

ACTIONS ARISING – BUSINESS COMMITTEE

From the FSA Business Committee on 23 September 2020

Index	Action	Due Date	Owner and progress to date
Action 1 - (FSA 20/09/11) Annual Report: Freedom of Information Requests, External Complaints and Internal Whistleblowing Cases	From the 2021 Annual Freedom of Information, External Complaints and Internal Whistleblowing Report onwards, Noel Sykes to provide greater detail of the subject areas of FOI requests.	September 2021	Noel Sykes Complete – This will be included in future reports.
Action 2 - (FSA 20/09/13) Science Update 2020	To give an update on what should constitute minimum laboratory capacity in paper on Sampling for November 2020 Board meeting.	November 2020	Director of Science Complete – Information contained in Board paper discussed at November 18 meeting.
Action 3 - (FSA 20/09/14) Annual Animal Welfare Update	To provide Committee Members with information about education uptake around Animal Welfare.	December 2020	Darren Whitby Complete – See Annex

Annex - Information about education uptake around Animal Welfare.

The FSA takes a nationwide approach to strengthening and improving performance of both FSA staff and Food Business Operators (FBOs) through education and guidance. We do that through regular updates to the Manual for Official Controls (MOC) and through supplementary best practice guidance; the TEC Files. All Food Business Operators have access to the MOC and are alerted when its contents are updated and advised to consider as part of their internal training packages.

Operatives working with live animals within a slaughterhouse setting are required by legislation to hold a Certificate of Competence (CoC) which is attained (following assessment) through a modular training programme provided through FDQ as a registered training body. In addition, depending on the throughput of premises the FBO will need to provide an Animal Welfare Officer who is also required to undergo mandatory training.

There will always be a need for specific educational pieces delivered through local teams in response to individual incidents and performance data, however the update given to Business Committee in the Annex to the Animal Welfare Board Paper focussed on nationwide initiatives delivered;

- Strengthened guidance in the MOC regarding suspension/revocation of CoCs, clarifying that suspensions must only be for a period of three months and during which the suspended individual must successfully complete specific retraining prior to having their CoC returned.
- Template letters (for suspension and revocation) were introduced for use by Official Veterinarians. These are available as annexes to the MOC; annexes are only available to FSA staff and contracted veterinarians.
- The animal welfare verification protocol (used by OVs to conduct specific welfare checks) was upgraded to improve its usability and to include more checks and balances, such as a monthly review of FBO Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- The MOC was amended to include a description of the main aspects an FBO must include within their SOP. An aide memoir was also added in the form of an annex that can easily be carried and referenced by OVs.

The TEC Files are best practice guidance and focusses on practical elements of implementation that are not appropriate for the MOC. The TEC Files are issued to all OVs and utilised by FBOs. TEC Files guidance was created on the 'restraint of cattle' and the 'provision of water', FSA consulted with FBOs in the production of this guidance and we have seen a reduction in regulatory contraventions since the introduction. However, contraventions regarding provision of water remain disproportionately high and we will be focussing on further improving guidance for this in the coming period.

The ability to assess uptake in this area is therefore not possible as FBO and FSA staff are provided with all educational/guidance material and further training uptake is a responsibility of the FBO to consider as part of their obligations for delivering the best outcomes for animal welfare.