

BUSINESS COMMITTEE REPORT

2 SISTERS FOOD GROUP (2SFG)

1. We have completed the investigation into the issues identified by undercover journalists at 2SFG. The investigation sought evidence from assurance schemes, retailers, interviews and over 500 hours of CCTV footage. Incidences of poor practice and weak management controls were identified but these have not required formal enforcement. 2SFG have been proactive in their response and corrective actions to resolve issues and rebuild confidence in their controls and culture.
2. The National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) collated intelligence to consider the case for a criminal investigation. This evidence was shared with enforcement agencies with the powers to investigate potential criminal activity and an assessment to not progress any food crime investigation was made by West Midlands Police and the Local Authority (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council).
3. Our investigation recommendations pointed to the need for improved data and intelligence sharing, better utilisation of CCTV in cutting plants and the development of the NFCU function. We have also announced a review of controls in cutting plants and cold stores based on some of the issues noted in the investigation. The Regulating our Future (RoF) programme team have been involved in the response to this issue to ensure alignment with data/intelligence sharing and wider RoF principles.
4. We provided an interim update to the House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee in response to its report recommendations and reported on progress against them from all involved in the hearing in October. We have maintained a full-time presence at all 2SFG poultry cutting plants since November but in the light of progress made by 2SFG and the assurances they have provided we are now looking to scale this back.

RUSSELL HUME

5. We have been running a 'severe' level incident relating to Russell Hume Limited and a number of other meat companies since January. This response has been de-escalated to 'routine' as at 2nd March.
6. Following a routine unannounced inspection on 12th January at Russell Hume's Birmingham site, subsequent investigations at its other five sites showed that the issue of inadequate food safety management systems was significant and systemic.
7. Remedial Action Notices (RANs) and Detention of Food Notices were served on 22nd January. Disposal of the affected product was done under the control of Field Operations staff working in collaboration with Animal and Plant Health Agency. On 5th February the RAN relating to the Liverpool site was lifted following the company making the necessary improvements to its food safety management system; however, the company did not restart operations. With the exception the London site, no other attempts were made by the business to improve their on-site food safety management systems. On 19th February, the company announced that it was going into administration. Investigations into potential criminal proceedings continue and the administrators are working with us on the release of compliant products.

8. The FSA and FSS met with representatives from the meat industry on 20th February 2018 to discuss the implications of these incidents. The meeting addressed the required actions and involvement in the review of cutting plants and cold stores announced on 1st February. It was agreed that we would work together to address the issues raised by recent events.
9. The RH case resulted in increased intelligence-led investigations with subsequent withdrawals of products from other companies. The FSA's actions demonstrate the robustness of our incident response arrangements and our willingness to use the full range of enforcement options open to us based on the evidence.

HR UPDATE

Diversity

10. The Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy was launched in the Autumn with the goal of creating a Civil Service where everyone feels able to bring their whole self to work and perform at their best. We are developing our own strategy to reflect these goals. We want better representation of ethnic minority staff and disabled staff at senior levels, and we need to develop talented people already working in the FSA as well as ensuring we recruit in the best and most diverse talent possible. We are sponsoring five places on the Positive Action Pathway, (EO to SEO) a cross-government development scheme for civil servants who are from under-represented groups. The FSA Women's Network will be holding an event on International Women's Day in early March. A draft FSA Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2018-2020) and action plan will be presented to EMT for consideration on 27 March.

Civil Service People Survey 2017

11. Following publication of the 2017 survey results in December, a corporate people survey action plan has been developed. This sets out the high-level actions we will work towards. These actions fall into four themes: pay and benefits, bullying/harassment/discrimination/safe to challenge, managing change and leadership. As it is everyone's responsibility to use the results of the survey to take action, the plan uses our ASPIRE values (Accountable, Supported, Professional, Innovative, Resilient, & Empowered) to reflect on what all employees can do to make the FSA a 'great place to work'.

Simplified Recruitment

12. Following an internal consultation exercise, EMT have agreed with recommendations to change and improve our current practices on both internal and external recruitment. The areas where there will be notable change include candidate attraction; candidate application and sifting; selection and assessment and also greater awareness of flexibilities currently available to fill roles. These changes will give managers increased options to choose from to ensure they get the right people in; have consistency in the advertising approaches they use; and benefit from a more

streamlined process to manage end-to-end recruitment. These changes have already started to be implemented and will develop further throughout 2018.

Talent Management (nine box grid)

13. All SCS, G6 and G7 staff will be having a career conversation with their manager before end of March 2018. For the first time, we are also encouraging all SEOs to take part in this exercise, however it is not mandatory for staff at this grade. The career conversation is a discussion on both performance and potential, and results in updated 9 box grid position. These grid positions will allow us to better understand who our 'high potential' individuals are, and will also identify those who may benefit from tailored support to become more effective in their current role / grade. This year, we are also keen to understand more about which professions our staff align themselves to, so we are also capturing this data to better support individuals who want to anchor their careers in specific areas, and assist them in building professional networks across the Civil Service.
14. Throughout 2018/19 the Talent and Capability team will use the data recorded from the nine box grid returns to plan learning interventions and corporate challenges for those ready for more 'stretch' in their roles, whilst also developing support for those earlier in the careers or who may want to solidify their experience in their current role.

New Performance Management Scheme – April 2018

15. Our new Performance Management (PM) scheme, which was developed with extensive feedback and input from representatives from across the Agency, was agreed by EMT in January 2018 and will be launched from April 2018.
16. We are now developing the Performance Management Toolkit which will provide the policy, process and guidance for both managers and employees with the intention that this is in a format which is both interactive and printable so that that is useful right across the Agency.
17. To support managers in using the new PM process, we have contracted a training delivery partner, GBS Corporate Training, to work with us to deliver one-day workshops for all managers which will provide a refreshment of remote management skills, brief them on the new PM policy and process and introduce strength-based feedback with skills practice, based on case-studies gathered from across the Agency.
18. The first pilot workshop is planned for 21 March with training rolling out at venues across the country between 26 March and 1 May 2018.

CCTV IN SLAUGHTERHOUSES

19. Around 12 months ago, following extensive engagement, meat industry bodies approached us with a proposal to consider a voluntary initiative to allow our Official Veterinarians to monitor CCTV for welfare purposes, as a matter of routine. This voluntary protocol, which will provide additional verification of animal welfare standards, was launched on 20th November. The voluntary protocol sets out the agreed structure and best practice under which on site Official Veterinarians should

view CCTV footage and can be viewed at the following link:
https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/cctv_official_access_protocol.pdf

20. The FSA supports the use of CCTV by business operators as part of their systems for monitoring and protecting animal welfare. The industry bodies signed up to this protocol are: British Meat Processors Association, Association of Independent Meat Suppliers, British Poultry Council, National Federation of Meat and Food Traders and Scottish Association of Meat Wholesalers.
21. Separately Defra also announced that CCTV will become mandatory in slaughterhouses later this year, with legislation introduced. This will only cover slaughterhouses in England. More information can be found on Defra's website via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cctv-to-be-introduced-in-all-slaughterhouses-in-england-in-2018>

UPDATE ON PROSECUTIONS

22. The impact of the introduction in 2016 of a Sentencing Guideline on Food Safety and Food Hygiene offences continues to be positive. This is not only in relation to the sentencing of those offences themselves, but also when the principles of the Guideline are applied to other regulatory offences where a guideline is not currently in place. This includes animal welfare breaches that are prosecuted by the Crown Prosecution Service (acting for Defra) following an FSA investigation. There is currently no definitive sentencing guideline for such offences, so counsel prosecuting animal welfare cases on behalf of the CPS have been directing the courts to the principles set down in existing guidelines for regulatory offences. The impact in 2017/18 has been that fines approaching £340,000 have been imposed by the courts following successful prosecution of food hygiene and animal welfare offences after FSA investigations. This sum is almost double the total fines achieved on FSA investigated cases in any previous year, despite the number of individual cases being comparatively low.
23. In the past month, there have been three successful prosecutions following FSA investigations including:
 - At Derby Magistrates Court on 6 February 2018, Moy Park Limited pleaded guilty to three offences under the Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015, in relation to an incident where birds were kept overnight in crates at the premises for over 12 hours without access to food or water. A large number of birds were found to be dead when processing commenced the next day. The court imposed a fine of £60,000 on the company and ordered them to pay prosecution costs of £2,469.
 - At Northallerton Magistrates Court on 2 March 2018, sentencing took place of four individuals who pleaded guilty to animal welfare offences identified following covert filming by Animal Aid at slaughter premises in North Yorkshire formerly operated by Bowood Farms Limited. This has been a challenging investigation and prosecution process that has lasted for over three years following the covert filming in late 2014. At one stage, proceedings were

dismissed by a District Judge following legal arguments raised by the defendants. Fortunately, the CPS were able to get that judgment overturned at the Court of Appeal, which allowed the prosecution to continue. Ultimately, at the start of a scheduled 4 day trial in Northallerton on 22 January 2018, William Woodward, a director of the company, and three slaughtermen (Kazam Hussein, Kabeer Hussain and Artur Lewandowski) entered guilty pleas to offences under the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

William Woodward was sentenced to 20 weeks imprisonment (suspended for 12 months) and given a 250 hours unpaid community work order. He was also ordered to pay £5000 towards prosecution costs and an £80 victim surcharge. Kazam Hussain was found guilty of two offences, one concerning 19 sheep breaching the 20 second rule, the other concerning six sheep whose throats were not cut correctly. He was sentenced to 18 weeks imprisonment on each charge (suspended for 12 months), ordered to carry out 250 hours unpaid community work and to pay £500 towards prosecution costs and a victim surcharge of £80.

Kabeer Hussain was found guilty of one offence concerning 24 sheep breaching the 20 second rule. He was sentenced to 16 weeks imprisonment on each charge (suspended for 12 months), ordered to carry out 250 hours unpaid community work and to pay £500 towards prosecution costs and a victim surcharge of £80. Artur Lewandowski was found guilty of pulling sheep by their fleece and was given a 12 month Community Order, ordered to carry out 150 hours unpaid community work and to pay £100 towards prosecution costs and a victim surcharge of £80.

They were all made subject of an indefinite Disqualification Order under s.34 of the Animal Welfare Act, preventing them from having any influence or control over sheep. They cannot appeal this order for three years.