 2021, which this year included direct contributions from members of the Executive Management Team in an All-Staff call.
71. The Civil Service People Survey 2021 showed that we continue to maintain very high levels of awareness of the Code. 91% of respondents confirmed an understanding

of the Code, 74% had an awareness of how to raise a concern under the Code, and 76% reported having confidence in how we might respond to their concern. Against all three indicators the FSA is equal to or above the Civil Service benchmark, though there has been a slight fall in comparison to the FSA's results from the 2020 People Survey. We are developing plans to return to what has otherwise been a continuing year-on-year improvement.

72. Once again annual reports on Raising a Concern and Whistleblowing were presented to the Executive Management Team and the Business Committee of the FSA Board, ensuring that senior management continue to shape our approach in this important area.
73. In 2021/22 we handled three referrals under the Policy. One identified wrongdoing and two cases are currently ongoing.

### **Shared Services**

74. The FSA uses the Oracle Shared Service provided by Shared Services Connected Ltd (SSCL) for its Finance and Procurement systems. This system is being used by many other government departments including the Department for Work and Pensions and the Ministry of Justice.
75. A third-party assurance report for SSCL for the year ending 31 March 2022 qualified 15 control objectives out of a total of 56. The controls noted, mostly, are not applicable to FSA as these services have not been required. FSA, however, will continue to monitor such reports and work to mitigate any risks.

### **Contracted-Out Meat Inspection**

76. As a result of the pandemic and changes in working requirements of qualified meat inspection staff, the FSA's contracted meat inspection supplier experienced difficulties in maintaining staffing levels sufficient to deliver the required services. The FSA took steps to examine the supplier's position, challenging on efficiencies and providing support where necessary to ensure the meat inspection levels across the country were not impaired. These actions were scrutinised by the FSA Board at its May 2021 meeting.

### **Macpherson Review of Quality Assurance of Government models**

77. In line with the recommendations of the Macpherson Review of Quality Assurance of Government, we maintain an up-to-date list of business-critical models (currently 12) and have processes in place to quality assure their inputs, methodology and outputs.

### **Situation in Ukraine**

78. As a result of the conflict in Ukraine, the largest producer of sunflower oil in the world, the FSA took action to address the ensuing supply chain disruption. The FSA's activities contributed to the wider Government response to the conflict, primarily working with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) as the lead government department for food security and supply and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) to support government efforts to maintain the food

supply chain in a way that is safe and supports the interests of consumers. This response was managed as an FSA-led joint FSA/FSS incident, working closely with Defra, Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the governments of the devolved nations, respecting the differing policy responsibilities on food labelling, composition and nutrition across the FSA and the UK, with work ongoing in 2022/23.

### Head of Internal Audit's opinion

79. During 2021/22, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the provision of internal audit services as follows:

1. Reduction in audit resource: members of the team supporting the FSA's emergency response throughout the year by working as part of emergency response teams and providing cover to approved meat establishments for regular employed and contracted staff who were absent due to COVID infections, reducing the audit delivery capacity.
2. Reduction in audit plan: Some planned audits being delayed or cancelled due to auditees lacking capacity to support audit activities and restrictions on access to some sites making evidence gathering for audit purposes challenging. This was mainly in relation to audits of local authorities.
3. Alternative assurance was obtained by the Head of Audit through formal, documented conversations with Heads of Divisions where controls or processes were changed – temporarily or permanently – in response to the pandemic and by relying on other sources of assurance, principally audits and reviews conducted on the FSA by external assurance providers.
4. The Internal Audit function within the Audit Assurance team was subject to planned independent external quality assurance review during the 4th quarter year. This is a periodic review that is required to comply with the UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Recommendations from the review will be implemented to improve the function's effectiveness.
5. During the year, I have consulted and informed the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee about changes to the audit plan and audit resource to take account of the impact of the pandemic on the organisation and the changing risk landscape.
6. My annual internal audit opinion reflects the results of the audits in the plan that were completed and other relevant sources of assurance and was not limited in scope, to the extent that the assurance provided by internal audit can only ever be reasonable, not absolute.
7. Based on the results of the audit work completed during the nine-month period to 31 March 2022 and understanding the FSA's control environment, the Head of Internal Audit's opinion is that the FSA has maintained adequate risk management, control and governance arrangements.

8. The majority of internal audits completed were placed in the top two categories of audit assurance opinions and none were in the lowest, fourth category. Where issues have been reported, management have taken appropriate mitigating actions to address these and have proactively involved Internal Audit where necessary in identifying root causes for the issues highlighted in Audit Reports.
9. Business planning and prioritisation of resources processes are now well established and ensure resources target key priorities. These are supported by maturing risk management and assurance frameworks which ensure risks at corporate, directorate and programme or project level are identified, assessed and mitigated appropriately.

### Significant internal control weaknesses

80. I am able to report that there were no significant weaknesses in the FSA's systems of internal controls in 2021/22 which affected the achievement of the FSA's key strategic outcomes, aims, objectives and policies.
81. I can also confirm that there have been no Ministerial Directions given during the course of the year.

### Looking ahead

82. In order to ensure the FSA had the finance capacity for the 2022/23 to 2024/25 financial years a cross- functional Spending Review 2021 (SR21) working group delivered a bid in line with HMT requirements. We worked closely with HMT to secure funding above our baseline, to support our work on areas such as post EU Exit activities, and the new PPDS (pre-packed for direct sale) "Natasha's Law" legislation.
83. To ensure value for money, as Accounting Officer and CEO, I Chaired the prioritisation discussions at EMT which set the budget recommended to the Board for 2022/23. This constituted a review of the FSA priorities and resources. Directors discussed and challenged each other on the economy, effectiveness and efficiency of the priorities in order to make best use of limited resources. A first draft budget was presented to Business Committee for early comment at the January 2022 Board Retreat. Final revisions were made and presented for approval at the March 2022 Board meeting.

### Northern Ireland

84. The Assembly passed the Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 in March 2022 which authorised the cash and use of resources for all departments for the 2021/22 year, based on the Executive's final expenditure plans for the year. The Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 also included a Vote on Account which authorised departments' access to cash and use of resources for the early months of the 2022/23 financial year. In the absence of a further Budget (No. 2) Act and Main Estimates in June 2022, the powers available to the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Finance under Section 59 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Section 7 of the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001

have been used to authorise further cash, and the use of further resources to ensure that departments can continue to deliver services. On 24 November 2022, the Secretary of State announced that he will bring forward a Budget Bill in Westminster in due course. This will supersede the Vote on Account in the Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 and the Section 59/Section 7 authorisations, and will authorise the cash and use of resources for the full 2022/23 financial year, as well as providing a Vote on Account for the early months of the 2023/24 year.

# Remuneration report

The remuneration of senior civil servants is set by the Prime Minister following independent advice from the Review Body on Senior Salaries. In reaching its recommendations, the Review Body has regard to the following considerations:

- the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified people to exercise their different responsibilities;
- regional/local variations in labour markets and their effects on the recruitment and retention of staff;
- Government policies for improving the public services including the requirement on departments to meet the output targets for the delivery of departmental services;
- the funds available to departments as set out in the Government's departmental expenditure limits; and
- the Government's inflation target.

The Review Body takes account of the evidence it receives about wider economic considerations and the affordability of its recommendations. Further information about the work of the Review Body can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-manpower-economics](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-manpower-economics)

## Service contracts

The Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 requires Civil Service appointments to be made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. The Recruitment Principles published by the Civil Service Commission specify the circumstances when appointments may be made otherwise.

Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commission can be found at [www.civilservicecommission.org.uk](http://www.civilservicecommission.org.uk)

This report has been prepared in accordance with guidance EPN 647. The tables in the remuneration report are subject to audit.

Service contracts for Board members are listed below:

Name	1st Term of Appointment	Duration of 1st Term Contract	2nd Term of Appointment	Duration of 2nd Term of Contract
Professor Susan Jebb OBE, PhD, FRCP (Hon), FMedSci (Chair)	01 July 2021	3 Years	–	–
Dr Ruth Hussey CB, OBE, DL (Deputy Chair) <sup>1</sup>	01 July 2020	3 Years	–	–
Dr Ruth Hussey CB, OBE, DL (Interim Chair) <sup>1</sup>	01 February 2021	Until a new FSA Chair was appointed	–	–
Colm McKenna	01 September 2016	3 Years	01 September 2019 <sup>3</sup>	1 Year
Peter Price	01 September 2020	3 Years	–	–
Margaret Gilmore <sup>4</sup>	18 November 2019	3 Years	–	–
Timothy Riley <sup>4</sup>	18 November 2019	3 Years	–	–
Mark Rolfe <sup>4</sup>	18 November 2019	3 Years	–	–
Fiona Gately	01 June 2021	3 Years	–	–
Lord David Blencathra	01 June 2021	3 Years	–	–
Heather Hancock DL LVO <sup>2</sup>	01 April 2016	3 Years	01 April 2019 <sup>2</sup>	3 Years
David Brooks <sup>5</sup>	01 April 2016	3 Years	01 April 2019	2 Years
Mary Quicke MBE DL <sup>5</sup>	01 September 2017	3 Years	–	–
Stuart Reid CBE <sup>5</sup>	01 September 2017	3 Years	–	–

1. Dr Ruth Hussey CB OBE served as the FSA Board Member for Wales until 30 June 2020, then began as Deputy Chair starting 01 July 2020 and as Interim Chair from 01 February 2021 to 30 June 2021.
2. Heather Hancock LVO DL stepped down as Chair as of 31 January 2021.
3. Colm McKenna was granted an extension to his second term as of 01 September 2020 for a short but indefinite period until a successor as Board Member for Northern Ireland was appointed. Colm has since left the Food Standards Agency on the 31 August 2022.
4. The following reappointments were made during March 2022: Margaret Gilmore,

Timothy Riley, and Mark Rolfe. All the aforementioned Board Members will begin their second term of service on the 18 of November 2022, following the expiration of their current contracts.

5. Board Member who left during financial year 2020/21.

Board members may serve a maximum of two terms, and length of term may vary.

All members of the Executive Management Team are permanent members of staff except Guy Poppy who was on secondment from Southampton University, Robin May who is on secondment from Birmingham University, Pam Beadman who was on secondment from The Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Paul Morrison who was on a fixed term contract.

There is no provision made for compensation relating to the early termination of any board or executive management team members.

### Remuneration (including salary) and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the most senior management of the department.

The annual increase in Board members' remuneration is based on that recommended for office holders by the Senior Salaries Review Body. Senior Civil Service (SCS) staff salaries are uplifted in line with the central (Cabinet Office) SCS performance based pay and review system.

Full details of the remuneration and pension interests of Board members and the Executive Management Team are detailed below and are subject to audit.

#### a) Remuneration

#### Executive Management Team

2021/22 figures (with 2020/21 comparators in brackets).

#### Single total figure of remuneration (audited)

Name	Salary (£000)	Bonus Payments (£000)	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100) <sup>1</sup>	Pensions benefits (to nearest £1,000) <sup>2</sup>	Total (£000)
Emily Miles (Chief Executive)	120–125 (120–125)	5–10 (5–10)	– (–)	40 (57)	165–170 (185–190)
Maria Jennings (Director of Regulation, Compliance, People & Northern Ireland)	100–105 (105–110)	0–5 (0–5)	– (–)	19 (44)	120–125 (150–155)
Julie Kettell (aka Pierce) (Director of Wales, Information and Science)	115–120 (115–120)	0–5 (5–10)	– (–)	45 (45)	160–165 (165–170)

Name	Salary (£000)	Bonus Payments (£000)	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100) <sup>1</sup>	Pensions benefits (to nearest £1,000) <sup>2</sup>	Total (£000)
Rebecca Sudworth (Director of Policy)	105–110 (105–110)	– (–)	– (–)	42 (42)	145–150 (145–150)
Simon Tunnicliffe (Acting Chief Operating Officer from 10/12/21) <sup>3</sup>	25–30 (–)	– (–)	– (–)	11 (–)	35–40 (–)
Craig Thomas (Interim Director of Finance and Performance from 03/08/2021 – 18/10/2021) <sup>3</sup>	10–15 (–)	– (–)	– (–)	6 (–)	20–25 (–)
Katie Pettifer (Director of Strategy, Legal, Communications and Governance from 19/07/2021) <sup>3</sup>	75–80 (–)	– (–)	– (–)	56 (–)	130–135 (–)
Pam Beadman (Director Finance & Performance from 06/09/21) <sup>3</sup>	50–55 (–)	– (–)	– (–)	– (–)	50–55 (–)
Steven Pollock (Interim Director of Strategy, Legal, Communications and Governance from 20/01/21 to 31/07/21) <sup>3</sup>	30–35 (15–20)	0–5 (–)	– (–)	34 (25)	70–75 (40–45)
Chris Hitchen (Director Finance & Performance to 30/07/2021) <sup>3</sup>	30–35 (100–105)	– (–)	– (–)	13 (40)	45–50 (140–145)
Dr Colin Sullivan (Incident Director COVID-19 Pandemic 01/04/20 – 03/08/20. Chief Operating Officer from 03/08/20 – 10/12/21) <sup>3</sup>	80–85 (110–115)	5–10 (0–5)	– (–)	29 (42)	115–120 (155–160)
Martin Evans (Acting Chief Operating Officer 23/03/20 to 03/08/20) <sup>3,4</sup>	– (35–40)	– (5–10)	– (–)	– (–)	– (40–45)

Name	Salary (£000)	Bonus Payments (£000)	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100) <sup>1</sup>	Pensions benefits (to nearest £1,000) <sup>2</sup>	Total (£000)
Paul Morrison (Director of Strategy, Legal & Governance from 02/12/19 to 20/01/21) <sup>3</sup>	– (80–85)	– (–)	– (–)	– (38)	– (115–120)

## Notes

1. Benefits in Kind relate to travel costs paid by FSA where officers regularly work at more than one FSA site, making the travel costs paid taxable
2. The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increases due to inflation or any increase or decreases due to a transfer of pension rights.
3. Where individuals served for only part of the year only their actual pay and benefits during the period of the role is reported. FYE equivalents are: 2020/21 Paul Morrison £100k-£105k and Martin Evans £90k-£95k. 2021/22 Dr Colin Sullivan £105k-£110k, Chris Hitchen £100k-£105k, Steven Pollock £95k-£100k, Pam Beadman £90k-£95k, Simon Tunnicliffe £90k-£95k, Craig Thomas £70k-£75k and Katie Pettifer £110k-£115k.
4. Martin Evans chose not to be covered by the Civil Service pension arrangements during the reported year. He took retirement upon his original leaving date but stayed on at the FSA and became Acting Chief Operating Officer because of the Pandemic. He didn't re-join a pension scheme when delaying his retirement though and so has no pension benefits during the time subject to disclosure.
5. Anjali Juneja was appointed as Director of International & UK affairs in March 2022. She did not attend a Board Meeting as a member of EMT during this time and so her remuneration details have been excluded.

In addition to these members of the Executive Management Team, Guy Poppy was in the position of Chief Scientific Adviser from 01/08/2014 to 30/06/2020, on secondment from Southampton University. The FSA has been recharged salary costs by the university in the band £30-£35k for the period 01/04/2020 to 30/06/2020. FTE equivalent £135k-£140k. From 6th July 2020 Professor Robin May took over the position of Chief Scientific Adviser, on secondment from the University of Birmingham. The FSA has been recharged salary costs by the university in the band £55k-£60k for the period 06/07/2020 to 31/03/2021. FTE Equivalent £75k-£80k. The FSA has also been re-charged salary costs by the university in the band £75k-£80k for the for the period 01/04/2021 to 31/03/2022.

From 26 March 2020 to 3rd August 2020 Colin Sullivan became the FSA lead director for the FSA response to the COVID-19 pandemic, leading the agency response to the implications for public health and food safety during that incident.

To support that work Martin Evans, Head of Field Operations stepped up as acting Chief Operating Officer until 3rd August 2020. His 2020/21 figures are displayed in the table above.

Colin Sullivan returned to his Chief Operating Officer role from 3 August 2020. He was a member of EMT all year and his actual figures are displayed in the table above.

All pay received by Colin and Martin relating to these appointments was received in the 2020/21 financial year and is reported as such. The FYE for Colin Sullivan as COVID-19 Lead is £105k-£110k.

### Pay Multiples

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce. In the case of the Food Standards Agency the term Director refers to members of the Executive Management Team. As such the highest paid Director refers to the highest paid member of the Executive Management Team.

### Consolidated FSA (audited)

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in the Food Standards Agency in the financial year 2021/22 was £125,000 – £130,000 (2020-21, £125,000 – £130,000). The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the organisation's workforce is disclosed below.

2021-22	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Total remuneration (£)	31,067	38,317	42,532
Pay ratio	4.10	3.33	3.00

2020-21	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Total remuneration (£)	31,691	37,950	43,658
Pay ratio	4.02	3.36	2.92

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The values for the salary component of remuneration for the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile were £28,798, £30,578 and £34,042 respectively.

Remuneration ranged from £18,000 to £125,000-£130,000 (2020/21, £18,000 to £125,000-£130,000).

The median remuneration of the workforce was 3.33:1 (2020-21, 3.36:1). The figure for 2020/21 has been restated as FTEs for fixed and temporary members of staff covering vacancies within the FSA have been included, which has altered the figure. The change in ratio is due to the median pay for staff decreasing, resulting in the ratio increasing.

### Percentage Change in Remuneration (audited)

Reporting bodies are also required to disclose the percentage change from the previous financial year in the:

- a. salary and allowances, and
- b. performance pay and bonuses

of the highest paid director and of their employees as a whole.

The percentage changes in respect of The Food Standards Agency are shown in the following table. It should be noted that the calculation for the highest paid director is based on the mid-point of the band within which their remuneration fell in each year.

In accordance with the Government Financial Reporting Manual section 6.5.21, the calculations below use the mean average.

Percentage change for:	2021/22 v 2020/21
Average employee salary and allowances	0.5%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	0.0%
Average employee performance pay and bonuses	-18.7%
Highest paid director's performance pay and bonuses	-20.0%

There is a negative correlation between the mean and median figures used in the calculations above as the median remuneration for the Food Standards Agency has decreased and the mean average employee salary and allowances have increased.

The median remuneration figure changed due to recruitment within the FSA resulting in a higher proportion of new starters within the headcount. The mean increase is a reflection of the change in grade mix with an increase at the higher grades.

### FSA Westminster (audited)

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in the Food Standards Agency for Westminster in the financial year 2021-22 was £125,000-£130,000 (2020/21, £125,000-£130,000). The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the organisation's workforce is disclosed below.

2021/22	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Total remuneration (£)	32,015	37,662	42,756
Pay ratio	3.98	3.39	2.98

2020/21	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Total remuneration (£)	31,770	37,670	43,924
Pay ratio	4.01	3.38	2.90

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The values for the salary component of remuneration for the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile were £26,751, £37,350 and £42,444 respectively.

Remuneration ranged from £18,000 to £125,000-£130,000 (2020/21 £18,000 to £125,000-£130,000).

The median remuneration of the workforce was 3.39:1 (2020/21, 3.38:1). The figure for 2020/21 has been restated as FTEs for fixed and temporary members of staff covering vacancies within the FSA have been included, which has altered the figure. The change in ratio is due to the median pay for staff decreasing, resulting in the ratio increasing.

### Percentage Change in Remuneration (audited)

Reporting bodies are also required to disclose the percentage change from the previous financial year in the:

- a. salary and allowances, and
- b. performance pay and bonuses

of the highest paid director and of their employees as a whole.

The percentage changes in respect of the Food Standards Agency for Westminster are shown in the following table. It should be noted that the calculation for the highest paid director is based on the mid-point of the band within which their remuneration fell in each year.

Percentage change for:	2021-22 v 2020-21
Average employee salary and allowances	0.5%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	0.0%
Average employee performance pay and bonuses	-18.5%
Highest paid director's performance pay and bonuses	-20.0%

### FSA Wales (audited)

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in the Food Standards Agency for Wales in the financial year 2021/22 was £85,000-£90,000 (2020/21 £80,000-£85,000). The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the organisation's workforce is disclosed below.

2021-22	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Total remuneration (£)	30,995	37,662	41,696
Pay ratio	2.82	2.32	2.11

2020-21	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Total remuneration (£)	31,094	38,025	41,281
Pay ratio	2.65	2.17	2.00

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The values for the salary component of remuneration for the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile were £30,350, £37,350 and £40,782 respectively.

Remuneration ranged from £25,000 to £85,000-£90,000 (2020/21, £18,000 to £80,000-£85,000). The remuneration range has increased due to the lowest graded staff member within Wales now being an Executive Officer (previously Administrative Officer) regarding the bottom end of the range. The top end of the range has also increased due to bonuses paid in 2021/22.

The median remuneration of the workforce was 2.32:1 (2020-21, 2.17:1). The figure for 2020/21 has been restated as FTEs for fixed and temporary members of staff covering vacancies within the FSA have been included, which has altered the figure. The change in ratio is due to the median pay for staff decreasing, resulting in the ratio increasing.

### Percentage Change in Remuneration (audited)

Reporting bodies are also required to disclose the percentage change from the previous financial year in the:

- a. salary and allowances, and
- b. performance pay and bonuses

of the highest paid director and of their employees as a whole.

The percentage changes in respect of the Food Standards Agency – Wales are shown in the following table. It should be noted that the calculation for the highest paid director is based on the mid-point of the band within which their remuneration fell in each year.

Percentage change for:	2021/22 v 2020/21
Average employee salary and allowances	2.4%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	0.0%
Average employee performance pay and bonuses	-26.3%
Highest paid director's performance pay and bonuses	N/A <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No Performance Pay or Bonuses were paid in 2020/21 and so percentage change is not applicable.

### FSA Northern Ireland (audited)

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in the Food Standards Agency in the financial year 2021/22 was £105,000-£110,000 (2020/21, £105,000-£110,000).

The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the organisation's workforce is disclosed below.

2021/22	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Total remuneration (£)	30,492	37,634	39,383
Pay ratio	3.53	2.86	2.73

2020/21	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Total remuneration (£)	31,194	38,299	39,911
Pay ratio	3.45	2.81	2.69

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The values for the salary component of remuneration for the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile were £30,350, £37,350 and £38,634 respectively.

Remuneration ranged from £18,000 to £105,000-£110,000 (2020/21, £19,000 to £105,000-£110,000). The remuneration range has decreased due to interns being taken on within Northern Ireland who are paid at the intern spot rate.

The median remuneration of the workforce was 2.86:1 (2020/21, 2.81:1). The figure for 2020/21 has been restated as FTEs for fixed and temporary members of staff covering vacancies within the FSA have been included, which has altered the figure. The change in ratio is due to the median pay for staff decreasing, resulting in the ratio increasing.

### Percentage Change in Remuneration (audited)

Reporting bodies are also required to disclose the percentage change from the previous financial year in the:

- a. salary and allowances, and
- b. performance pay and bonuses

of the highest paid director and of their employees as a whole.

The percentage changes in respect of the Food Standards Agency are shown in the following table. It should be noted that the calculation for the highest paid director is based on the mid-point of the band within which their remuneration fell in each year.

Percentage change for:	2021/22 v 2020/21
Average employee salary and allowances	-1.4%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	0.0%
Average employee performance pay and bonuses	-49.1%
Highest paid director's performance pay and bonuses	0.0%

### Food Standards Agency Board

2021/22 figures with (2020/21) comparators in brackets.

**Single total figure of remuneration (audited)**

Name	Salary (£000)	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)	Pensions benefits (£000) <sup>1</sup>	Total (£000)
Professor Susan Jebb OBE, PhD, FRCP (Hon), FMedSci (Chair) (from 01/07/21)	50–55	–	–	50–55
Dr Ruth Hussey CB OBE	25–30 (25–30)	– (–)	– (–)	25–30 (25–30)
Colm McKenna	20–25 (20–25)	– (–)	– (–)	20–25 (20–25)
Peter Price (From 01/09/20)	10–15 (5–10)	– (–)	– (–)	10–15 (5–10)
Margaret Gilmore	5–10 (5–10)	– (–)	– (–)	5–10 (5–10)
Timothy Riley	5–10 (5–10)	– (–)	– (–)	5–10 (5–10)
Mark Rolf	5–10 (5–10)	– (–)	– (–)	5–10 (5–10)
Fiona Gately (from 01/06/21) <sup>2</sup>	5–10 (–)	–	–	5–10 (–)
Lord David Blencathra (from 01/06/21) <sup>2</sup>	5–10 (–)	–	–	5–10 (–)
Heather Hancock DL LVO, Chair (to 31/01/21) <sup>2</sup>	– (55–60)	– (–)	– (–)	– (55–60)
David Brooks (to 31/03/21) <sup>2</sup>	– (10–15)	– (–)	– (–)	– (10–15)
Mary Quicke MBE DL (to 31/08/20) <sup>2</sup>	– (0–5)	– (–)	– (–)	– (0–5)
Stuart Reid CBE (to 31/08/20) <sup>2</sup>	– (0–5)	– (–)	– (–)	– (0–5)

**Notes**

1. No FSA board members are in a pension scheme contributed to by FSA therefore there are no pension costs to report.
2. All starter and leaver salaries are shown for their actual period of employment. The corresponding full year equivalents for 2020/21 was for Heather Hancock DL LVO £65k-£70k, Mary Quicke MBE DL £10k-£15k and for Stuart Reid CBE £10k-£15k. Full year equivalents for 2021/22 was Susan Jebb OBE, PhD, FRCP (Hon), FMedSci £56k-£70k, Fiona Gately £5k-£10k Lord David Blencathra £5k-£10k.

## Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation. This report is based on accrued payments made by the Department and thus recorded in these accounts.

## Benefits in Kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument.

## Bonuses

A Pay Committee is set up each year to assess implementation of pay awards including bonus payments in line with guidance provided by the Cabinet Office. Membership of the Pay Committee is made up of directors and one independent member. Pay recommendations are considered on the basis of review of individual performance against objectives as well as overall consistency.

The Committee provides a breakdown of awards to the Cabinet Office, covering performance group distribution, analysis of bonuses awarded and feedback on the operation of the system. The bonuses reported in 2021/22 relate to performance in 2020/21 and bonuses reported in 2020/21 relate to performance in 2019/20.

**(b) Pension benefits (audited)****Executive Management Team****2021/22**

Name	Role	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/03/22 and related lump sum £5,000 (£000)	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age £2,500 (£000)	CETV at 31/03/22 (£000)	CETV at 31/03/21 (£000)	Real increase in CETV (£000)
Emily Miles	Chief Executive (from 23/09/19)	35 – 40 plus lump sum of 55 – 60	0 – 2.5 plus lump sum of 0	534	487	17
Dr Colin Sullivan	Chief Operating Officer (from 03/08/20)	10 – 15	0 – 2.5	156	128	20
Maria Jennings*	Director of Regulation, Compliance, People & Northern Ireland	55 – 60	0 – 2.5	934	879	5
Julie Kettell (aka Pierce)	Director of Openness, Digital, Data & Wales	40 – 45	2.5 – 5	748	683	36
Chris Hitchen	Director of Finance & Performance	25 – 30	0 – 2.5	351	332	7
Rebecca Sudworth	Director of Policy	5 – 10	0 – 2.5	98	64	25
Steven Pollock	Director of Strategy, Legal & Governance (from 20/01/21)	40 – 45 plus a lump sum of 120 – 125	0 – 2.5 plus a lump sum of 2.5 – 5	989	948	30
Simon Tunnicliffe	Acting Chief Operating Officer (from 10/12/21)	0 – 5	0 – 2.5	37	30	6

Craig Thomas	Interim Director of Finance and Performance (from 03/08/2021 – 18/10/2021)	10 – 15	0 – 2.5	117	114	2
Katie Pettifer	Director of Strategy, Legal, Governance and Communications (from 19/07/2021)	25 – 30 plus lump sum of 40 – 45	10 – 12.5 plus lump sum of 2.5 – 5	372	247	25
Pam Beadman	Director Finance & Performance (from 06/09/21)	30 – 35	0 – 2.5	462	447	-6

### Notes

- \* As Premium PCSPS Scheme members, staff can choose, within a predetermined range, how their accumulated pension benefits are split between lump sum and annual pension.

## 2020/21

Name	Role	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/03/21 and related lump sum (£000) £5,000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age (£000) £2,500	CETV at 31/03/21 (£000)	CETV at 31/03/20 (£000)	Real increase in CETV (£000)
Emily Miles	Chief Executive (from 23/09/19)	30 – 35 plus lump sum of 50 – 55	2.5 – 5 plus lump sum of 0 – 2.5	487	435	30
Dr Colin Sullivan	Chief Operating Officer (from 03/08/20)	5 – 10	2.5 – 5	128	88	28
Maria Jennings*	Director of Regulation, Compliance, People & Northern Ireland	50 – 55	2.5 – 5	879	820	27
Julie Kettell (aka Pierce)	Director of Openness, Digital, Data & Wales	40 – 45	2.5 – 5	683	615	35
Chris Hitchen	Director of Finance & Performance	25 – 30	0 – 2.5	332	294	20
Rebecca Sudworth	Director of Policy	0 – 5	0 – 2.5	64	31	24
Paul Morrison	Director of Strategy, Legal & Governance (from 02/12/19 to 20/01/21)	30 – 35 plus a lump sum of 60 – 65	0 – 2.5 plus a lump sum of 0 – 2.5	547	505	21
Steven Pollock	Director of Strategy, Legal & Governance (from 20/01/21)	40 – 45 plus a lump sum of 115 – 120	0 – 2.5 plus a lump sum of 0 – 2.5	948	922	23

## Notes

\* As Premium PCSPS Scheme members, staff can choose, within a predetermined range, how their accumulated pension benefits are split between lump sum and annual pension.

1 There are no figures reported for Martin Evans as he took retirement upon his original

leaving date but stayed on at the FSA and became Acting Chief Operating Officer because of the Pandemic. He did not re-join a pension scheme when delaying his retirement though and so has no pension benefits during the time subject to disclosure.

## Civil Service Pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 1 April 2015 a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme or Alpha, which provides benefits on a career average basis with a normal pension age equal to the member’s State Pension Age (or 65 if higher). From that date, all newly appointed civil servants and the majority of those already in service joined Alpha.

Prior to that date, civil servants participated in the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The PCSPS has four sections: 3 providing benefits on a final salary basis (classic, premium or classic plus) with a normal pension age of 60; and one providing benefits on a whole career basis (nuvos) with a normal pension age of 65.

These statutory arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under classic, premium, classic plus, nuvos and alpha are increased annually in line with Pensions Increase legislation. Existing members of the PCSPS who were within 10 years of their normal pension age on 1 April 2012 remained in the PCSPS after 1 April 2015. Those who were between 10 years and 13 years and 5 months from their normal pension age on 1 April 2012 switch into alpha sometime between 1 June 2015 and 1 February 2022. Because the Government plans to remove discrimination identified by the courts in the way that the 2015 pension reforms were introduced for some members, it is expected that, in due course, eligible members with relevant service between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022 may be entitled to different pension benefits in relation to that period (and this may affect the Cash Equivalent Transfer Values shown in this report – see below). All members who switch to alpha have their PCSPS benefits ‘banked’, with those with earlier benefits in one of the final salary sections of the PCSPS having those benefits based on their final salary when they leave alpha. (The pension figures quoted for officials show pension earned in PCSPS or alpha – as appropriate. Where the official has benefits in both the PCSPS and alpha the figure quoted is the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes.) Members joining from October 2002 may opt for either the appropriate defined benefit arrangement or a defined contribution (money purchase) pension with an employer contribution (partnership pension account).

Employee contributions are salary-related and range between 4.6% and 8.05% for members of classic, premium, classic plus, nuvos and alpha. Benefits in classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years initial pension is payable on retirement. For premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike classic, there is no automatic lump sum. classic plus is essentially a hybrid with benefits for service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per classic and benefits for service from October 2002 worked out as in premium. In nuvos a member builds up a pension based on his pensionable earnings during their period of scheme membership. At the end of the scheme year (31 March) the member’s

earned pension account is credited with 2.3% of their pensionable earnings in that scheme year and the accrued pension is uprated in line with Pensions Increase legislation. Benefits in alpha build up in a similar way to nuvos, except that the accrual rate is 2.32%. In all cases members may opt to give up (commute) pension for a lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004.

The partnership pension account is an occupational defined contribution pension arrangement which is part of the Legal & General Mastertrust. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 8% and 14.75% (depending on the age of the member). The employee does not have to contribute, but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.5% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally-provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over pension age. Pension age is 60 for members of classic, premium and classic plus, 65 for members of nuvos, and the higher of 65 or State Pension Age for members of alpha. (The pension figures quoted for officials show pension earned in PCSPS or alpha – as appropriate. Where the official has benefits in both the PCSPS and alpha the figure quoted is the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes, but note that part of that pension may be payable from different ages.)

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website [www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk](http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk)

### **Food Standards Agency Board**

A number of former FSA Board members benefit from a by-analogy pension scheme similar to the PCSPS. The scheme is now closed to new members and there are no active scheme members.

### **Cash Equivalent Transfer Values**

This is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the pension benefits they have accrued in their former scheme.

The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total Ministerial service, not just their current appointment as a Minister. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

**Real Increase in CETV**

This is the element of the increase in accrued pension funded by the Exchequer. It excludes increases due to inflation and contributions paid by the Minister. It is worked out using common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

## Staff report

### Staff costs (audited)

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
Wages and Salaries	2,204	1,927
Social Security Costs	242	217
Other Pension Costs	592	538
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,038</b>	<b>2,682</b>
Other Staff	189	99
<b>Total Net Costs</b>	<b>3,227</b>	<b>2,781</b>

### Civil Service Pension Schemes

The Principal Civil Service Pension Schemes (PCSPS) and the Civil Servant and Other Pension Scheme (CSOPS) – known as “alpha” are unfunded multi-employer defined benefit schemes but the FSA is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The scheme actuary valued the scheme as at 31 March 2016 and you can find details in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation ([www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/about-us/resource-accounts/](http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/about-us/resource-accounts/)).

For 2021/22, employers’ contributions of £592k (2020/21 £538k) were payable to the PCSPS and CSOPS at one of four rates in the range of 26.6% to 30.3% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The scheme’s Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2021/22 to be paid when the member retires and not the benefits paid during this period to existing pensioners.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. No FSA in NI staff chose to do so.

The average number of whole-time equivalent persons employed by the FSA in Northern Ireland during the year was as follows (audited):

2021/22			2020/21		
Permanently Employed Staff	Others	Total	Permanently Employed Staff	Others	Total
58	4	62	54	3	57

### Reporting of Civil Service and other compensation schemes – exit packages (audited).

The number of exit packages for Northern Ireland during 2021/22 was nil (2020/21 was also nil).

There was no early retirements on ill health grounds in 2021/22 and 2020/21.

## Staff composition

### Staff turnover

FSA staff turnover figures are calculated in line with Cabinet Office's guidance.

Westminster	11.2%
FSA Wales	12.0%
FSA Northern Ireland	6.4%

### Number of SCS staff by pay band (as of 31 March 2022):

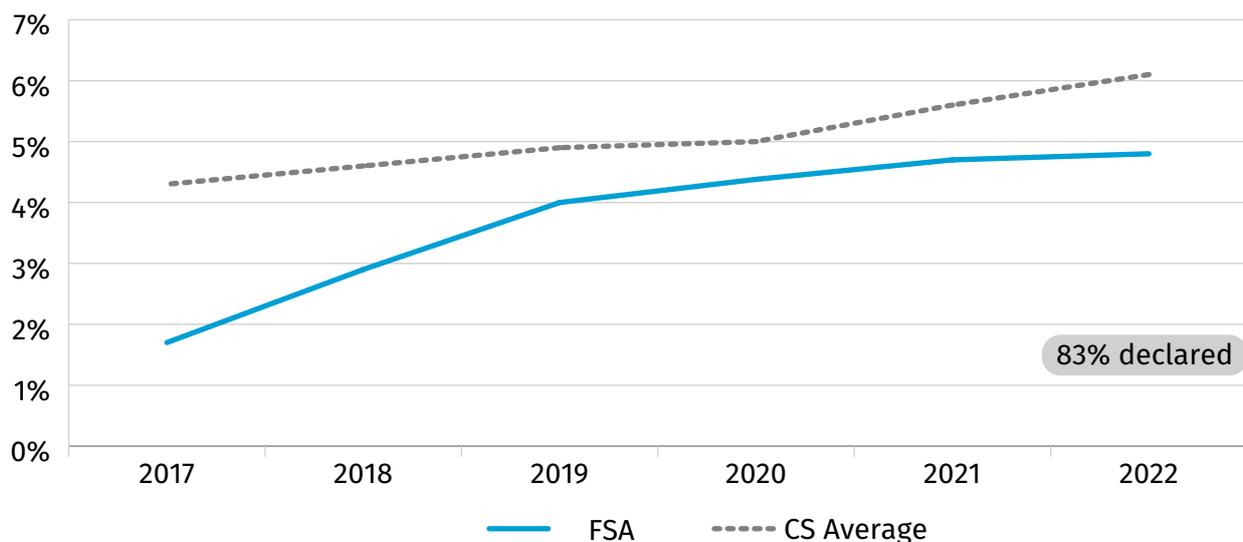
Pay band	Westminster	Wales	Northern Ireland	Total
SCS1	15	1	1	17
SCS2	7	0	1	8
SCS3	1	0	0	1

### Number of persons of each sex (as of 31 March 2022):

	Male	Female
Executive members	2	7
Other Senior Civil Servants	12	5
Board members	5	6
Other employees	811	633

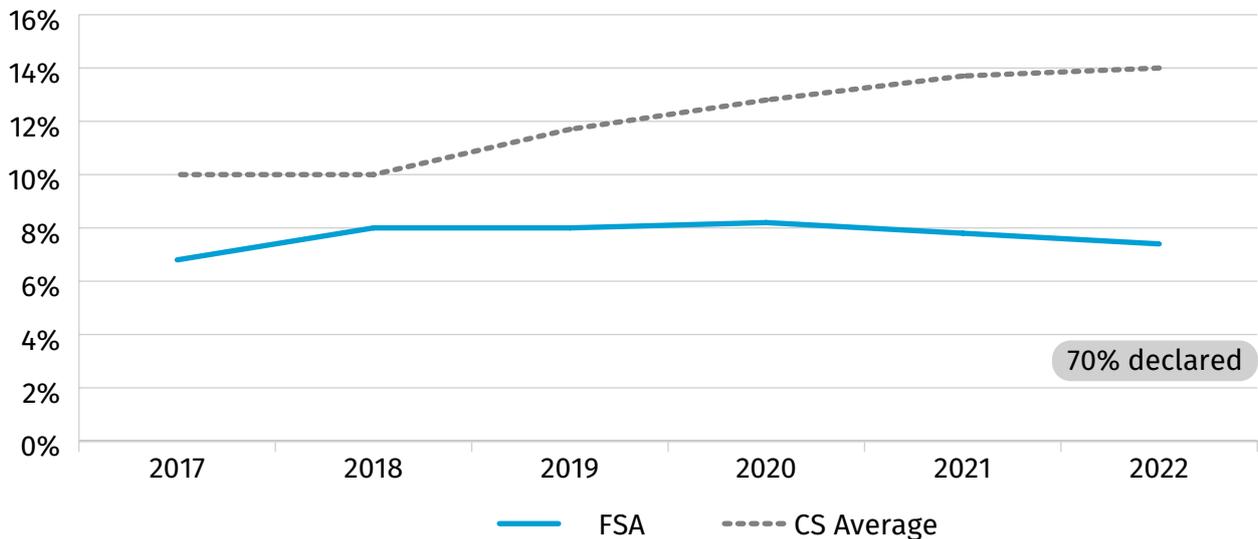
### Performance statistics (representation figures)

Fig. 37: Representation of Lesbian, gay, bisexual and other (LGBO) (declared)



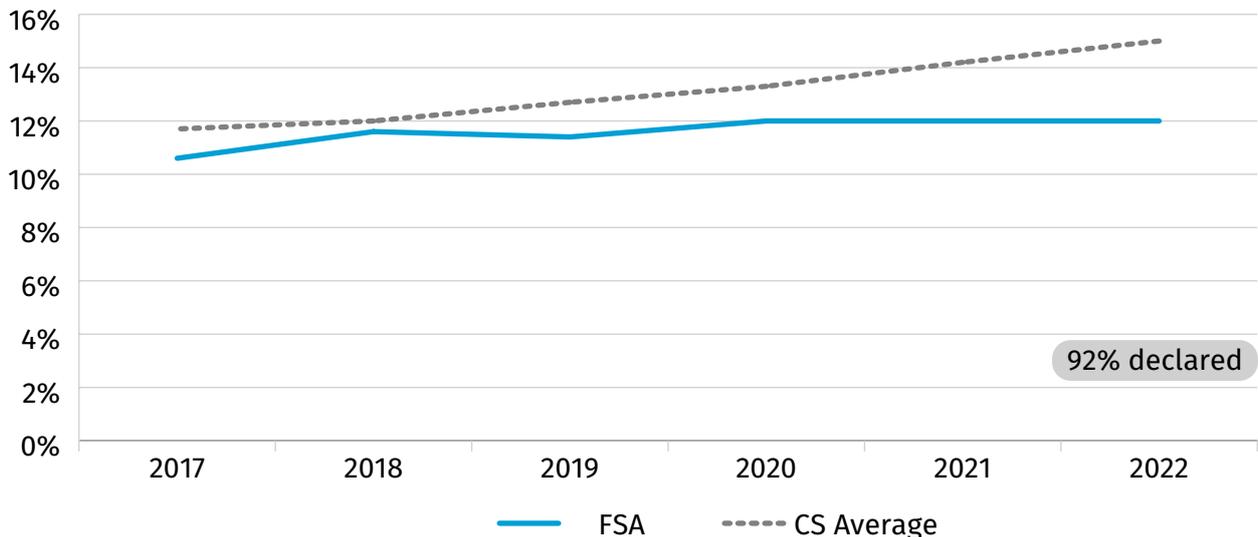
**4.7%** of employees define their sexual orientation as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and other. This is slightly below the Civil Service average, although data may be impacted due to a low declaration rate.

**Fig. 38: Representation of disability (declared)**



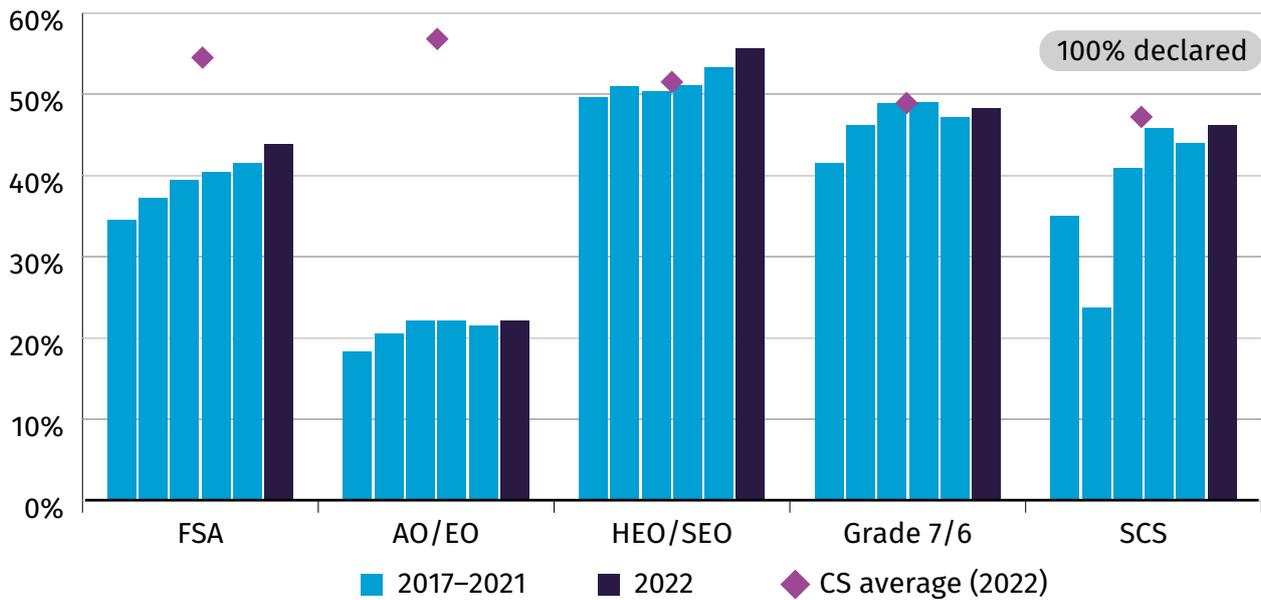
**7.4%** of employees have declared a disability. The percentage of people declaring themselves as having a disability is underrepresented in the FSA, in comparison to the Civil Service average, although the data may be impacted due to a low declaration rate.

**Fig. 39: Representation of ethnic minority (declared)**



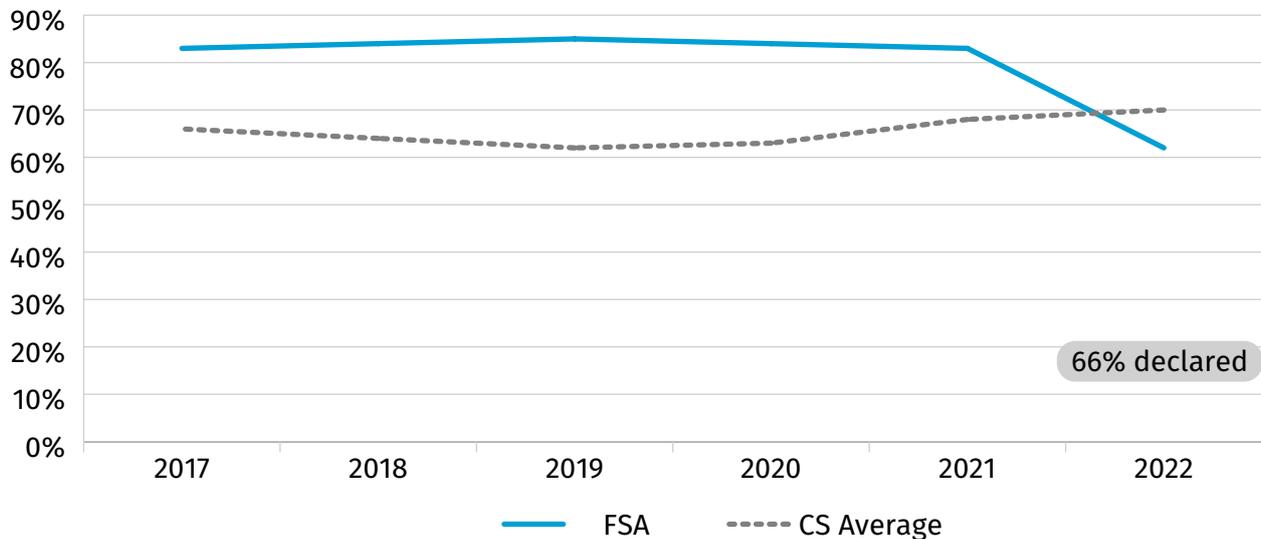
**12%** of employees have declared themselves as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic. This is slightly below the Civil Service average.

**Fig. 40: Representation of women by grade**



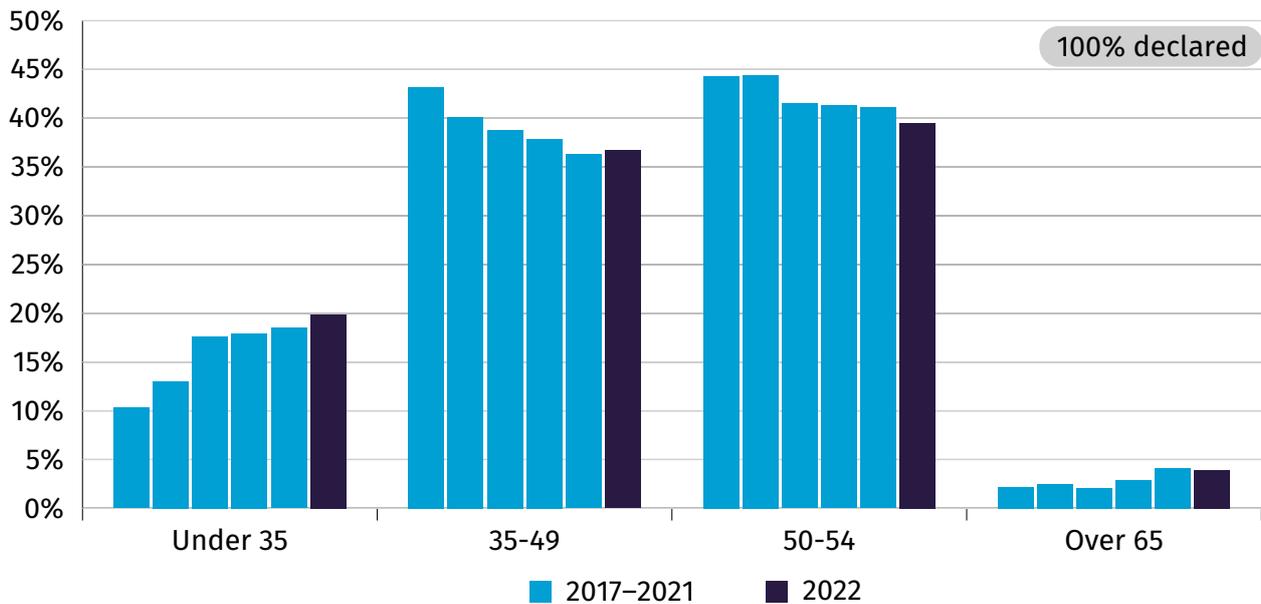
**43.9%** of employees in the FSA are women. This has increased gradually since 2012, with the number of women at SCS and more junior grades remaining high but below gender parity of 50%.

**Fig. 41: Representation of faith and belief (declared)**



**61.5%** of employees have declared a faith or belief. This is slightly lower than the Civil Service average, although the data may be impacted due to a low declaration rate.

**Fig. 42: FSA representation by age bands (declared)**



The FSA has had an ageing workforce for several years as the number of employees over 50 has increased, remaining above the Civil Service average. There has also been a steady increase in representation of the under 30s, which is currently at almost half the Civil Service average.

**Reporting of sickness absence data**

The provisional figure for staff absence as a result of physical and mental illness including injuries, disability or other health problems is approximately 6.3 days per employee, compared with 5.1 and 4.0 for the previous 2 years.

**Table 1: Sickness data by country**

Country	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Westminster	6.5	5.3	4.1
FSA in Wales	0.4	1.5	0.9
FSA in Northern Ireland	5.2	2.9	4.8
Consolidated	6.3	5.1	4.0

## Off-payroll engagements

The FSA is required to publish information on our highly paid and/or senior off-payroll engagements

**Table 1: For all off-payroll engagements as of 31 March 2022, for more than £245 per day and that last for longer than six months.**

	FSA
No. of existing engagements as of 31 March 2022	4
Of which:	
No. that have existed for less than one year at time of reporting	2
No. that have existed for between one and two years at time of reporting	1
No. that have existed for between two and three years at time of reporting	1
No. that have existed for between three and four years at time of reporting	0
No. that have existed for four or more years at time of reporting	0

All existing off-payroll engagements, outlined above, have at some point been subject to a risk-based assessment as to whether assurance is required that the individual is paying the right amount of tax and, where necessary, that assurance has been sought.

**Table 2: All temporary off-payroll workers engaged at any point during the year ended 31 March 2022, for more than £245 per day.**

	FSA
No. of off-payroll workers engaged during the year ended 31 March 2022	4
Of which:	
No. determined as in-scope of IR35	0
No. determined as out-of-scope of IR35	4
No. of engagements reassessed for compliance or assurance purposes during the year	1
Of which: no. of engagements that saw a change to IR35 status following review	0
No. of engagements where the status was disputed under provisions in the off-payroll legislation	0

**Table 3: For any off-payroll engagements of board members, and/or, senior officials with significant financial responsibility, between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022**

	FSA
No. of off-payroll engagements of board members, and/or, senior officials with significant financial responsibility, during the financial year. (1)	0
Total no. of individuals on payroll and off-payroll that have been deemed “board members, and/or, senior officials with significant financial responsibility”, during the financial year. This figure should include both on payroll and off-payroll engagements. (2)	17

### Consultancy spend

Consultancy spend in 2021/22 was £44,836 relating to six suppliers with the greatest spend by one supplier being £20,634.

## Health and safety reporting

At a time so dominated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, our Health, Safety and Wellbeing Unit (HSWU) have continued to provide competent advice to managers and staff to enable delivery of our duty of care and to ensure our ability to support the wellbeing of our employees.

Our National Health and Safety Committee continues to facilitate meaningful consultation with Trade Unions, enabling a platform for collaborative working, including with our Service Delivery Partner.

Progress against the 2020-23 Health and Safety ambition is as follows:

**Ambition 1** – is the reduction of employee lost days due to work related injury; seeking an overall reduction of 15% over the period 2020-23 when compared with the period 2017-20 (which was a total of 841 days).

**Ambition 2** – is the elimination of accidents at work that cause harm serious enough to be reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013).

## Reportable Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR) 2018/19 – 2021/22

RIDDOR Category	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Fatal	0	0	0	0
Major	0	1	0	1
<7 day	7	4	3	2
Disease	3	13	0	1
Dangerous Occurrence	0	0	0	0
Total	10	18	3	4

In the above table there are 13 cases of COVID-19 infection, RIDDOR reported during 2020/21, within the disease category. These cases involved frontline staff carrying out their regulatory role at 3 approved food businesses and were RIDDOR reported based upon there being reasonable evidence that occupational exposure to COVID-19 had occurred, following reported COVID-19 outbreaks at those food businesses. In 2021/22, 1 COVID-19-related case recorded.

**Ambition** is to reduce the accident/incident rate (AIR) annually over 2020-23. The AIR rate for 2021/22 was 3,639, compared to 5,701<sup>40</sup> for 2020/21.

## Recruitment practice

The FSA recruitment policy follows the Civil Service recruitment principles and is based on appointment of the best candidate on merit, identified through a process of open and fair competition. The recruitment policy is set out on our intranet site and provides a transparent approach that identifies high calibre individuals and promotes equality and diversity.

All external recruitment is currently subject to internal approval by either the Director for FSA Northern Ireland, People & Organisational Change or the Head of People & Organisational Change. Occasionally we do appoint individuals by exception, and the use of exceptions along with external recruitment activity is reported to the Civil Service Commission on a quarterly basis.

Temporary agency staff are employed via an agency and are engaged on an ad hoc or temporary basis to fulfil requirements within established posts which involve providing cover (e.g. for a vacancy, holiday or sickness) or additional resource requirements.

These engagements can be either administrative or professional roles.

<sup>40</sup> 2019/20 AIR figure updated (previously 4,909) to include incidents closed following the Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20.

## Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017

The Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 took effect from 1 April 2017. These regulations were laid following the enactment of the Trade Union Act 2016. The Trade Union Act was passed in May 2016; one of the elements of this Act is the requirement for employers in the public sector to publish information on facility time.

Facility Time is the provision of time off from an employee's normal role to undertake TU duties and activities when they are elected as a TU representative.

Trade Unions (TUs) play an important role in the modern workplace and there are considerable benefits to both employers and employees when organisations and unions work well together.

### Table 1 Relevant union officials

What was the total number of your employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period?

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent employee number
22	21.6

### Table 2 Percentage of time spent on facility time

How many of your employees who were relevant union officials employed during the relevant period spent a) 0%, b) 1%-50%, c) 51%-99% or d) 100% of their working hours on facility time?

Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	16
1-50%	6
51%-99%	0
100%	0

### Table 3 Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Provide the figures requested in the first column of the table below to determine the percentage of your total pay bill spent on paying employees who were relevant union officials for facility time during the relevant period.

First Column	Figures
Provide the total cost of facility time	£28,782
Provide the total pay bill	£71,995,000
Provide the percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time, calculated as: (total cost of facility time ÷ total pay bill) x 100	0.04%

#### Table 4 Paid trade union activities

As a percentage of total paid facility time hours, how many hours were spent by employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period on paid trade union activities?

<i>Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours calculated as: (total hours spent on paid trade union activities by relevant union officials during the relevant period ÷ total paid facility time hours) x 100</i>	0%
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# Statement of Outturn against Assembly Supply (SOAS)

In addition to the primary statements prepared under IFRS, the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRM) requires the Food Standards Agency to prepare a Statement of Outturn against Assembly Supply (SOAS) and supporting notes.

The SOAS and related notes are subject to audit, as detailed in the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The SOAS is a key accountability statement that shows, in detail, how an entity has spent against their Supply Estimate. Supply is the monetary provision for resource and cash (drawn primarily from the Consolidated Fund), that the Assembly gives statutory authority for entities to utilise. The Estimate details Supply and is voted on by the Assembly at the start of the financial year and is then normally revised by a Supplementary Estimate at the end of the financial year. It is this final Estimate, normally the Spring Supplementary Estimate, which forms the basis of the SOAS.

Should an entity exceed the limits set by their Supply Estimate, called control limits, their accounts will receive a qualified opinion.

The format of the SOAS mirrors the Supply Estimates to enable comparability between what the Assembly approves and the final outturn. The Supply Estimates are voted by the Assembly and published on the DoF website.

The supporting notes detail the following: Outturn detailed by Estimate line, providing a more detailed breakdown (note 1); a reconciliation of outturn to net operating expenditure in the SOCNE, to tie the SOAS to the financial statements (note 2); a reconciliation of net resource outturn to net cash requirement (note 3); an analysis of income payable to the Consolidated Fund (note 4), a reconciliation of income recorded within the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure to operating income payable to the Consolidated Fund (note 5); and detail on non-operating income – excess Accruing Resources (note 6).

The SOAS and Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, which is similar to, but different to, IFRS. An understanding of the budgeting framework and explanation of key terms is provided on page 103, in the financial review section of the performance report. Further information on the Public Spending Framework and the reasons why budgeting rules are different to IFRS can also be found in chapter 1 of the Consolidated Budgeting Guidance, available on gov.uk.

The SOAS provides a detailed view of financial performance, in a form that is voted on and recognised by the Assembly. The financial review, in the performance report, provides a summarised discussion of outturn against estimate and functions as an introduction to the SOAS disclosures.

## Summary tables – mirror Part II and III of the Estimates

Summary table, 2021/22, all figures presented in £000

Type of spend	Note	Outturn		Estimate		Outturn vs Estimate, saving/(excess) Net Total	Prior Year Outturn Total 2020/21
		Gross Expenditure	Accruing Resources Total	Gross Expenditure	Accruing Resources Total		
<b>Request for Resources</b>							
<b>Departmental Expenditure in DEL:</b>							
A-1 Food Safety, Nutrition and Standards	SOAS1	16,668	(4,065)	17,716	(4,351)	13,365	10,531
<b>Annually Managed Expenditure (AME):</b>							
A-2 Food Safety, Nutrition and Standards	SOAS1	(14)	–	300	–	300	–
<b>Non-Budget:</b>							
A-3 Notional Charges	SOAS1	14	–	20	–	20	14
<b>Total resources</b>	<b>SOAS2</b>	<b>16,668</b>	<b>(4,065)</b>	<b>18,036</b>	<b>(4,351)</b>	<b>13,685</b>	<b>10,545</b>
<b>Non-operating cost Accruing Resources</b>		–	–	–	–	–	–

Explanations of variances between Estimate and outturn are given in Note SOAS1 and in the Performance Report.

**Net cash requirement 2021/22, all figures presented in £000**

Item	Note	Outturn	Estimate	Outturn vs Estimate, saving/(excess)	Prior Year Outturn Total, 2019/20
<b>Net Cash requirement</b>	SOAS3	12,497	13,487	990	10,127

**Summary of income payable to the Consolidated Fund during the year**

There was no income payable to the Consolidated Fund during the year.

# Notes to the Statement of Outturn against Assembly Supply, 2021/22 (£000)

## SOAS note 1. Outturn detail, by Estimate line

Type of Spend	2021/22				2020/21			
	Other current Admin	Grants	Gross Resource Expenditure	Accruing Resources	Net total Virements* virements	Estimate	Outturn vs Estimate (inc virements), saving/ (excess)	Prior Year Outturn Total, 2020/21
<b>Request for Resources A:</b>								
<b>Departmental Expenditure in DEL:</b>								
A-1 Food Safety, Nutrition and Standards	- 12,245	4,423	16,668	(4,065)	13,365	13,365	762	10,531
<b>Annually Managed Expenditure (AME):</b>								
A-2 Food Safety, Nutrition and Standards	- (14)	-	(14)	-	300	300	314	-
<b>Non-Budget:</b>								
A-3 Notional Charges	-	14	14	-	20	20	6	14
<b>Resource Outturn</b>	<b>- 12,245</b>	<b>4,423</b>	<b>16,668</b>	<b>(4,065)</b>	<b>13,685</b>	<b>13,685</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>10,545</b>

\* Virements are the reallocation of provision in the Estimates that do not require Assembly authority (because the Assembly does not vote to that level of detail and delegates to DoF). Further information on virements are provided in the Supply Estimates in the Northern Ireland Guidance Manual, available on the DoF website.

The Outturn vs Estimate column is based on the total including virements. The Estimate total before virements have been made is included so that users can reconcile this Estimate back to the Estimates approved by the Assembly.

The FSA in Northern Ireland resource spend for the period was £12,603k compared to the estimate of £13,685k. The underspend was partly due to a £314k underspend on Annually Managed Expenditure (AME). The FSA in NI carries £300k AME budget cover (this is non-cash) in the event of default on payments. The remaining underspend was mainly due to expenditure on EU Exit, meat hygiene inspections and staff costs being less than expected. The Covid-19 pandemic and uncertainties on the operationalisation of the Northern Ireland Protocol were major factors contributing to the underspend.

## SOAS note 2. Reconciliation of outturn to net operating expenditure

	Note	Outturn	Supply Estimate	Outturn compared with Estimate	Prior Year Outturn Total, 2020/21
Net Resource Outturn	SOAS1	12,603	13,685	1,082	10,545
<b>Net Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>SOCNE</b>	<b>12,603</b>	<b>13,685</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>10,545</b>

As noted in the introduction to the SOAS above, outturn and the Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, which is similar to, but different from, IFRS. Therefore, this note reconciles the resource outturn to net operating expenditure, linking the SOAS to the financial statements.

The Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland is excluded from the Administration budget regime.

## SOAS note 3. Reconciliation of net resource outturn to net cash requirement

	Note	Outturn total	Estimate	Outturn vs Estimate, Saving / (excess)
<b>Resource Outturn</b>	SOAS1	12,603	13,685	1,082
<b>Capital</b>				
Acquisition of property, plant and equipment	4,5	7	50	43
<b>Accruals to cash adjustments:</b>				
<i>Adjustments to remove non-cash items:</i>				
Depreciation and amortisation	2	(49)	(55)	(6)
New provisions, and adjustments to previous provisions		14	(300)	(314)
Other non-cash items	2	(14)	(20)	(6)
Increase/(decrease) in receivables		96	-	(96)
(Increase)/decrease in payables		(160)	127	287
<b>Net Cash Requirement</b>		12,497	13,487	990

As noted in the introduction to the SOAS above, outturn and the Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, not on a cash basis. This reconciliation bridges the resource outturn to the net cash requirement.

## SOAS note 4. Amounts of income to the Consolidated Fund

There was no surrender of excess Accruing Resources or Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts payable to the Consolidated Fund.

## SOAS note 5. Reconciliation of income recorded within the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure to operating income payable to the Consolidated Fund

		2021/22	2020/21
	Note	£000	£000
Operating income	3	(4,065)	(4,051)
Income authorised to be Accruing Resources		4,065	4,051
<b>Operating income payable to the Consolidated Fund</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

## SOAS note 6. Non-operating income – Excess Accruing Resources

There was no non-operating income Excess Accruing Resources during the year.

# Other Assembly Accountability Disclosures

## i. Losses and Special Payments

The following sections are subject to audit.

The Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland did not incur any losses, or make any special payments during 2021/22 (2020/21 nil).

## ii. Fees and Charges

This section is subject to audit.

An analysis of material programme income from services provided to external customers is as follows:

	2021/22			2020/21		
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
	Income	Full Cost	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Income	Full Cost	Surplus/ (Deficit)
Meat Hygiene Inspection	(4,038)	6,779	(2,741)	(4,048)	6,690	(2,642)
	<b>(4,038)</b>	<b>6,779</b>	<b>(2,741)</b>	<b>(4,048)</b>	<b>6,690</b>	<b>(2,642)</b>

The FSA's financial objective is to recover costs fully. There currently remains a shortfall between the costs for the FSA of delivering meat official controls and the income received from Food Business Operators (FBOs) for these services. This is effectively a subsidy of £2.7m from the FSA to the meat industry.

In addition to meat hygiene inspection, the FSA received income from a joint project on Nutrition (National Diet & Nutrition Survey) and from milk hygiene inspections.

The above information is provided to meet the Fees and Charges disclosure requirements of the FReM and has not been provided for Segmental Analysis purposes under IFRS 8.

### iii. Remote Contingent Liabilities

This section is subject to audit.

There were no remote contingent liabilities (2020/21 nil). Details of any non-remote Contingent Liabilities can be found in note 11.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Miles". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**Emily Miles**

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer  
9 January 2023

# The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Northern Ireland Assembly

## Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) for the year ended 31 March 2022 under the Food Standards Act 1999. The financial statements comprise:

- Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2022;
- Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year then ended; and
- the related notes including the significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Food Standard Agency's (Northern Ireland) affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended; and
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Food Standards Act 1999 and Department of Finance directions issued thereunder

## Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects:

- the Statement of Outturn against Assembly Supply properly presents the outturn against voted Parliamentary control totals for the year ended 31 March 2022 and shows that those totals have not been exceeded; and
- the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

## Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs) (UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Entities in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2019. I have also elected to apply the ethical standards relevant to listed entities. I am independent of the in Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Reporting Manual, which requires entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue in the future.

## Other Information

The other information comprises information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements nor my auditor's certificate and report. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinion on other matters

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with Department of Finance directions made under the Food Standards Act 1999; and
- the information given in the Performance and Accountability Reports for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

## Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance and Accountability Reports.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Report Manual are not made; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

## Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view;
- internal controls as the Accounting Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statement to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and

- assessing the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) will not continue to be provided in future.

## Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Food Standards Act 1999.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

### Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations including fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulation, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud is detailed below.

My procedures included the following:

#### Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, we considered the following:

- The nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland)'s accounting policies.
- Inquiring of management, the Food Standards Agency's Head of Internal Audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) policies and procedures relating to:
  - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and

- the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland)'s controls relating to Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland)'s compliance with the Food Standards Act 1999 and Managing Public Money;
- discussing among the engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, posting of unusual journals and complex transactions. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I also obtained an understanding of the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) framework of authority as well as other legal and regulatory frameworks that the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland) operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the Food Standards Agency (Northern Ireland). The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included, Managing Public Money, employment law and the Food Standards Act, 1999.

In addition, I considered other risk assessment procedures performed relating to fraud, non-compliance with laws and regulations and regularity including compliance with the Cabinet Office controls.

### **Audit response to identified risk**

As a result of performing the above, the procedures I implemented to respond to identified risks included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations discussed above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management, the Audit and Risk Committee and in-house legal counsel concerning actual and potential litigation and claims.
- reading and reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board and internal audit reports;
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business; and
- other audit procedures responsive to the risk of fraud, non-compliance with laws and regulations or irregularity as appropriate.

I also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members including internal specialists and remained

alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of my certificate.

### **Other auditor's responsibilities**

I am required to obtain appropriate evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the Statement of Outturn against Assembly Supply properly presents the outturn against voted Assembly control totals and that those totals have not been exceeded. The voted Assembly control totals are Departmental Expenditure Limits (Resource and Capital), Annually Managed Expenditure (Resource and Capital), Non-Budget (Resource) and Net Cash Requirement.

I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

## **Report**

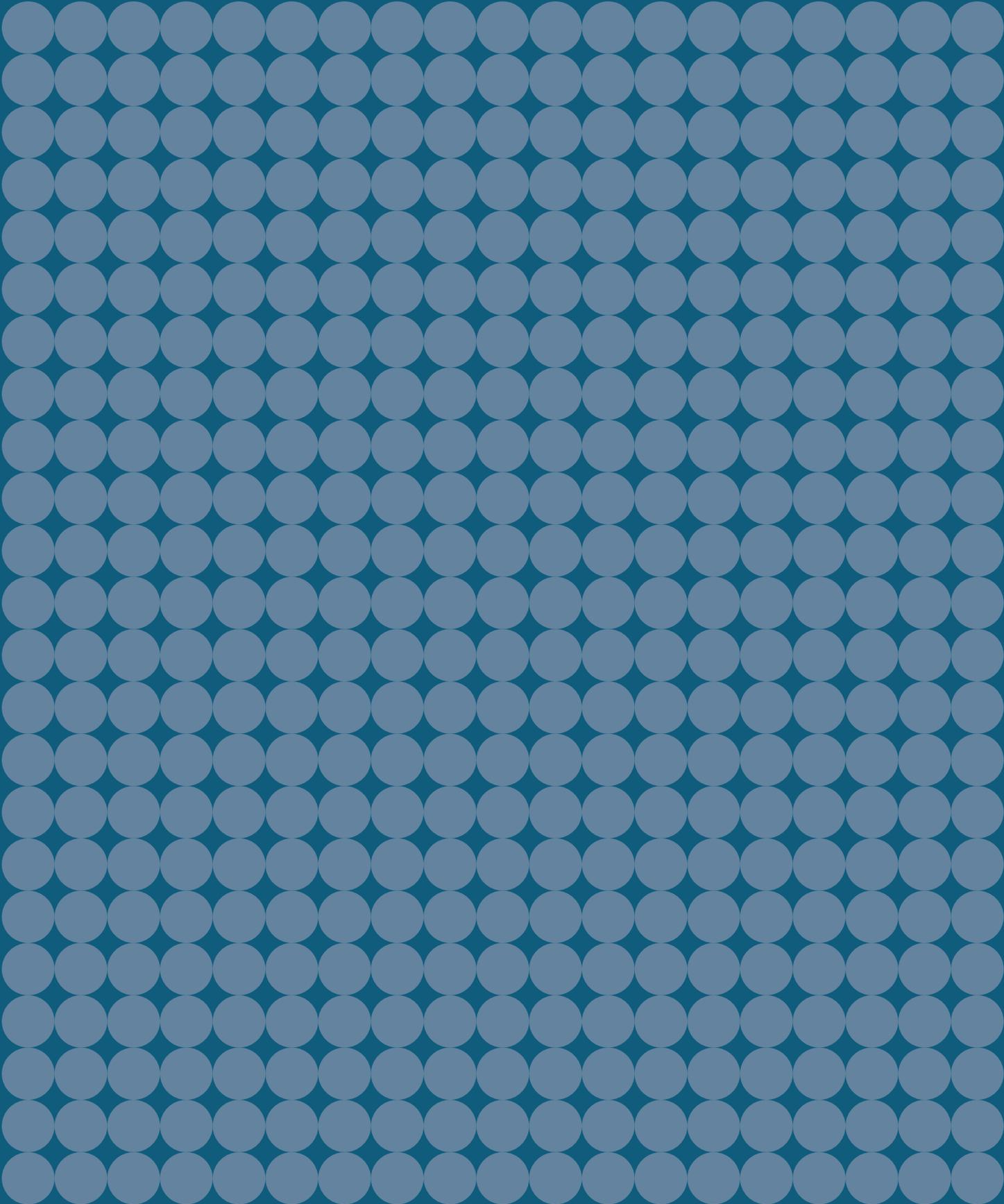
I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

**Gareth Davies**  
**Comptroller and Auditor General**  
National Audit Office  
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road  
Victoria  
London  
SW1W 9SP

**Date** 16 January 2023



# Accounts



# Financial Statements

## Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

for the year ended 31 March 2022

This account summarises the expenditure and income generated and consumed on an accruals basis. It also includes other comprehensive income and expenditure, which include changes to the values of non-current assets and other financial instruments that cannot yet be recognised as income or expenditure.

		2021/22	2020/21
	Note	£000	£000
Revenue from contracts with customers	3	(4,065)	(4,051)
Total Operating Income		(4,065)	(4,051)
Staff costs	2a	3,227	2,781
Depreciation	2a	49	54
Other operating expenditure	2a	637	554
Monitoring and surveillance	2a	12,755	11,207
Total Operating Expenditure		16,668	14,596
<b>Net Expenditure for the year<sup>1</sup></b>		<b>12,603</b>	<b>10,545</b>

1 There is no other comprehensive net expenditure for FSANI.

The notes on pages 186 to 201 form part of these accounts.

## Statement of Financial Position

as at 31 March 2022

This statement presents the financial position of the Food Standards Agency. It comprises three main components: assets owned or controlled; liabilities owed to other bodies; and equity, the remaining value of the entity.

	Note	2021/22 £000	2020/21 £000
<b>Non-current assets:</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	4	69	106
Intangible assets	5	9	14
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>78</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Current assets:</b>			
Trade and other receivables	8	846	767
Other current assets	8	354	337
Cash	7	104	181
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>1,304</b>	<b>1,285</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>1,382</b>	<b>1,405</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	9	(4)	(148)
Other liabilities	9	(2,545)	(2,318)
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>(2,549)</b>	<b>(2,466)</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>(1,167)</b>	<b>(1,061)</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Provisions	10	(118)	(132)
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<b>(118)</b>	<b>(132)</b>
<b>Total assets less total liabilities</b>		<b>(1,285)</b>	<b>(1,193)</b>
<b>Taxpayers' equity and other reserves</b>			
General fund		(1,285)	(1,193)
<b>Total taxpayers' equity</b>		<b>(1,285)</b>	<b>(1,193)</b>



**Emily Miles**

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

9 January 2023

The notes on pages 186 to 201 form part of these accounts.

## Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 31 March 2022

The Statement of Cash Flows shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Department during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Department generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of service costs and the extent to which these operations are funded by way of income from the recipients of services provided by the Department. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash inflows and outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Departments' future public service delivery.

		2021/22	2020/21
	Note	£000	£000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net operating expenditure		(12,603)	(10,545)
Adjustments for non-cash transactions	2	49	68
(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other receivables	8	(96)	(3)
Increase/(Decrease) in trade and other payables	9	83	106
less movements relating to items not passing through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	9	77	309
<b>Net cash outflow from operating activities</b>	SOAS3	<b>(12,490)</b>	<b>(10,065)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	4	(7)	(62)
<b>Net cash outflow from investing activities</b>	SOAS3	<b>(7)</b>	<b>(62)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
From the Consolidated Fund (Supply) – current year		12,420	9,818
<b>Net Financing</b>		<b>12,420</b>	<b>9,818</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period before adjustment for receipts and payments to the Consolidated Fund</b>		<b>(77)</b>	<b>(309)</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period after adjustment for receipts and payments to the Consolidated Fund</b>			
Cash at the beginning of the period	7	181	490
Cash at the end of the period	7	104	181
		<b>(77)</b>	<b>(309)</b>

The notes on pages 186 to 201 form part of these accounts.

## Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

for the year ended 31 March 2022

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Food Standards Agency, analysed into 'general fund reserves' (i.e. those reserves that reflect a contribution from the Consolidated Fund). The General Fund represents the total assets less liabilities of a department, to the extent that the total is not represented by other reserves and financing items.

	Note	General Fund £000	Total Reserves £000
<b>Balance at 31 March 2020</b>		<b>(790)</b>	<b>(790)</b>
Net Assembly Funding		10,128	10,128
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year		(10,545)	(10,545)
Auditors Remuneration	2	14	14
<b>Balance at 31 March 2021</b>		<b>(1,193)</b>	<b>(1,193)</b>
Net Assembly Funding		12,497	12,497
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year		(12,603)	(12,603)
Auditors remuneration	2	14	14
<b>Balance at 31 March 2022</b>		<b>(1,285)</b>	<b>(1,285)</b>

The notes on pages 186 to 201 form part of these accounts.

# Notes to the Departmental Resource Accounts

## 1 Statement of Accounting Policies

### 1.1 Basis of Preparation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2021/22 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HM Treasury and the Accounts Direction issued by Department of Finance. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. The legislative basis for preparing the Northern Ireland account is the Food Standards Act 1999. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Food Standards Agency in NI (FSA in NI) for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the FSA in NI are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material to the accounts. In accordance with the provisions of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and the Food Standards Act 1999, all of the accounts of the FSA are audited by the Comptroller & Auditor General of the National Audit Office.

In addition to the primary statements prepared under IFRS, the FReM also requires the Department to prepare one additional primary statement. The Statement of Outturn against Assembly Supply and supporting notes show outturn against Estimate in terms of the net resource requirement and the net cash requirement.

### 1.2 Accounting Convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment, intangible assets, inventories and certain financial assets and liabilities where material.

### 1.3 Significant Accounting Policies and Material Judgements

Estimates and the underlying assumptions are reviewed on a regular basis by the FSA's senior management. Areas of significant judgement made by management are:

IAS37 Provisions – judgement is made on the best estimate of the amount of the obligation. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period, taking into account the risks and uncertainties. Details on provisions held can be found in note 10.

### 1.4 Non-Current Assets

Non-current assets are items of the Agency's property that have a value greater than or equal to £5,000 (inclusive of irrecoverable VAT where applicable) and have a useful life of greater than one year. The capitalisation policy applies to all construction, capital improvements which enhance the functionality of a building, major equipment

purchases and other capital projects totalling £5,000 or more. This also applies to multiple low cost items of a similar nature which are functionally interdependent or collectively improve efficiency within the FSA in NI. When consolidated, these create an asset to the Agency. If these collectively have a cost in excess of £5,000 and an intended useful period in excess of a year then the items are usually consolidated as one asset.

### 1.5 Property, Plant and Equipment

The FSA does not currently own any land or buildings. All property, plant and equipment assets are carried at depreciated historic cost as a proxy for fair value. This is in accordance with FReM requirements as these assets have short useful lives or low values or both. Assets under construction are not depreciated until the month after they are brought into use. All assets are owned.

### 1.6 Intangible Assets

Computer software and software licences with a purchase cost in excess of £5,000 (including irrecoverable VAT and delivery where applicable) are capitalised at cost and amortised over the life of the licence, or over 7 years if the licence is bought in perpetuity. Intangible assets under construction are not amortised until the month after they are brought into use. The FSA has developed an external facing website ([www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)) primarily for the promoting and advertising of its own services. This website will not generate future economic benefits and consequently all expenditure incurred on developing it is recognised as an expense as it occurs and is not capitalised.

### 1.7 Depreciation and Amortisation

Assets are depreciated from the month following the date of being available for use. Depreciation and amortisation are applied on a straight-line basis to write off costs evenly over the asset's anticipated life. This is in accordance with FReM requirements as a proxy for fair value as these assets have short useful lives or low values or both. Estimated useful lives are reviewed during the year and assets relifed where applicable. The information below shows the useful lives of the assets currently on the non-current asset register.

	2021/22	2020/21
Property, plant and equipment		
Computer equipment	2 – 5 years	2 – 5 years
Office equipment	11 years	11 years
Fixtures and fittings	6 – 10 years	6 – 10 years
Intangible assets:		
Computer software and software licences	6 – 7 years	6 – 7 years

The FSA does not currently own any land or buildings. All property, plant and equipment assets are carried at depreciated historic cost as a proxy for fair value.

## 1.8 Research & Development Expenditure

Expenditure on research is not capitalised and is treated as an operating cost as it is incurred. Expenditure on development in connection with a product or service which is to be supplied on a full cost recovery basis is capitalised if it meets those criteria specified in IAS38.

Most research projects have a retention clause to ensure the satisfactory delivery of the final report. The FSA's policy is to accrue for the final retention amount if the work has been completed at the year end.

## 1.10 Revenue from Contracts with Customers

In line with IFRS 15, the FSA recognises 'Revenue from Contracts with Customers' relating to its main operating activities and the associated contracts. These are classified by activity and grouped into revenue from official controls charged to industry and a joint nutrition project.

FSA revenue is recognised when the performance obligation is satisfied, performance obligation is when inspection and hygiene work is performed. More detail as to application of the 5 step model under IFRS 15 is detailed in note 3 of these accounts.

## 1.10 Administration and Programme Expenditure

FSA in NI are outside the administration budget regime.

## 1.11 Pensions

FSA past and present employees are covered by the provisions of PCSPS. The defined benefit scheme is unfunded. The Department recognises the expected cost of these elements on a systematic and rational basis over the period during which it benefits from employees' services by payment to the PCSPS of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for payment of future benefits is a charge on the PCSPS. In respect of the scheme, the Department recognises the contributions payable for the year.

Further details can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation and at [www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/](http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/).

## 1.12 Operating Leases

All operating leases are accounted for under IAS17 Leases. Classification is made at the inception of the relevant lease.

Operating leases are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease. Operating lease incentives received are recognised as a reduction in the rental expenses and are allocated over the shorter of the lease or the period in which the rental has been reduced by the lessor. The allocation is on a straight line basis. The FSA does not currently have any finance lease liabilities.

### 1.13 Value Added Tax

The net amount of Value Added Tax (VAT) due to or from HMRC is shown as a receivable or payable on the Statement of Financial Position. Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, or if it is incurred on the purchase of a non-current asset, it is capitalised in the cost of the asset.

### 1.14 Provisions

Provisions are recognised in accordance with IAS 37. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation, arising from a past event, at the Statement of Financial Position date.

Provisions have not been discounted as the resulting adjustments are not considered material to these accounts.

### 1.15 Contingent Liabilities

The department discloses for Assembly reporting and accountability purposes:

- i) Items over £250,000 (or lower, where required by specific statute) that do not arise in the normal course of business and which are reported to the Northern Ireland Assembly by Departmental minute prior to the Department entering into the arrangement;
- ii) All items (whether or not they arise in the normal course of business) over £250,000 (or lower, where required by specific statute or where material in the context of resource accounts) which are required by the FReM to be noted in the resource accounts.

Where the time value of money is material, contingent liabilities which are required to be disclosed under IAS37 are stated at discounted amounts and the amounts reported to the Northern Ireland Assembly separately noted. Contingent liabilities that are not required to be disclosed by IAS37 are stated at the amounts reported to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

### 1.16 Financial Assets and Liabilities

The FSA holds the following financial assets and liabilities:

- 1) Assets
  - Cash and cash equivalents
  - Other current assets
  - Trade Receivables – current
- 2) Liabilities
  - Trade and other payables
  - Other Liabilities
  - Provisions

Financial Assets and Liabilities are accounted for under IFRS 9.

Cash balances are measured as the amounts received in FSA's bank account. The FSA does not currently have cash equivalents. Trade receivables are measured at fair value with an impairment review carried out under IFRS 9. Trade and other payables are measured at fair value, with use of agreed invoiced amount, or management estimate in the case of accrued expenditure, forming the basis for valuation.

### **1.17 Early adoption of IFRSs, amendments and interpretations**

The FSA have not adopted any IFRSs, amendments or interpretations early.

### **1.18 IFRSs, amendments and interpretations in issue but not yet effective, or adopted**

IFRS 16 has been applicable for reporting periods beginning from 1 January 2019. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, mandatory application of IFRS 16 by government departments was delayed until 1 April 2022, the FSA will therefore apply IFRS 16 from 1 April 2022.

The new standard removed the distinction between operating and finance leases for lessees and requires right of use assets and lease liabilities to be recognised in the Statement of Financial Position for all leases with a term of more than 12 months unless the underlying asset is of low value.

IFRS 16 has been adapted by to expand the definition of a contract to include intra-UK government agreements where non-performance may not be enforceable by law. This brings FSA accommodation leases with other government departments within the scope of IFRS 16.

The option for FSA has withdrawn the accounting policy choice to apply IFRS 16 retrospectively to each prior reporting period presented in accordance with IAS 8. At the date of initial application the FSA will recognise the cumulative effect of initially applying IFRS 16 as an adjustment to the opening balance of taxpayers' equity.

There has also been the withdrawal of the option to reassess whether a contract is, or contains, a lease at the date of initial application. The FSA will therefore only initially apply IFRS 16 to any contracts previously identified as a lease, or containing a lease, under IAS 17. Contracts relating to accommodation and lease cars have been identified as within scope of IFRS 16.

IFRS 16 does not require the recognition of assets of liabilities for leases where the underlying asset is of low value. HMT has mandated the election of this option and the FSA will therefore recognise lease payments for low value assets as an expense. The FSA will adopt a threshold of £5,000 for low value assets which is in line with its capitalisation policy for owned assets, see Note 1.4 for more details.

IFRS 16 also does not require the recognition of assets or liabilities for leases of 12 months or less. It is mandated the election of this option, so the FSA will recognise such leases as an expense. The FSA identified leases relating to Multi-Function-Devices as falling within this category.

IFRS 16 does not allow for inclusion of non-recoverable VAT within the value of the lease payments when calculating the value of the Right of Use Asset and Lease Liability.

On transition Right of Use Assets and Lease Liabilities will be recognised at an amount equal to the Net Present Value of the lease payments to be made from recognition, to the anticipated end of the lease. Such payments to be discounted at either the rate implied in the contract or at the rate defined by HMT. At December 2021 the rate to be used for leases recognised in the calendar year 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022 is 0.95%.

IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts (expected to be adopted by FReM in 2023/24) is not likely to be applicable to the financial statements of the FSA.

## 2a Operating Expenditure

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
<b>Staff Costs<sup>1</sup></b>		
Wages and salaries	2,204	1,927
Social security costs	242	217
Other pension costs	592	538
Other Staff costs	189	99
<b>Total Staff Costs</b>	<b>3,227</b>	<b>2,781</b>
<b>Rentals under operating leases:</b>		
Operating leases	<b>98</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Non-cash items:</b>		
Depreciation	44	49
Amortisation	5	5
Auditors' remuneration and expenses	14	14
Decrease in provision	(14)	–
<b>Total non-cash items</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>68</b>
Accommodation costs	94	94
Staff overheads	24	11
Administration costs	265	178
IT costs <sup>2</sup>	126	121
Committee Costs	30	38
	<b>539</b>	<b>442</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>608</b>

1 Further analysis of staff costs is located in the Accountability Report on page page 156.

2 Central IT costs are recharged to Devolved Offices from FSA Westminster.

## 2b) Programme Expenditure

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
<b>Monitoring and Surveillance:</b>		
Enforcement & Audit/Local Authority	4,500	3,078
Standards & Dietary Health	256	261
Meat Inspection	6,779	6,690
Press & Publicity	98	89
Microbiological Food Safety	1,122	1,089
	<b>12,755</b>	<b>11,207</b>

## 3 Income

Operating income, analysed by classification and activity, is as follows:

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
<b>Revenue from contracts with customers</b>		
Income for official controls charged to industry	4,039	4,048
Income from Joint Nutrition Projects	26	–
Miscellaneous Income	–	3
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,065</b>	<b>4,051</b>

IFRS 15 requires the FSA to recognise revenue to depict the transfer of goods or services to customers in an amount that reflects the consideration to which the FSA expects to be entitled in exchange for those goods or services. The breakdown above best reflects the income generated from FSA assessed against IFRS 15.

The £4.039m income from official controls charged to industry is contractual income that is invoiced in arrears and thus the performance obligation has already occurred. The £26k relates to income from a joint nutrition project.

There is no variable element to the transaction price. The transaction price is the cost of staff time carrying out services using an hourly rate for the grade of staff supplied/ service provided. FSA does not accept non-cash consideration for payment nor does it offset consideration due to a customer against that due from the same party. Invoices are due on receipt and there is no time value of money or financing offered.

Payment terms are immediate on receipt of the FSA invoice as all invoices are issued in arrears for services carried out in the month or quarter before. There is no separation of price invoiced against performance obligation as the obligation has already occurred. Invoices are calculated on a time basis less discount as described in the Fees and Charges Note on page page 172.

In line with IFRS 15, revenue is recognised at the point of service provided to the customer, at the point of invoice raised or by accrual for services performed in month to be invoiced in future. There is no invoicing in advance of service provision.

## 4 Property, plant and equipment

### 4a

	2021/22			
	Fixtures and Fittings	Office Equipment	Computer Equipment	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Cost or valuation</b>				
At 1 April 2021	142	6	243	391
Additions	–	–	7	7
Disposals	–	–	–	–
<b>At 31 March 2022</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>398</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>				
As at 1 April 2021	116	6	163	285
Charged in year	19	–	25	44
Disposals	–	–	–	–
<b>At 31 March 2022</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>329</b>
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2022</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>69</b>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2021	26	–	80	106
<b>Asset financing</b>				
Owned	7	–	62	69
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2022</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>69</b>

## 4a

	2020/21			
	Fixtures and Fittings	Office Equipment	Computer Equipment	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Cost or valuation</b>				
Cost at 1 April 2020	138	6	185	329
Additions	4	–	58	62
Disposals	–	–	–	–
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>391</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>				
As at 1 April 2020	97	6	133	236
Charged in year	19	–	30	49
Disposals	–	–	–	–
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>285</b>
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>106</b>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2020	41	–	52	93
<b>Asset financing</b>				
Owned	26	–	80	106
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>106</b>

## 5 Intangible assets

### 5a

	2021/22
	Computer software and software licences
	£000
<b>Cost or valuation</b>	
Cost at 1 April 2021	30
Additions	–
Disposals	–
<b>At 31 March 2022</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Amortisation</b>	
As at 1 April 2021	16
Charged in year	5
Disposals	–
<b>At 31 March 2022</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2022</b>	<b>9</b>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2021	14
<b>Asset financing</b>	
Owned	9
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2022</b>	<b>9</b>

## 5b

	2020/21
	<b>Computer software and software licences</b>
	<b>£000</b>
<b>Cost or valuation</b>	
Cost at 1 April 2020	30
Additions	–
Disposals	–
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Amortisation</b>	
As at 1 April 2020	12
Charged in year	4
Disposals	–
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>14</b>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2020	18
<b>Asset financing</b>	
Owned	14
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>14</b>

## 6 Financial Instruments

As the cash requirements of the department are met through the Estimates process, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body of a similar size. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts for non-financial items in line with the department's expected purchase and usage requirements and the department is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

## 7 Cash

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April	181	490
Net changes in cash and cash equivalents	(77)	(309)
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>181</b>

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
The following balances at 31 March were held at:		
Government Banking Service	104	181
	<b>104</b>	<b>181</b>

## 8 Trade receivables, financial and other assets

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>		
Trade receivables	464	451
VAT recoverable	382	316
	<b>846</b>	<b>767</b>
Other current assets:		
Prepayments	22	23
Accrued Income	332	314
	<b>354</b>	<b>337</b>

## 9 Trade payables and other liabilities

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Trade payables	4	123
Other payables	–	25
	<b>4</b>	<b>148</b>
Other current liabilities:		
Accruals and deferred income	2,441	2,137
Amounts issued from the Consolidated Fund for supply but not spent at year end	104	181
	<b>2,545</b>	<b>2,318</b>

## 10 Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April	132	132
Provided in the year	–	–
Provisions not required written back	(14)	–
Provisions utilised in the year	–	–
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>132</b>

### Analysis of expected timing of discounted flows

	2021/22
	£000
<b>Dilapidations</b>	
Not later than one year	–
Later than one year and not later than five years	–
Later than five years*	118
<b>Balance at 31 March 2022</b>	<b>118</b>

\* the expected timing of the provision is on the basis that the lease will be re-negotiated.

A provision has been created for estimated dilapidation costs in respect of an operating lease held. The value is based on professional advice. The FSA is continuing to occupy its premises under interim operating lease agreements while new contracts are being negotiated. The provision has not been discounted, as the resulting adjustment is not considered material to these accounts.

## 11 Contingent liabilities

There were no contingent liabilities (2020/21 nil).

## 12 Commitments under leases

### Operating leases

Total future minimum payments under operating leases are given in the table below for each of the following periods.

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
<b>Obligations under operating leases comprise:</b>		
Land and buildings:		
Not later than one year	8	98
Later than one year and not later than five years	–	8
Later than five years	–	–
	<b>8</b>	<b>106</b>

The FSA lease arrangements do not contain any contingent rents payable, terms of renewal or purchase options, escalation clauses or any imposed restrictions (such as those concerning dividends, additional debt or further leasing).

The FSA is continuing to occupy its premises under interim operating lease agreements while new contracts are being negotiated.

## 13 Capital commitments

The FSA in NI has no capital commitments.

## 14 Other financial commitments

The Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland did not have any other commitments as at 31 March 2022.

## 15 Related-Party Transactions

None of the Board Members, key managerial staff or related parties have undertaken any material transactions with the FSA in Northern Ireland during the year.

The FSA in Northern Ireland had a number of transactions with other government departments and other central government bodies. All Related Parties are with Other Government Bodies.

In Northern Ireland, these were the Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs £7,446k for the delivery of meat, milk, egg and primary production official controls; Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute £339k for the delivery of shellfish official

controls; Department of Finance £282k for legal services, rates and training; Department of Health and Social Care (England) £73k, the Executive Office £62k, Loughs Agency £9k and Department of Health (NI) £7k.

In July 2020 the Director for Regulatory Compliance, People and NI took up an unpaid role as a Non-Executive Director with the Council for the Homeless NI (CHNI). The FSA in NI contributes £40k per year to the NI Fareshare Project within CHNI to help tackle food poverty. The Director has and will continue to remove herself from any discussions at CHNI Board Meetings regarding the funding of Fareshare and declares her interest in relation to the funding of Fareshare by the FSA. She has also removed herself as authorising officer for the FSA's funding of Fareshare. This responsibility has moved to the Director of Resources & People.

## **16 Entities within the Departmental Boundary**

The FSA in NI has no other entities within its Departmental Boundary.

## **17 Events after the reporting period**

In accordance with the requirements of IAS 10 Events after the reporting period, post year end events are considered up to the date on which the accounts are authorised for issue. This is interpreted as the date of the Certificate and Report of the UK Comptroller and Auditor General. There are no reported events after the reporting period.









