

Food Law

Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland)

FOOD LAW PRACTICE GUIDANCE

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Amendment Number	Signed	Date
Amendment No. 1	_____	_____
Amendment No. 2	_____	_____
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Amendment No. 18	_____	_____
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Please sign and date to confirm replacement of relevant pages with amendments issued by the Food Standards Agency.

PREFACE

This Practice Guidance is issued by the Food Standards Agency for Northern Ireland to assist District Councils with the discharge of their statutory duty to enforce the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 and Regulations made under it.

District Councils should be aware that law relating to food is not necessarily made under the Food Safety Order (NI) 1991. Law that applies to food is also contained in and/or made under, the Diseases of Animals (NI) Order 1981, the European Communities Act 1972, and the Consumer Protection (NI) Order 1987 and directly under EC Regulations.

District Council officers authorised under Article 2(2) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 to carry out duties under that Order and Regulations made under it are not automatically authorised to deal with food law under other legislation. Separate authorisation in respect of other legislation is also required e.g. legislation made under the European Communities Act 1972, including the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006¹ and the Official Feed and Food Control Regulations (NI) 2006², under which officers may be generally or specially authorised.

This Practice Guidance replaces all previous guidance issued in the Codes of Practice, made under the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991.

Material in the previous guidance has been reviewed and updated to take account of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006, the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 and relevant EU Regulations.

This Practice Guidance also takes account of recommendations made by the EU Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) following their inspections of the UK's food control services.

District Councils should be aware that Article 8(5) of Regulation 852/2004³ stipulates that guides to good practice drawn up pursuant to Directive 93/43/EEC (known in the UK as "Industry Guides to Good Hygiene Practice") shall continue to apply after the entry into force of that Regulation, provided that they are compatible with its objectives.

Attention is drawn to the guidance on the scope and conduct of official checks on establishments subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004⁴.

References to chapters, paragraphs and annexes are to the relevant parts of this document unless stated otherwise.

References in this guidance to "the Agency" or "the Food Standards Agency" mean the Food Standards Agency for the United Kingdom.

¹ SR 2006 No. 3

² SR 2006 No. 2

³ Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs

⁴ Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin

References in this guidance to “FSANI” mean the Food Standards Agency for Northern Ireland.

The guidance contained in this document is given in good faith, and accords with the Agency’s understanding of relevant legal requirements.

It should not, however, be taken as an authoritative statement or interpretation of the law as only the Courts have that power. Any examples given are illustrative and not comprehensive.

District Councils are strongly advised to consult their own legal departments when considering enforcement matters.

SECTION 1: ADMINISTRATION

All relevant information on administration is contained within the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 1.1: INTER AUTHORITY MATTERS

1.1.1: Introduction

This chapter deals with those situations where more than one authority may have enforcement responsibilities

1.2.2: Services to Consumers

The division of enforcement responsibility between District Councils and for example Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Quality Assurance Branch (DARD QAB) may not be readily apparent to the consumer.

Such authorities should aim to provide a food law enforcement service that is, as far as consumers are concerned, as seamless, effective and accessible as possible.

CHAPTER 1.2: QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

1.2.1. Introduction

This Chapter deals with the qualifications and experience of authorised officers of District Councils.

1.2.2. Pooling Expertise

District Councils should consider identifying a pool of authorised officers within their local or regional liaison group, whose experience and qualifications encompass the range of product-specific establishments subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004 and food business establishments which undertake specialist or complex high-risk activities. The Group Environmental Health Committee structure in Northern Ireland may help to facilitate this.

District Councils that lack officers with suitable qualifications and experience to inspect such activities may then seek assistance from such officers.

CHAPTER 1.3: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All relevant information on conflicts of interest is contained in the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 1.4: FOOD BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT RECORDS

1.4.1. Introduction

This Chapter contains information about the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as they relate to food business records.

1.4.2. Data Protection

District Councils should ensure that their data protection registration encompasses all their reasons for holding data, including its supply to other agencies for the purposes of ensuring public health and the effective enforcement of food law.

District Councils must uphold the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (both of which implement the relevant EC Directives) in relation to any data and information they hold.

If District Councils have any doubts about the release of data or information they should seek legal advice or contact the Information Commissioner's office whose website can be found at www.ico.gov.uk.

CHAPTER 1.5: REGISTRATION OF FOOD BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS

All relevant information on the registration of food business establishments is contained in the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 1.6: CROWN AND POLICE PREMISES

1.6.1. Introduction

This Chapter deals with enforcement of food law in Crown and police premises. This non-statutory guidance concerns the approach to enforcement in Crown premises and in premises that are occupied by the police; it does not apply to premises that are occupied by the Health and Social Services Boards or HSS Trusts since these are not Crown premises. The Code of Practice contains statutory guidance, which District Councils must follow, regarding the enforcement of food law in such premises.

1.6.2. Scope of Application - Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006

The scope of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 extends to police premises, Crown premises and to people in the public service of the Crown. Authorised officers therefore have power to enter police premises and Crown premises to investigate complaints and to carry out inspections in the same way as they do in any other food business. See however paragraph 1.6.3 of the Code of Practice relating to National Security Certificates.

1.6.3. Scope of Application - Food Safety (NI) Order 1991

The Food Safety Order extends to police premises, most Crown premises (subject to the exemptions detailed), and to people in the public service of the Crown. Authorised officers therefore have power to enter police premises and most Crown premises to investigate complaints and to carry out inspections in the same way as they do in any other food business.

The provisions of the Order do not, however, apply to Her Majesty the Queen or His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales personally.

The Code of Practice contains statutory guidance which District Councils must follow on the enforcement of the Order in Crown and police premises.

1.6.4. Conduct and Frequency of Inspections

Food businesses in Crown and police premises should be included in the District Councils planned inspection programme in accordance with the Code of Practice.

1.6.5: Enforcement - Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006

Unlike the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 do not exempt the Crown if it contravenes the Regulations. This means that the Crown can be prosecuted if it contravenes the Regulations. However, as mentioned in Paragraph 1.6.2 above, District Councils should use discretion when exercising their powers in respect of Crown premises and, in practice, should adopt the same approach to the enforcement of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 in respect of Crown premises as they do in respect of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991.

1.6.6: Enforcement - Food Safety (NI) Order 1991

1.6.6.1: Liability

Article 49(2) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 says that the Crown is not criminally liable if it contravenes the Order or Regulations or Orders made under it. This means that the Crown cannot be prosecuted if it contravenes the Order etc.

A District Council may, however, apply, in the High Court, for a declaration that any act or omission of the Crown, which amounts to a contravention of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 or regulations made under the Order, is unlawful.

The identity of the proprietor of the food business concerned should be carefully considered if the question of action under food law arises.

Contract caterers operating on Crown premises can be prosecuted as they are not subject to this exemption. Careful consideration also needs to be given to the question as to whose failure gave rise to the contravention.

Although contract caterers operating on Crown premises can be prosecuted, structural failures may be the responsibility of the Crown itself.

Any application under Article 49(2) should be addressed to the relevant Head of Department and sent to the Crown Solicitor for Northern Ireland, Royal Courts of Justice, Chichester Street, Belfast, BT1 3JY.

The summons should be sent to the principal officer of a non-Departmental Government body.

1.6.6.2: Position of Individual Civil or Government Servants

Although the Crown is immune from prosecution, individuals in the public service of the Crown may still be prosecuted in the same way as any other person. Failure to comply with the provisions of food law could therefore expose an individual civil or Government servant to the risk of prosecution.

District Councils should not consider prosecuting an individual civil or Government servant as a substitute for action against the Crown. Such action should only be considered if the circumstances would have resulted in the prosecution of an individual in the case of any other business.

1.6.6.3: Statutory Notices

The service of an Emergency Prohibition Notice does not itself make the recipient criminally liable. Such notices may therefore be served on the Crown where it is the proprietor of the food business concerned.

Emergency Prohibition Notices should be served on the appropriate Head of Department and copied to the Solicitor as described above.

In order that such notices can be acted upon without undue delay, they should also be copied to the person in charge of the premises concerned, e.g. the Governor of a prison.

District Councils should apply in the normal way to a Magistrates Court for an Emergency Prohibition Order on the whole or part of Crown premises, or to prevent the operation of a process or treatment, or use of a piece of equipment in a business run by the Crown.

It should be remembered, however, that although a Magistrates Court may impose an Emergency Prohibition Order, it may not impose a Prohibition Order, since a Prohibition Order can only be made when there has been a conviction under relevant food law.

The food business operator in Crown premises may appeal in the normal way to a Magistrates Court against an Improvement Notice and may also appear to argue against the imposition of an Emergency Prohibition Order.

The Crown may also appeal against a refusal to issue a certificate lifting an Emergency Prohibition Order.

A District Council may apply for a declaration in the High Court if a business run by the Crown fails to comply with an Emergency Prohibition Order.

CHAPTER 1.7: FOOD INCIDENTS AND HAZARDS

1.7.1. Introduction

This Chapter deals with food incidents and hazards that are identified by District Councils.

1.7.2. Information Received Locally Which May Indicate a Wider Problem

District Councils are responsible for investigating and dealing with food that fails to comply with food safety requirements in their areas. District Councils may identify potential problems in a number of ways such as:

- Following microbiological examination or chemical analysis of samples submitted to a Food Examiner or Public Analyst;
- As a result of complaints from members of the public, either directly or through a third party, for example, the police, citizens' advice bureaux etc;
- Through notifications from a manufacturing company, trade association, wholesaler, retailer, importer or caterer;
- Information from enforcement agencies in other countries;
- As a result of a notification from a GP of one or more cases of communicable diseases, including food-borne illness, or from the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC), or the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (NI) (CDSC (NI)).

The illustrations above are not intended to be comprehensive.

Following consultation with the Food Examiner and/or Public Analyst, samples of relevant foods or ingredients and appropriate samples (vomit, stool) from any persons affected should be obtained where possible and sent for examination/analysis. These items can be critically important in identifying the cause of the illness and may even save lives.

1.7.3. Guidance on Food Complaints

1.7.3.1 Notification of Food Complaints

As a general rule anybody who may be prosecuted as a result of a consumer complaint should be notified that the complaint has been made as soon as reasonably practicable.

The District Council should normally notify anybody who has an interest as soon as preliminary investigations indicate that a complaint may be well founded. Other potential defendants should be notified as they emerge.

Notification may be by any means, but should be confirmed in writing as soon as reasonably practicable. The written notification should include the date and nature of the complaint.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which notification could impede an investigation. In such circumstances notification should take place once it would no longer prejudice further investigations.

1.7.3.2. Involvement of Other Food Authorities

If an investigation of a complaint brings to light a problem or potential problem outside the area of the enforcing District Council, the other District Councils affected should be informed as soon as possible in accordance with the Home Authority Principle.

1.7.3.3. Scientific Investigation of Food Complaint Samples

The authorised officer will need to consider whether food that is the subject of a complaint needs to undergo any scientific investigation. If the authorised officer is in any doubt, advice should be sought from the Public Analyst and/or Food Examiner who will be able to advise on the form of scientific investigation which may be appropriate, particularly where a combination of analysis and examination is required.

If the authorised officer considers that a food complaint sample should be analysed, it should be sent to the Public Analyst. If it should be microbiologically examined, it should be sent to a Food Examiner. If any other investigation is necessary, the food should be sent to somebody who is suitably qualified and able to give evidence in the event of a prosecution.

The subject of a complaint or other interested party may ask for a food complaint sample to be made available to help with an internal investigation. The District Council should try to comply with any reasonable request provided that it does not compromise the proper storage, analysis, examination or evidential value of the sample.

SECTION 2: COMMUNICATION

CHAPTER 2.1: DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Relevant information on disclosure of information is contained in the Code of Practice. Chapter 1.4 of this Guidance is also relevant.

CHAPTER 2.2: FOOD ALERTS

All relevant information on Food Standards Agency communications and guidance is contained in the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 2.3: FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY COMMUNICATIONS AND GUIDANCE

All relevant information on Food Standards Agency communications and guidance is contained in the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 2.4: INFORMATION TO BE SUPPLIED TO THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY

All relevant material on information to be supplied to the Food Standards Agency is contained in the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 2.5: LIAISON WITH OTHER MEMBER STATES

2.5.1. Introduction

This Chapter deals with the administration of and the approach to the European liaison arrangements that are to be operated by the Food Standards Agency from 1 April 2006. Detailed provisions on administrative assistance and co-operation with other Member States are set out in Articles 34 to 38 of Regulation 882/2004⁵.

2.5.2. The Role of the Food Standards Agency

The Agency is responsible for ensuring that official controls in the UK are carried out in accordance with Regulation 882/2004.

The Agency, from 1 April 2006, is the designated liaison body for the purposes of Article 35 of Regulation 882/2004 and, as such, is responsible for assisting and co-ordinating communication between Competent Authorities and the transmission and reception of requests for assistance. However, this does not preclude direct contacts, exchange of information or co-operation between the staff of Food Authorities in different Member States.

In respect of requests for assistance from other Member States, the Agency is responsible for ensuring that all the necessary information concerning compliance, or otherwise, with UK food law is provided without delay, except for information which cannot be released because it is the subject of legal proceedings.

The Agency will deal with matters falling under categories A (Trans-border matters to be referred directly to the Agency) and B (Trans Border Matters reported to the Agency after liaison has taken place) (see Chapter 2.5 of the Code of Practice).

2.5.3. The Role of District Councils

The “European Principle of the Home Authority” adopted by the European Forum of Food Law Enforcement Practitioners (FLEP) forms the basis for the arrangements for information exchanges involving the UK. The role of the District Councils in the provision of administrative assistance will depend on whether they are acting as “Home Authority”, “Enforcing Authority” or “Originating Authority.” These terms are defined as follows:

- “Home Authority” means the food law enforcement authority in the Member State which has geographical responsibility for the area in which the responsible decision-making base of the food enterprise is located (e.g. this may be the factory, the head office or address on the product label);

⁵ Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules

- “Enforcing Authority” means the food law enforcement authority in a Member State which is investigating infringements or queries relating to food products received from other Member States;
- “Originating Authority” means the food law enforcement authority in a Member State in whose area a decentralised enterprise produces or packages goods or services. The Originating Authority has special responsibility for ensuring that goods and services produced within its area conform to legal requirements. The functions of the Home Authority and Originating Authority may be combined in some areas.

2.5.4. Enquiries from Member States

Requests for information or administrative assistance received by the Food Standards Agency will be passed to the appropriate District Council for action. The subsequent response may be made either via the Agency or direct to the Enforcing Authority in the Member State concerned if appropriate.

2.5.5. Documentation

In accordance with Article 36(2) of Regulation 882/2004, District Councils must ensure that documents are forwarded without undue delay. Article 36(2) permits documents to be transmitted in their original form, or for copies to be provided.

2.5.6. Disclosure of Information

Article 7 of Regulation 882/2004 sets out the general requirements in respect of transparency and confidentiality. Article 34 stipulates that Articles 35 to 40 of that Regulation, which deal with administrative assistance and co-operation between Member States “shall not prejudice national rules applicable to the release of documents which are the object of, or are related to, court proceedings, or rules aimed at the protection of natural or legal persons’ commercial interests”.

District Councils should therefore ensure that any release of information is compatible with national legislation including that relating to Data Protection and Freedom of Information (see also Chapter 1.4).

2.5.7. Use of Information in Criminal Proceedings

Information can only be used in criminal proceedings with the prior consent of the sending Member State. Where a Member State is party to an international agreement or convention on mutual assistance, the procedures laid down in such instruments must be followed.

All EU Member States are parties to The European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters⁶. This Convention requires that requests for information to be used as evidence in criminal proceedings be transmitted through the relevant authority.

The relevant authority in the UK is the “United Kingdom Central Authority”, which is part of the Judicial Co-operation Unit of the Home Office. The Central Authority liaises with the judicial authorities in Northern Ireland.

All requests via the Central Authority must be notified to the Agency so that it can fulfil its role as the UK single liaison body.

The UK Central Authority address is:

Home Office
UK Central Authority
5th Floor, Fry Building
Marsham Street,
London
SW1P 4DF

District Councils should ensure that any information known, at the time of the request, to be required for use in criminal proceedings is obtained from the Member State by means of a letter of request under Section 3 of the Criminal Justice (International Co-operation) Act 1990.

District Councils are not “designated prosecuting authorities” for the purposes of the above mentioned Act and letters of request must therefore be sought from a Justice of the Peace or a Judge.

Where District Councils wish to use information that has already been supplied by another Member State, a letter of request should similarly be sought from a Justice of the Peace or a Judge.

The request must formally seek the consent of the Home Authority (or equivalent) in the Member State concerned to use the information in the proceedings.

2.5.8. Non-compliance with Legislation

When, during the exchange of information, it is apparent that a trader has not complied with EU rules or national legislation, the Member State where the alleged non-compliance has taken place is required to report to the other Member State on action taken and steps to prevent recurrence. Either Member State can then decide whether the report should also be copied to the European Commission. District Councils should copy all reports to the Agency. The Agency will decide whether the Commission should be notified.

⁶ Council Act of 29 May 2000 establishing, in accordance with Article 34 of the Treaty on European Union, the Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Member States of the European Union (Official Journal C197, 12 .07.2000).

2.5.9: Form – Notification of Incident to the Food Standards Agency



**Notification of Incident to the Food Standards Agency
Exchange of Information: Routine Food Matters**

Please complete all parts of this form in capital letters or type

**Directed to
(Member State)**

Info Only*

FA Ref:

**Action
Requested***

**Agency
Ref:**

* (Please tick as appropriate)

Name and Address of Food Authority:

Contact Officer:

Tel:

E-mail:

Fax:

Full product description (to include product name or brand name, health/ identification marks):

Nature of complaint/request:

Date of Notification:

Photo: Yes No

Name and Address of Manufacturer, Packer, Retailer, Wholesaler (where appropriate):

Details of Investigation by FA: Please include details of who has been contacted i.e. importer; any appropriate UK Home Authority and include details of measures or actions taken and outcome of enquiry.

Action to be requested of the FSA: Please specify comprehensively the nature of the information requested.

Is the information intended to be used for prosecution?

Yes: **No:** **Maybe:** (Please tick as appropriate)

If “maybe” please be aware of time delays due to the need to reconfirm information for prosecution purposes. In relation to offences under UK Food legislation please detail any time bars.

Signed..... Date sent:

Please return this form when completed to Hygiene Technical Support Branch, Food Standards Agency, Room 415C, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH.

SECTION 3: GENERAL ENFORCEMENT

CHAPTER 3.1: APPROACH TO ENFORCEMENT

All relevant information on the approach to enforcement is contained in the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 3.2: HYGIENE IMPROVEMENT NOTICES / IMPROVEMENT NOTICES

3.2.1. Introduction

This Chapter deals with the use of Hygiene Improvement Notices under Regulation 6 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006, and the use of Improvement Notices under Article 9 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 in connection with food standards issues.

3.2.2. The Enforcement Approach

The primary objective of enforcement action should always be to achieve compliance in the most effective way possible.

The practice of giving advice, and communicating by letter about enforcement issues, are well-established approaches to enforcement that are understood by food businesses. Such procedures are therefore encouraged whenever they are likely to secure compliance with the requirements of food law within a time that is reasonable in the circumstances.

Conversely, the service of a Hygiene Improvement Notice does not preclude parallel action such as prosecution for matters that are subject of the notice. Such a course of action may be particularly appropriate where conditions are serious or deteriorating.

3.2.3. Service of Notices

The Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 require a Hygiene Improvement Notice to be served on a food business operator. Although unlikely to be used (see Paragraph 3.2.3 of the Code of Practice), the Food Safety (NI) Order (NI) 1991 requires an Improvement Notice to be served on the proprietor of a food business.

Hygiene Improvement Notices or Improvement Notices should normally be served either by delivery to the food business operator/ food business proprietor in person, or at their usual or last known residence by a postal or courier service that included proof of posting or despatch and, ideally, proof of delivery.

It is not always possible to identify the food business operator and Section 24 of The Interpretation Act (NI) 1954 therefore allows an Improvement Notice to be addressed to the "Owner" or " occupier" and left at the premises if the proprietor can not be identified.

The officer serving a Hygiene Improvement Notice or Improvement Notice should ensure, wherever possible, that the person who is responsible for taking action also receives a copy, especially where the local manager is not the food business operator/ food business proprietor.

3.2.4. Drafting of Notices

It should be clear from the Hygiene Improvement Notice / or Improvement Notice exactly what the recipient is required to do, and why. The notice should therefore be clearly drafted and easily understood.

As failure to comply with the requirements of a Hygiene Improvement Notice or Improvement Notice within the specified period is an offence, an officer who has decided to serve a notice should consider whether a single notice with a single time limit is appropriate. Failure to comply with one or more items of such a notice would be a failure to comply with the whole notice and constitute a single offence.

The alternative of serving multiple notices, each with a different time limit, may be more appropriate where multiple contraventions are concerned.

Separate notices with separate time limits may also be easier to handle if there is an appeal. An appeal against a single notice concerning multiple contraventions would result in the suspension of the whole notice until the appeal had been dealt with.

In respect of Hygiene Improvement Notices requiring structural work to be carried out, the officer should normally discuss the detail of any such work with the food business operator, or with a person acting on the operator's behalf who is in a position to authorise the work, before a notice is issued. However, the issue of a notice should not be unduly delayed if agreement cannot be reached or a responsible person cannot be contacted.

3.2.5. Time Limits

A Hygiene Improvement Notice should clearly state the time limit by which the measures required by the notice must be completed. Both the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 specify a minimum period of 14 days.

An appeal may be lodged against the time limit, so it must be realistic, justifiable, and have regard to the extent and complexity of the measures required.

The time limit should normally be discussed and agreed with the operator/proprietor or with a person acting on the operator/proprietor's behalf who is in a position to agree a time limit, before a notice is issued. The officer may, however, set a time limit without such agreement if agreement cannot be reached or a responsible person cannot be contacted.

The following factors should be taken into consideration in setting a time limit:

- The risk to public health;
- The nature of the problem;
- The availability of solutions.

3.2.6. Extension of Time Limits

Although Hygiene Improvement Notices and Improvement Notices are to be complied with by the stipulated time limit, District Councils should give due regard to any genuine difficulties that may occur in achieving compliance by that deadline.

There is no specific provision in the regulations to extend the time limit for compliance with a notice, but it may be unreasonable not to allow an extension if the food business operator / food business proprietor has a genuine reason for needing more time.

The operator / proprietor should be advised when the notice is served that any request for an extension of time should be made in writing before the notice expires.

If the officer considers that the request is reasonable, they should make a note of the reasons for their decision on the relevant establishment file. The existing notice should then be withdrawn and a new notice issued reflecting the new time limit by which compliance must be achieved.

However, the officer should never issue such a notice automatically. When deliberating on a request for an extension of the time limit, the officer should always consider whether the facts at that time justify such an extension, taking into account:

- The risk to public health associated with the fault if an extension was granted;
- The reason for the request;
- The remedy involved;
- The past record of co-operation of the operator / proprietor;
- Any temporary action which the operator / proprietor proposes to take to remedy the defect.

3.2.7. Works of Equivalent Effect

Notices should make it clear that Regulation 6 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and Article 9 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, as appropriate, allow a food business operator / food business proprietor to carry out measures of at least equivalent effect to those specified in a Hygiene Improvement Notice / Improvement Notice and recommend that alternative measures are discussed with the officer who served the notice before starting work to avoid unnecessary expenditure or inappropriate work.

The District Council should respond in writing to any request from a proprietor to vary the work, and any agreed alternative measures should be confirmed in writing.

Disputes should be considered by the District Councils lead officer for food safety, or by the head of service or another senior manager.

District Councils should ensure that they have procedures to consider such matters, so that it is clear to the proprietor that there is a proper review.

3.2.8. Compliance

The officer who served the Hygiene Improvement Notice or Improvement Notice should liaise with the food business and monitor the work being undertaken and encourage the food business operator / food business proprietor to notify the officer when the work has been completed. Another authorised officer should monitor the work if the officer who served the notice is unable to do so.

The work should be checked as soon as practicable after notification has been received that it has been completed and the officer should confirm in writing that the works have been satisfactorily completed.

3.2.9. Appeals

It should be clear to the recipient of a Hygiene Improvement Notice or Improvement Notice that there is a right of appeal against the notice.

The notice should therefore include details of the right of appeal and the recipient provided with the name and address of the relevant local Magistrates Court.

The food business operator / food business proprietor should also be asked to notify the officer if an appeal is lodged.

3.2.10. Other Discussion with the District Council

Although a food business operator / food business proprietor has a right of appeal against a Hygiene Improvement Notice or Improvement Notice, the District Council should be prepared to discuss a notice and its requirements informally with the operator / proprietor if they wish to do so.

The District Council should similarly be prepared to discuss the requirements of any letter or other enforcement action.

If a operator / proprietor indicates that the requirements of an Improvement Notice are inconsistent with the interpretation or practice of other Food Authorities, the District Council should have regard to the views of the "Home Authority" as defined in the LACORS Home Authority Principle.

District Councils should have internal arrangements to consider such requests for further discussion and consider how they make these arrangements known to operators / proprietors.

Any disputes that arise should be referred to the lead officer for food safety, or an appropriate senior manager nominated by the lead food officer.

3.2.11. Other Guidance

Further guidance on the use and preparation of Hygiene Improvement Notices has been issued by LACORS.

CHAPTER 3.3: PROHIBITION PROCEDURES

3.3.1. Introduction

This Chapter deals first with the use of hygiene prohibition procedures and Remedial Action Notice / Detention Notice procedures under Regulations 7, 8 and 9 respectively of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and the associated voluntary closure procedures. It then deals with the prohibition procedures of Article 10 and Article 11 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, the associated voluntary closure procedures and the prohibition of persons under Article 10 of the Order, in connection with food standards issues.

3.3.2. The Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006

3.3.2.1: Regulation 7 - Hygiene Prohibition Procedures

A Magistrates Court may make a Hygiene Prohibition Order under Regulation 7 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 to:

- Prohibit the use of a process or treatment for the purposes of the business if the health risk condition is fulfilled;
- Prohibit the use of the premises or equipment for the purposes of the food business or any similar food business if the construction of the premises or use of any equipment fulfils the health risk condition;
- Prohibit the use of the premises or equipment;
- For the purposes of any food business if the state or condition thereof fulfils the health risk condition.

The District Council must first successfully prosecute the food business operator for an offence under the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006.

The Court will make an order if it considers that the premises, equipment, treatment and/or process fulfils the health risk condition as per Regulation 7(2).

The Court may also make an order prohibiting a food business operator from managing any food business, or a particular type of food business.

3.3.2.2: Regulation 8 - Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Procedures

An authorised officer may serve a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice under Regulation 8 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 if the health risk condition is fulfilled in respect of a food business and there is an imminent risk of injury to health. The effect of the notice is to immediately close the premises, or prevent the use of equipment, or the use of a process or treatment. Unlike Regulation 7, these powers cannot be used against a person.

The authorised officer must apply to a Magistrates Court for a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order within three days of a hygiene emergency prohibition notice being served, the day of service of the notice being Day 1.

The operator must have at least one complete day's notice of the intention to make the application.

3.3.2.3: Regulation 9 - Remedial Action Notices / Detention Notices

See Chapter 3.5 of the Code of Practice.

3.3.3. The Food Safety (NI) Order 1991

3.3.3.1: Article 10 - Prohibition Procedures

A Magistrates' Court may make a Prohibition Order under Article 10 of the Order to:

- Close food premises;
- Prohibit premises from being used for particular kinds of food business;
- Prevent the use of a piece of equipment for any food business, or a particular food business;
- Prohibit a particular process;
- Prohibit the proprietor from managing any food business.

The District Council must first successfully prosecute the proprietor of the business for a breach of relevant food law.

The Court will make an order if it considers that the premises, equipment or process pose a risk of injury to health.

The Court may also make an order prohibiting a proprietor or manager from managing a food business.

3.3.3.2: Article 11 - Emergency Prohibition Procedures

An authorised officer may serve an Emergency Prohibition Notice under Article 11 of the Order if there is an imminent risk of injury to health in food premises. The effect of the notice is to immediately close the premises, or prevent the use of the equipment or process, although unlike Article 10, these powers cannot be used against a person.

The authorised officer must apply to a Magistrates Court for an Emergency Prohibition Order within three days of an Emergency Prohibition Notice being served, the day of service of the notice being Day 1.

Although there is no legal requirement for the application to be heard within the three days, the Court should be asked to list the application for hearing at the earliest opportunity.

The proprietor must have at least one complete day's notice of the intention to make the application.

Once made, an Emergency Prohibition Order supersedes an Emergency Prohibition Notice.

3.3.4. "Health Risk Condition" / "(Imminent) Risk of Injury to Health"

Regulations 7 and 8 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 can only be used if the "health risk condition" is fulfilled. In respect of Regulation 7, there must be a risk of injury to health and in respect of Regulation 8 there must be an imminent risk of injury to health. Article 10 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 can only be used if the "health risk condition" is fulfilled and Article 11 can only be used if there is an "imminent risk" of injury to health.

In respect of Regulation 8 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and Article 11 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, the word "imminent" qualifies the word "risk". There must always be an imminent risk of injury to health before a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice or Emergency Prohibition Notice can be served. It is the risk of injury that must be imminent. The injury itself may occur sometime in the future, but it is essential to show that it could occur for the action to succeed. Not everyone exposed to the risk of injury will actually suffer the injury. It is the exposure to the risk of injury that enables action to be taken.

3.3.5. Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006

In relation to food hygiene, the health risk condition under the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 may exist if, for example, conditions in premises, or a defective process or treatment, carries a high risk of causing food-borne infection.

Foods containing potentially harmful levels of pathogenic micro-organisms represent an imminent risk and should be seized or detained under Regulation 25 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 by using Article 8 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991. However, the process or treatment which exposed the food to this microbiological contamination should be dealt with under Regulation 8 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006.

3.3.6. Food Safety (NI) Order 1991

In relation to food standards, the health risk condition under the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 may exist if, for example:

- A process or treatment introduces a teratogenic chemical (one that injures a developing foetus in the womb) into food, but the damage will not be apparent until the baby is born;

- A process or treatment introduces a genotoxic chemical (one that damages genes or chromosomes) into food, the effects of which may not manifest themselves until abnormal offspring or a malignant tumour occur some time in the future.

Foods containing potentially damaging levels of such chemicals represent an imminent risk and should be seized or detained under Article 8 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991. However, the process or treatment which exposed the food to this chemical contamination should be dealt with under Article 11 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991.

3.3.7. Criteria for Action

3.3.7.1: Hygiene Prohibition Procedures / Prohibition Procedures

The criteria for action depend on the conditions in Regulation 7(2) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and Article 19(2) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 being met, i.e. that either the construction or condition of the premises, or any equipment or the use of any process or treatment involves a risk of injury to health.

An authorised officer should use professional judgement to decide whether premises, process, treatment or piece of equipment or its use involves a risk of injury to health.

The general criminal law principle is that the onus of proof rests with the party who asserts the affirmative issue that the court should make an order. The persuasive burden remains with the prosecution throughout (except where the defence raises insanity, a statutory objection to the proviso or where the statute transfers the onus). A similar rule applies in civil proceedings.

3.3.7.2: Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Procedures / Emergency Prohibition Procedures

In the case of Regulation 8(2) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and Article 11(2) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, the application is made by the District Council and hence it bears the onus of proof and the persuasive burden. The necessary evidential requirements are respectively set out in Regulation 7(2) and 7(4) and Regulation 8(1) and 8(4) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006, and Article 10(3) and 10(4) and Article 11(1) and (4) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991.

An authorised officer should use professional judgement to decide whether premises, process, treatment or piece of equipment or its use involves an imminent risk of injury to health.

Further guidance can be found in Paragraph 3.3.9.

3.3.8. Seeking Additional Advice

Authorised officers should seek expert medical or other advice if a process or treatment is producing food that appears to contain chemicals or other

substances that may pose an imminent risk of injury to health, or where the process or treatment in question itself requires other specialist knowledge or expertise⁷.

An authorised officer exercising a right of entry under Regulation 14 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 or Article 33 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 may be accompanied by anybody else who is necessary, including an expert or experts.

It is, however, the authorised officer who must be satisfied that the health risk condition is fulfilled with respect to the food business.

3.3.9. Deferring Immediate Action

There may be circumstances where immediate closure may be unnecessary, even though there would normally be an imminent risk to health.

The condition of retail food premises, for example, that would normally pose an imminent risk, would not necessarily warrant immediate closure if the condition was only discovered at the end of trading hours.

In such a case, the authorised officer might decide not to impose an emergency prohibition if the food business operator/ food business proprietor undertook to get a team of contract cleaners to improve the position during the night.

The risk in such circumstances might be minimal, as the premises would not be open to the public. The authorised officer would be free to decide on the following morning whether the imminent risk still existed or had been removed.

3.3.10. Serving the Notice or Order

A Hygiene Prohibition Order, a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order, a Prohibition Order or an Emergency Prohibition Order – all of which are made by the Courts – need not necessarily be served by the authorised officer who initiated the action. It should, however, be served by an officer who is competent to explain the purpose of the order or deal with obstruction.

If a Hygiene Prohibition Order, a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order, a Prohibition Order or an Emergency Prohibition Order cannot be handed to the food business operator/ food business proprietor in person, a copy of the document should be handed to whoever would be responsible for complying with immediate closure or prohibition action, e.g. the manager.

The authorised officer should ensure that the operator / proprietor is aware of the matters that constitute an imminent risk. Although this is included in the model Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice in the Code of Practice and the prescribed Emergency Prohibition Notice, the operator / proprietor may not understand what steps need to be taken to remove the imminent risk and further explanation may be necessary.

⁷ The Institute of Food Science and Technology maintains a list of experts in particular fields.

3.3.11. Methods of Serving the Notice or Order

Every effort should be made to serve a Hygiene Prohibition Order, a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order, a Prohibition Order or an Emergency Prohibition Order by delivering it to the food business operator/food business proprietor, or each of the operators/proprietors in the case of a partnership etc, by hand.

The authorised officer may, if necessary, consult with the Clerk of the Petty Sessions to see if it would be possible to serve the Order before the operator/proprietor leaves the Court if the operator/proprietor is present

The service of the notice or order on a number of partners may present difficulties, particularly where a partner is not in the United Kingdom at the time. As soon as the notice or order is properly served on any one of the partners it takes effect.

If it is not possible to serve the document by hand then the authorised officer should serve the document by a postal or courier service that includes proof of posting or despatch and, ideally, proof of delivery.

The document may be faxed to the food business operator / food business proprietor of the business for information in advance of its formal service, but a hard copy must follow for it to be properly served.

It may be useful to record the time of service, even when the postal service is used.

Immediately the document has been legally served by one of the methods mentioned Section 24 of the Interpretation Act (NI) 1954, the prohibition on the use of the premises, or equipment for the purposes of any food business, or a particular type of food business, or prohibition on a process or treatment, becomes effective under the Order and the Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice or emergency prohibition notice ceases to have effect.

3.3.12. Evidence Required

The authorised officer should collect sufficient evidence to produce to the Court in order to substantiate any proceedings.

It is important that contemporaneous notes, including sketches and photographs, are taken during an inspection as they may need to be used in evidence to a Court. Samples of insects, dirt or other contaminants may also be useful.

Although authorised officers do not need to be accompanied by a witness, there may be occasions when visual reports are of particular relevance and there would be benefits in matters being witnessed.

If a note of an inspection is compiled by officers at the end of, or during a visit, they should satisfy themselves as soon as practicable afterwards that it is accurate, so they may rely on it in Court.

3.3.13. Hygiene Prohibition Orders / Prohibition Orders

During an inspection of premises prior to a Court hearing for an offence under the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 or the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, the authorised officer may discover that the matter(s) giving rise to the prosecution has either not been removed or has been removed but has recurred.

If the food business operator / food business proprietor is convicted, the Court's attention may be brought to the provisions of Regulation 7(1) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 or Article 10(1) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 that the Court may consider making a prohibition order on the premises, process or equipment, thus ensuring that the risk to health is removed.

3.3.14. Prohibition of a Person

When the food business operator / food business proprietor or manager of a food business has been convicted of an offence, the authorised officer may feel that it is appropriate to ask the Court to consider making an order in relation to the operator / proprietor.

Circumstances where such action may be appropriate include repeated offences such as failure to clean, failure to maintain equipment, blatant disregard for health risks, or putting health at risk by knowingly using unsafe food.

3.3.15. Application to the Court

The District Council should discuss a detailed programme of formal action with its litigation solicitor and with the clerk of the Petty Sessions and should clarify details of local Court practice to try and resolve potential difficulties of obtaining Court time at short notice. This could be initiated by informal contact with the Clerk of the Petty Sessions to ensure that, if at all possible, applications for Emergency Prohibition Orders are expedited.

The food business operator / food business proprietor must be notified that the authorised officer intends to apply for an Emergency Hygiene Prohibition Order or Emergency Prohibition Order. The operator / proprietor must have at least one complete day's notice before the application.

3.3.16. Action to be taken Prior to the Hearing

The authorised officer should organise monitoring of the premises between the service of the notice and the Court hearing. The officer who served the notice need not necessarily carry out the monitoring.

The premises should be re-inspected shortly before the hearing (preferably the day before or on the day of the hearing itself) by the officer who served the notice.

If this is not possible, an authorised officer with relevant experience should carry out the re-inspection. This should also be the case if any contravention was found during the monitoring.

The purpose of the re-inspection is to gather evidence as to the current condition of the premises or equipment for the Court hearing. If appropriate, more evidence may be gathered.

The authorised officer should note any changes that have taken place since the notice was served. For example, the circumstances which led to the service of the notice may have worsened, or other circumstances not present originally may now also pose a risk to health.

If the authorised officer is considering bringing the attention of the Court to Regulation 7(1) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 or Article 10(1) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 so that a Hygiene Prohibition Order or Prohibition Order against a food business operator / food business proprietor is to be considered, it is important that suitable evidence is gathered to produce to the Court.

It is important that the authorised officers brief their legal advisers fully on the public health aspect of the case in hand, including the public health basis for the legal requirements which have been breached, so that they can, in turn, impress upon the Court the seriousness of the charges.

3.3.17. Information to be given to the Court

Information that the Court may require includes:

- The state of the premises or equipment, both at the time of the offence and at the time the premises were re-inspected prior to the hearing;
- Evidence that the food business operator/food business proprietor has been involved in the commission of offences elsewhere, which tended to show weaknesses in management (the authorised officer may have to investigate to ascertain whether the operator/proprietor has been involved in convictions at previous food premises and what these convictions were for).

It is usual practice for those prosecuting to ascertain whether there have been any previous convictions or cautions and to obtain details for presentation to the Court in the event of the prosecution being successful. They may also be used in evidence if the requirements of Section 101 of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2004 are met.

Information on a trader's previous record may be held in the Office of Fair Trading's (OFT) Central Register of Convictions⁸, particularly if the trader operates from multiple sites in different District Council areas. District Councils are encouraged to use the register to discover relevant history when considering a prosecution or formal caution, and to notify the OFT of

⁸ The Office of Fair Trading, Central Register of Convictions, Craven House, 40 Uxbridge Road, Ealing, London, W5 2BS

successful prosecutions and formal cautions so that they may be included in the Register.

3.3.18. Affixing the Notice or Order on the Premises

Regulations 7 and 8 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and Articles 10 and 11 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 direct that as soon as practicable after the making of an order or the service of a notice, a copy of the order or notice should be affixed in a conspicuous position on the premises by the District Council.

The purpose of this is to inform the public, which includes anyone who may use the premises or equipment, that premises have been closed or a process or piece of equipment prohibited from being used.

An authorised officer who is competent to explain the meaning and importance of the notice, should take this action. A witness need only accompany the officer if required by the District Council. The authorised officer who initiated the action need not necessarily be involved.

The authorised officer should, if possible, firmly affix the document inside the premises, but in a position where it can clearly be seen and read from the outside, preferably on the inside of the glass of a front display window.

If such a position is unavailable the officer should use professional judgement as to the best place available and if necessary affix a second copy of the document to the outside of the premises, making sure, as far as possible, that it is protected from the weather and possible vandalism. The District Council should arrange for periodic checks to be made on the document to establish that it is still there.

3.3.19. Unauthorised Removal or Defacement of Notices or Orders

Neither the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 nor the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 make any reference to defacing or removing a Hygiene Prohibition Order, a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice or Order, a Prohibition Order, or an Emergency Prohibition Notice or order. This is, however, covered by other legislation.

Article 3 of the Criminal Damage (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 makes it an offence for any person to destroy or damage property belonging to another without reasonable cause.

An Emergency Prohibition Notice is the property of the District Council. If the authorised officer discovers that a notice has been removed or defaced, he should replace the notice as soon as possible and consider starting proceedings for criminal damage.

Article 112 of the Magistrates Courts (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 enables a Court making an order to make provisions ancillary to it, such as requiring that the order should not be defaced or removed. The breach of such a requirement is punishable by a £2,000 fine, or a fine of £50 per day where the

breach continues after there has been a Court decision about the breach, or two months' imprisonment in either case. The authorised officer should ask the Court at the time of the making of an order to make provisions ancillary to it under Article 112 of the Magistrates Courts (Northern Ireland) Order 1981.

Where an order has been removed or defaced the officer should start proceedings under Article 112 of the Magistrates Courts (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 for disobedience to the Court's requirement that it should not be removed or defaced. Such proceedings can be started by making a complaint in writing to the Court, stating when the order was made, what its terms were and how a requirement of the order had been broken.

3.3.20. Lifting the Notice or Order

The food business operator / food business proprietor must apply in writing to the District Council for a certificate lifting an Emergency Prohibition Notice or Order or a Prohibition Order. On receiving such a request, the authorised officer should re-inspect the premises as soon as possible and determine as soon as is reasonably practicable, or in any event within 14 days, whether the notice or order can be lifted.

The decision on whether to issue the certificate or not should be made by the officer who initiated the action if this is possible or, if it is not, by another authorised officer with the relevant qualifications and experience.

If the District Council is of the opinion that the health risk condition has been removed, arrangements should be made for the certificate under Regulation 7(7) or 8(8) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006, or Article 10(6) or 11(8) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 as appropriate to be issued as quickly as possible, and in any case within 3 days. The certificate may be sent by fax, although the proprietor may also be informed of the decision verbally, thus allowing the premises to re-open immediately.

If the authorised officer is of the opinion that the health risk condition has not been removed, arrangements should be made under Regulation 7(7)(b) or 8(9)(b) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006, or Article 10(7)(b) or Article 11(9)(b) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 as appropriate for the District Council to issue a notification of continuing risk to health as quickly as possible. The District Council must give reasons why it is not satisfied that the health risk condition has been removed.

Although a certificate lifting a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice or Emergency Prohibition Notice may be issued before the application for an Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order or Emergency Prohibition Order can be heard, the operator / proprietor may still be prosecuted for the offence(s) against the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 or the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 as appropriate.

The District Council should ensure that the court is informed in this situation.

A hygiene prohibition order or prohibition order on the food business operator / food business proprietor can only be lifted on application by the operator / proprietor to the Court that made the order.

3.3.21. Breach of a Notice or Order

A person who knowingly contravenes a Hygiene Prohibition Order or a Prohibition Order is guilty of an offence under Regulation 7(5) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 or Article 10(5) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, respectively. A person who knowingly contravenes a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice or Order or an Emergency Prohibition Notice or Order is guilty of an offence under Regulation 8(5) or (6) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 or Article 11(5) or (6) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, respectively.

The authorised officer should start proceedings for the offence under the appropriate Article by laying information before the Magistrates Court.

If the authorised officer believes that there is sufficient evidence to show that the proprietor is unlikely to respond to a summons, application should be made for a warrant rather than a summons. The Court will decide if the circumstances justify this action and may ask the authorised officer for their view as to whether to endorse the warrant with bail. The authorised officer should use their professional judgement and take into account all relevant circumstances in their decision.

The District Council should make contingency arrangements with its legal department, so that in the event of the breach of a notice or order, there is no delay in making an application before the Court.

3.3.22: Appeals: Refusal of a Food Authority to Issue a Certificate That The Health Risk Condition No Longer Exists

Regulation 20(1)(b) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and Article 37 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 allow anybody who is aggrieved by a decision of a District Council to refuse to issue a certificate that there is no longer a risk to health to appeal by way of a complaint to the Magistrates Court. The time limit for such an appeal is one month from the date when the District Council served the notice of their refusal to lift the prohibition.

The recipient of a notice of refusal should clearly understand their right of appeal. The notice should therefore include, or be accompanied by, details of the right of appeal and the name and address of the relevant Magistrates' Court.

3.3.23. Compensation

Regulation 8(10) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and Article 11(10) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 provide for the District Council to compensate the food business operator / food business proprietor for losses arising from the service of a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice or Emergency Prohibition Notice if a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order or

Emergency Prohibition Order as appropriate is not applied for from the Court within three days.

Compensation is also payable if the Court is not satisfied that an imminent risk of injury to health existed at the time the notice was served.

Compensation is payable in respect of “any loss” which is directly attributable to the wrongful service of the notice.

The District Council may assess the amount of compensation due taking into account (among other things) the following aspects where applicable:

- The length of time the process or treatment was halted, or the use of premises or equipment was prohibited and for what purpose;
- Loss of trade;
- Value of spoiled food;
- Loss of goodwill;
- Loss of wages;
- How much of the damage to trade is repairable;
- Obligation of the operator / proprietor to mitigate their own loss;

or, if the operator/proprietor of the business is agreeable, a loss adjuster may be called in.

CHAPTER 3.4: SEIZURE AND DETENTION

3.4.1. Introduction

This Chapter concerns the use of the detention and seizure powers under Regulation 25 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and / or Article 8 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, as amended.

3.4.2. General

It is presumed under Food Law that all food is intended for human consumption until it is proved to the contrary.

Detention powers should not, however, be used in relation to food that has already been clearly identified by a food business as not being intended for human consumption.

An officer may assist or advise the person in charge of the food as appropriate. If there is any doubt about the food being used for human consumption, then the officer should use the statutory procedures.

3.4.3. When to Use Detention and Seizure Powers

3.4.3.1. Food Not Produced, Processed or Distributed In Compliance With the Hygiene Regulations

Under Regulation 25 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006, an authorised officer of a District Council may, on an inspection of any food, certify that it has not been produced, processed or distributed in compliance with the Hygiene Regulations as defined in Regulation 2. A model certificate for this purpose can be found in Annex 7 of the Code of Practice. The food must then be treated for the purposes of Article 8 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 as failing to comply with food safety requirements. District Councils must continue to use the forms set out in the Detention of Food (Prescribed Forms) Regulations (NI) 1991⁹ when using powers under Article 8 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 following the issue of a certificate as mentioned above.

3.4.3.2: Food Which Does Not Satisfy Food Safety Requirements – Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, as amended

If food does not satisfy food safety requirements for other than hygiene reasons, Article 8 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 should be used. Article 9 of the Order permits the service of a detention of food notice to prevent the use of the food for human consumption. District Councils must continue to use the forms set out in the Detention of Food (Prescribed Forms) Regulations (NI) 1991 when using powers under Article 8 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991.

⁹ SR 1991 No. 215

3.4.4. Specific Powers of Seizure and Detention for District Councils enforcing Food Standards

Legislation which gives powers of seizure and detention to District Councils includes:

- The Tryptophan in Food Regulations (NI) 2005¹⁰
- The Food (Control of Irradiation) Regulations (NI) 1992¹¹
- The Miscellaneous Food Additives Regulations (NI) 1996¹²
- The Colours in Food Regulations (NI)1996¹³
- The Sweeteners in Food Regulations (NI)1996¹⁴
- The Kava Kava in Food Regulations (NI)2003¹⁵
- The Food (Jelly Confectionery) (Emergency Control) Regulations (NI) 2002¹⁶
- The Contaminants in Food Regulations (NI) 2004¹⁷
- The Genetically Modified Food Regulations (NI) 2004¹⁸
- The Food (Chilli, Chilli Products, Curcuma and Palm Oil) (Emergency Control) Regulations (NI) 2005¹⁹

3.4.5. Detention of Food

Authorised officers need to exercise careful judgement, and may need to seek expert advice, before using their powers to detain food pending further investigation.

Food that is suspected of causing food poisoning can often be readily identified, and the decision to detain can therefore be taken relatively easily.

The notice may specify that the food is either to be held where it is, or moved to a place specified by the officer, pending further investigations.

Food that requires special storage conditions, such as refrigeration, may need to be moved elsewhere, in which case the decision to require the food to be moved should be discussed with the owner of the food.

The decision to detain a whole batch, lot, or consignment needs careful consideration before a notice is served (see paragraph 3.4.9).

¹⁰ SR 2005 No. 440

¹¹ as amended, SR 1992 No. 172

¹² as amended, SR1996 No. 50

¹³ as amended, SR 1995 No.49

¹⁴ as amended SR 1995 No. 48

¹⁵ as amended SR 2002 No. 10

¹⁶ as amended SR 2002 No. 141

¹⁷ as amended, SR 2004 No.487

¹⁸ SR 2004 No. 385

¹⁹ SR 2005 No. 284

3.4.6. Seizure of Food

The officer may be required to prove that the food produced before the Justice of the Peace is the food that was seized. The food should only be left if the officer is confident that it will not be moved, used for human consumption, or the evidence destroyed.

3.4.7. Food Condemnation Warning

A food condemnation notification giving details of the time and place of the appearance before a Justice of the Peace should be given to the owner of the food once the decision to seize food has been taken. This notification is purely administrative and may therefore be signed by any authorised officer.

The officer delivering the notification does not need to hold the same qualifications as the officer who took the decision to detain or seize the food, but should be sufficiently competent to explain the purpose of the notification and to deal with any obstruction.

Notification to the owner of the food may be by personal delivery, fax, telephone, e-mail, or other rapid means of communication.

This is especially important in cases of seizure, because of the right conferred by Article 8(5) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, as amended, on any person who may be liable to prosecution for selling or producing unsafe food to attend before a Justice of the Peace, to be heard and to call witnesses.

3.4.8. Taking Action without Inspecting

The provisions of Article 8 also apply to food that has not been inspected (Article 8(2)).

This could apply when the officer has reasonable grounds to suspect that consumption of the food would be likely to cause food-borne or other communicable disease, or that it was otherwise so contaminated that it would not be reasonable for it to be consumed in that condition.

Information from another reliable source, e.g. another District Council, the NIPHL, the CCDC, or the Food Standards Agency etc. may be sufficient to enable an authorised officer to act without inspecting.

Although an inspection of the food is not legally necessary in such situations, it may nonetheless be prudent, if only for identification purposes.

3.4.9. Dealing with Batches, Lots or Consignments of Food

Article 14(2) of Regulation 178/2002²⁰ defines unsafe food and is relevant to both the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991. Article 5(2) of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, as amended, effectively

²⁰ Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety

defines food which fails to comply with food safety requirements for the purpose of Part II of the Order as food which is unsafe within the meaning of Article 14(2) of Regulation 178/2002.

Article 14(6) of Regulation 178/2002 covers the situation where food is part of a larger batch, lot or consignment of food of the same class or description. In such circumstances it is presumed, until the contrary is proved, that all of the food in the batch, lot or consignment fails to comply with food safety requirements.

The authorised officer should use professional judgement to decide whether to detain or seize the whole of the batch, lot or consignment. Appropriate expert advice should be sought if necessary.

If a whole batch, lot or consignment is detained and it subsequently becomes clear that only part of the detained food is affected and needs to be seized, the remainder of the batch etc. may be released. The compensation provisions under Article 8(7) Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, as amended, should always be borne in mind if this course of action is used.

3.4.10. Voluntary Procedures

It should also be borne in mind that the use of voluntary procedures might contribute to a defence in any subsequent prosecution. It could, for example, be argued that the food was not so contaminated that it had to be seized.

The fact that food had been condemned by a Justice of the Peace would be persuasive in any prosecution, but would not in itself necessarily establish an offence. It would still be necessary for a case to be proved beyond reasonable doubt. In this respect certificates of analysis or examination are of particular value.

CHAPTER 3.5: REMEDIAL ACTION NOTICES / DETENTION NOTICES

All relevant information on Remedial Action Notices and Detention Notices is contained in the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 3.6: TEMPERATURE CONTROL REGULATIONS

3.6.1. Introduction

This Chapter provides guidance on the enforcement of Regulation 27 / Schedule 4 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006. In respect of circumstances to which this regulation is not applicable and where food is required to be kept under temperature control for safety reasons, the general requirements of Annex II which include Chapter I, Paragraph 2 (d), Chapter III Paragraph 2(g), Chapter IV Paragraph 7, Chapter V Paragraph (2) and Chapter IX Paragraphs (2), (5), (6) and (7), of Regulation 852/2004 would apply, as appropriate or any specific temperature control requirements in Regulation 853/2004.

3.6.2. General Approach to Temperature Checks

Stage 1 - Air Temperature Monitoring

Air temperature monitoring provides an indication of the performance of a refrigeration system over time, and a single reading at any one time will not necessarily be an indication of product temperature. Air temperature monitoring records are an indication of temperature history, including defrost cycles, door openings, breakdowns etc. They should be regarded as a guide to how a particular system is functioning.

Stage 2 – Between-pack Testing

Non-destructive temperature measurement, or between-pack testing, should normally be used as the next step in the enforcement process. This is done with a pre-cooled flat-headed probe, suitable for measuring surface or between-pack temperatures.

It is important to ensure good thermal contact between the product and the probe when taking between-pack measurements. A total tolerance of +2.8°C (0.8°C as specified for instrument accuracy and 2°C for the limitation of the methodology) should be allowed. Care should be taken to allow time for the reading to stabilise, and to ensure that the temperature reading relates to the product, not the surrounding air, which can happen if the probe is not properly sandwiched between the packs. Testing should be conducted with the minimum of disturbance to the product or its temperature-controlled environment, particularly the airflow patterns in retail display cabinets. For products within an outer casing it will be necessary to open the casing and insert the temperature probe between packs.

Not all packs or packaging materials are suitable for between-pack testing. Irregularly shaped packs where good thermal contact is not possible, packaging materials that act as an insulator and products in cartons or bubble packs where large air spaces exist are all examples where a between-pack temperature measurement may not be sufficiently accurate to give an indication of product temperature. In such instances it may be necessary to proceed directly to a destructive temperature measurement.

Stage 3 - Product Testing (Destructive)

If a “stage 2” temperature measurement has not been possible, or there is reasonable doubt after a “stage 2” test about compliance with temperature requirements, it will be necessary to progress to destructive testing.

Sample preparation and temperature measurement should normally be undertaken with the sample in its temperature-controlled environment. If this is not possible, the sample should be removed to an appropriately refrigerated environment, provided the transfer does not prejudice product temperature. Any transfer should take place prior to preparation of the sample. Transfer of products within the normal cold chain, e.g. from a vehicle to a cold store, is acceptable.

When a “stage 3” measurement is being carried out, insertion of the temperature probe into the food may render the food unsaleable. In such circumstances, the authorised officer should consider purchasing the food in question.

The selection of items to be tested is at the discretion of the officer. However, if “stage 2” testing has been carried out and there appears to be a breach of the relevant temperature requirements, it should not normally be necessary to select large numbers of items for “stage 3” testing.

In the first instance, items should be taken for “stage 3” testing from the warmest part of the refrigeration system. This can usually be identified using thermochromic (liquid crystal) strip temperature indicators. Although these do not give an accurate temperature reading, they can provide a useful guide to relative temperature distribution within a refrigeration system.

3.6.3. Taking Temperature Measurements

The temperature of a product should not be prejudiced by, for example, opening the doors in a vehicle too often or for too long; disturbing the air curtain in a chill cabinet, or removing the food from a refrigerated environment for long periods.

Any opened cases or cartons should be re-sealed and appropriately labelled or marked with the date and time of the inspection; the name of the person who opened it, and the name of the District Council. This is to show that the case or carton was opened for an official inspection and removes any suspicion of malicious tampering.

3.6.4. Tolerances

“Stage 2” temperature readings may be up to 2°C warmer than the true product temperature, especially product with thick packaging. They may also be affected by recent movement of goods, defrost cycles or instrumental inaccuracy as described below.

Authorised officers should use professional judgement in borderline cases to decide whether further “stage 2” measurements are necessary before proceeding to “stage 3”.

3.6.5. Checking and Calibration of Enforcement Measuring Thermometers etc

The accuracy of the thermometer or other temperature measuring device, and any detachable probes, should be checked against a reference thermometer or calibrator that is certified to an appropriate standard, e.g. NPL, and the result recorded, before and after taking any temperature measurements that are likely to result in enforcement action.

The record of such a check should be referenced to the instrument’s certificate of calibration and include serial numbers of the instrument and any interchangeable probes.

If a reference thermometer is not available, the sensor can be checked in a wet ice mixture. In this case, the system should be calibrated at 0°C. The temperature of wet ice from distilled water is 0°C. Drinking water with a salt content of 0.1% will only depress the melting point to -0.06°C. Therefore, in most cases drinking water can be used to make the ice for the checking procedure. Ice should be broken up into very small pieces, packed into a wide-necked vacuum flask, wetted with cold water and stirred. The sensor should be placed at the centre of the flask at a depth of at least 50mm and agitated frequently and the temperature read after three minutes when stabilised. The read-out instrument can be checked separately using calibration attachments at two or three different temperatures. The combination of checking the system at 0°C with that of checking the instrument should ensure accuracy at higher temperatures.

3.6.6. Pre-cooling of Instruments

The thermometer or other temperature measuring device and the penetration probe should be pre-cooled before being used to measure product temperature to ensure that instruments are as close as possible to the temperature of the product being measured. Pre-cooling reduces the likelihood of a rise in product temperature due to the temperature of the probe and the action of making the hole and can usually be done by leaving the instruments and probe in the same temperature controlled environment as the sample for about 10 minutes. Provided there is no significant rise in the temperature of the instrument or probe, subsequent measurements can be made after a much shorter pre-cooling period.

3.6.7. Preparation of Samples for Temperature Measurement

Only temperature measuring probes that are specifically designed for the purpose should be used to make a hole in the product. If the probe is not designed for this purpose a separate pre-cooled product penetration implement should be used. The diameter of the hole should provide a close fit to that of the probe and its depth will depend on the type of product being tested (as described below).

3.6.8. Measurement of Product Temperature

Preparation of the product for testing and its temperature measurement should take place with the product in its temperature-controlled environment. Measurement is as follows:

- (a) Where the product dimensions allow, insert the pre-cooled probe to a depth of at least 2.5cm from the nearest outside surface of the product.
- (b) Where (a) is not possible the probe should be inserted to a minimum depth from the surface of at least 3 times the diameter of the probe. With some products, because of their small size, greater care has to be taken to avoid excessive rises in product temperature from unnecessary handling of the sample.

Certain foods, because of their size or composition, cannot be penetrated satisfactorily to determine their internal temperature. In these cases, the internal temperature of the food package should be determined by insertion of a suitable pre-cooled sharp-stemmed probe to the centre of the pack to measure the temperature in contact with the food.

It may not always be possible to determine the internal product temperature accurately, especially of fragile or open-textured products. The temperature of such products should be measured by carefully removing the product from its packaging and firmly sandwiching a pre-cooled flat-headed probe between two items of product.

The temperature reading should not be recorded until it has stabilised.

3.6.9. Equipment Used for Chilled Product Temperature Measurement

Temperature measurement systems that are used for enforcement purposes should meet the following requirements:

- The system should reach 90% of its final reading within 3 minutes;
- The system should have an accuracy of $\pm 0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$, or better when the sensor is measuring within the temperature range -20°C to $+30^{\circ}\text{C}$;
- The accuracy must not change by more than $\pm 0.3^{\circ}\text{C}$ when the instrument is operated in temperatures of -20°C to $+30^{\circ}\text{C}$;
- The instrument display should be readable to at least 0.1°C ;
- The system should be robust and shock proof;
- The temperature sensitive part of the system should be constructed to facilitate good thermal contact with the food and be easily cleaned.

A dry cell battery, not mains electricity, should power the measuring instrument. The instrument should incorporate a method of checking the battery voltage to indicate when replacement or re-charging is necessary. The design of the probe depends on the type of temperature measurement:

- For product tests: a robust rigid stem with a sharpened point suitable for insertion into the product and capable of being sterilised;
- For between-pack tests: a flat head suitable for a between-pack measurement with good surface contact, low thermal mass and high thermal conductivity. If a suitable flat probe is not available, one can be constructed using a calibrated sensor crimped in the centre of a square, (approximately 4cm long) or circle (approximately 4cm diameter) or a double layer of aluminium foil. Any inter-connecting cables should be flexible between 0°C and +30°C.

CHAPTER 3.7: QUICK FROZEN FOODSTUFFS

3.7.1. Introduction

This guidance gives informal, non-statutory advice to District Councils on checking temperatures and temperature monitoring systems when enforcing the Quick-frozen Foodstuffs Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1990²¹ (the Regulations) as amended which implement Directives 89/108/EEC²², 92/1/EEC²³ and 92/2/EEC²⁴ in Great Britain.

Food is not subject to the Regulations unless it is specifically labelled or described as “quick-frozen”. A quick-freezing process can be regarded as any form of accelerated freezing such as blast freezing, plate freezing, liquid nitrogen freezing, etc.

3.7.2: Legislative Changes

Commission Directive 92/1/EEC has been repealed and replaced by the directly applicable Commission Regulation 37/2005²⁵. Necessary amendments to the Quick-Frozen Foodstuffs Regulations (NI) 1990 are still under consideration. Once these have been decided, consequential amendments to this chapter will be necessary.

There are three main points of difference between Directive 92/1/EEC and Regulation 37/2005. First, in the case of transport there is no longer a requirement for Competent Authorities to approve the temperature measuring instruments used. Also, from 1 January 2006 all measuring instruments, used in transport, warehousing, or storage of quick-frozen foodstuffs must comply with the relevant CEN standards²⁶. Finally, from 1 January 2006, the legislation will apply to rail transport for the first time.

It is important to note, however, that there are significant transitional provisions. Measuring instruments installed up to 31 December 2005, which meet the legislative requirements at the time, can continue to be used until 31 December 2009.

3.7.3. Temperature Requirements

After quick-freezing, the Regulations require relevant food to be kept at, or colder than, -18°C.

²¹ As amended, SR 1990 No.455

²² Council Directive 89/108/EEC of 21 December 1988 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to quick-frozen foodstuffs for human consumption

²³ Commission Directive 92/1/EEC of 13 January 1992 on the monitoring of temperatures in the means of transport, warehousing and storage of quick-frozen foodstuffs intended for human consumption

²⁴ Commission Directive 92/2/EEC of 13 January 1992 laying down the sampling procedure and the Community method of analysis for the official control of the temperatures of quick-frozen foods intended for human consumption

²⁵ Commission Regulation (EC) No 37/2005 of 12 January 2005 on the monitoring of temperatures in the means of transport, warehousing and storage of quick-frozen foodstuffs intended for human consumption

²⁶ European Committee for Standardization, www.cenorm.be

It is necessary, however, to ensure that the temperature of food has stabilised after freezing and packing before the temperature requirements of the Regulations are applied. Permitted exceptions relating to the temperature of food apply during primary, secondary and local distribution as stated in Schedule 1 (2)(c) of the Regulations.

Catering outlets are *not* required to comply with these Regulations as the caterer does not sell the food as "quick-frozen" but prepares the food for sale in a chilled or heated form.

3.7.4. Staged Approach to Enforcement

The staged approach to enforcement which is required by the Code of Practice, involves the following:

- Checking air temperature and air temperature monitoring records;
- A non-destructive check of food temperature if the first stage check raises reasonable doubt about compliance with the Regulations;
- A destructive temperature measurement of the food itself if doubt remains about compliance with the Regulations after the first two stages have been completed.

The initial stage of any check to monitor compliance with the Regulations should include a discussion with the proprietor or other responsible person about the position of temperature monitoring sensors, how temperatures that they record relate to the actual temperature of the food, and how temperature control is achieved.

Destructive temperature measurement should normally only be undertaken when reasonable doubt remains that food is being held at the required temperatures, having regard to permitted fluctuations, after earlier steps in the staged approach have been completed.

Adopting this approach will also be less time consuming, and avoid food being rendered unfit for sale unnecessarily.

3.7.5. Air Temperature Checks

A check of air temperature and any air temperature monitoring records should be the first step in the staged approach to enforcement.

Authorised officers should inspect air temperature monitoring records where they exist. Although operators are required to ensure that air temperatures are recorded, except in retail cabinets and local distribution, this does not preclude the use of supplementary systems based on temperature measurements other than air temperatures. Enforcement action should cease at this point if the air temperature check is satisfactory.

Air temperature monitoring is designed to indicate the performance of refrigeration equipment, and a single reading at any one time will not necessarily correspond directly to the temperature of the food.

Air temperature monitoring records will show temperature history, including any defrost cycles, door openings, breakdowns etc, and are a useful guide to how well a particular installation is functioning. The length of time that records should be kept in excess of one year (Regulation 6A(2)(b)) should be related to the maximum shelf-life of the foods to which they relate.

3.7.5.1. Air Temperature Checks: Cold Stores

Enforcement at factory cold stores should primarily concentrate on the temperature of out-going product. The temperature requirements of the Regulations do not apply until the product has been thermally stabilised.

Authorised officers need to verify that a cold store is a holding store for quick-frozen foodstuffs and not merely used for temperature stabilisation, which is not covered by the Regulations.

Manufacturers may have off-site cold storage facilities that are used for temperature stabilisation, and transport to these sites prior to thermal stabilisation of the foodstuff will be necessary.

Authorised officers should be satisfied that the temperature monitoring sensors in cold stores have been appropriately positioned so as to give an accurate indication of product temperature, and may check whether the sensors are giving accurate readings by comparing them against their own calibrated instruments if necessary.

3.7.5.2. Air Temperature Checks: Transport

Authorised officers should ascertain whether temperature measuring instrument(s) used in transport (excluding local distribution vehicles and railways) meet the specification set out in Schedule 2(e) of the Regulations, and that proper recordings are being made (Regulation 6A (2)).

This is to satisfy Article 2(1) of Directive 92/1/EEC, which requires the Competent Authority to approve such measuring instruments. Instruments will be deemed to be approved if they comply with the appropriate specification in the Regulations.

Temperature sensors in a vehicle need to be sited so that they give an accurate indication of the air temperatures to which the load is subjected. In short or multi-compartment vehicles a sensor measuring the air-return to the refrigeration unit may be sufficient. In larger vehicles, an additional sensor positioned further down the chamber may be necessary to indicate adequate air circulation.

International transport of quick-frozen foodstuffs is sometimes achieved by conveying the product in insulated containers that have to be connected to independent refrigeration units ("clip-on units"). This refrigeration equipment is not an integral part of the container, and different systems can be used at

different stages in the distribution chain. Temperature monitoring records may therefore not be immediately available for the whole of the journey, and authorised officers will have to make a professional judgement as to whether or not further inspection is necessary.

Local distribution vehicles are only required to be fitted with a visible thermometer (Schedule 2(g)). The sensor should be located so that it indicates the temperature of the air returning to the refrigeration unit. Air temperature monitoring records may not give a representative indication of product temperature because of the frequency of door openings in local delivery vehicles.

3.7.5.3. Air Temperature Checks: Retail Display Cabinets

It may be necessary to discuss with the proprietor or representative how the retail cabinet temperature monitoring system operates and how its readings relate to the air temperature at the load line.

In many instances sensors will not be physically located at the load line. Authorised officers should therefore satisfy themselves that temperature sensors are positioned within cabinets so that their readings are indicative of temperatures at maximum load lines.

Although thermometers in retail display cabinets must be easily visible to the operator and to authorised officers, they do not necessarily have to be visible to consumers. A central readout at a control point that registers data from a number of cabinets in a system satisfies this requirement.

In open cabinets, including open vertical cabinets, thermometers have to be indicative of the temperature at the clearly marked maximum load line, although in open vertical cabinets the load line is not usually marked as it is normally regarded to be the front edge of the shelves.

Authorised officers should also be aware that there are many different types of temperature monitoring and measuring equipment, and that not all will give an instantly readable indication of temperature.

A display cabinet is a "point of retail sale" and therefore the temperature tolerance for local distribution also applies to back-up cold rooms in retail premises. The tolerance relating to retail display cabinets is a permanent tolerance which takes into account cabinet defrost cycles and the temperature gradient within a cabinet i.e. it allows for radiant heat and other such influences affecting the temperature of the top or outermost (warmest) packs in a cabinet.

3.7.6. Non-destructive Temperature Checks

If an air temperature check leaves reasonable doubt that food to which the Regulations apply is being, or has been held at the required temperature, then a non-destructive between-pack temperature check should be undertaken. Enforcement action should cease if the result of the non-destructive temperature check is satisfactory.

Authorised officers should ensure that cartons or cases of quick-frozen foodstuffs that are opened for checking are re-sealed and appropriately labelled or marked with the date and time of the check, the name of the officer, and the name of the District Council. This is to show that the case was opened for an official check and to avoid any suspicion of malicious tampering.

Not all packs or packaging materials are suitable for this type of measurement. Irregularly shaped packs where good thermal contact is not possible, packaging materials that act as an insulator and products in cartons or bubble packs where large air spaces exist are all examples where a non-destructive between-pack temperature measurement may not be sufficiently accurate to be indicative of product temperature. If the packaging of the food is not suitable for this type of measurement it may be necessary to proceed directly to a destructive temperature measurement.

When performing non-destructive between-pack temperature checks it is important to ensure good thermal contact between the product packaging and the probe. A total tolerance of +2.8°C (0.8°C for instrument accuracy, and 2°C for the limitation of the methodology) should be allowed.

Checks should be conducted so as to cause the minimum of disturbance to the product and its temperature-controlled environment, particularly to the airflow patterns in retail display cabinets. This can be achieved by using a pre-cooled, flat-headed probe that is suitable for measuring surface or between-pack temperatures.

Care should be taken to allow the reading to stabilise whilst ensuring that the temperature recorded is not that of the surrounding air, e.g. because the probe is not properly sandwiched between the packs. For products within an outer casing it will be necessary to open the casing and insert the temperature probe between packs.

3.7.7. Destructive Temperature Measurement

Destructive temperature measurement should only be undertaken where it has not been possible to carry out a non-destructive temperature check, or where reasonable doubt still remains after a non-destructive temperature check.

Sample preparation and temperature measurement should normally be undertaken whilst the sample remains in the refrigerated environment in which it was selected. If this is not possible it will be necessary to move the sample to an appropriately refrigerated environment prior to measuring its temperature, provided the transfer does not prejudice its temperature. Any transfer should take place prior to preparation of the sample. Transfer of products within the normal cold chain, e.g. from a vehicle to a cold store, is acceptable.

If internal product temperature measurement is to be undertaken, both the probe and the product penetration device should be pre-cooled. Only temperature measuring probes that are specifically designed for the purpose should be used to make a hole in the sample.

In other cases a separate pre-cooled product penetration implement must be used. Pre-cooling minimises any local rise in product temperature due to the action of making the hole and can usually be done by leaving the instruments and probe in the same temperature controlled environment as the sample for about 10-15 minutes. Provided there is no significant rise in the temperature of the instrument or probe subsequent determinations can be made with a much shorter pre-cooling period.

If formal action is considered necessary, then determination of the actual temperature of the food must always be made since it is the temperature of the food that must comply with the Regulations.

The operator should witness the temperature measurement process and food temperature readings if possible.

If accurate internal product temperature measurement is not possible, e.g. because the product is fragile, the product should be treated in the same way as particulate foodstuffs (e.g. green peas etc). The surface product temperature should be determined by carefully removing the product from its packaging and firmly sandwiching a pre-cooled flat-headed probe between two products. This is regarded as equivalent to the method detailed in paragraph 6.3(c) of Annex II, Directive 92/2/EEC, and can be used for a prosecution.

3.7.8. Sampling

Before a non-destructive or a destructive temperature measurement can be undertaken, the authorised officer should decide on the positions from which the samples to be measured should be taken.

3.7.8.1. Sampling: Cold Stores

It is necessary to establish that the product has been in the cold store long enough for temperature stabilisation to have occurred. Paragraph 1.1 of Annex 1 of Directive 92/2/EEC states:

"Samples should be selected from several critical points in the cold store, for example: near the doors (upper and lower levels), near the centre of the cold store (upper and lower levels), and near to the air return of the cooling unit."

It may be necessary to take several samples if there is any doubt about the warmest position or if it is not possible to take air temperature measurements from the desired area.

Depending on access within the cold store it may be possible to take several air temperature readings at various points to verify the chosen sampling position. Attention should be paid to the way in which product is stacked within the store, the height of stacks, and any other factor that may impede the free circulation of air around the store causing localised "warm spots".

3.7.8.2. Sampling: Transport

Particular care should be exercised when sampling from vehicles to ensure that the refrigerated environment is disturbed as little as possible.

Paragraph 1.2(a) of Annex 1 of Directive 92/2/EEC states that if it is necessary to select samples during transport they should be selected:

"... from the top and the bottom of the consignment adjacent to the opening edge of each door or pair of doors."

In circumstances where further investigation is required, or when unloading has already commenced, it may be necessary to select samples during unloading of a vehicle. Unloading of the vehicle should be carried out so that the product to be tested is marked, or can be identified, for subsequent examination under temperature controlled conditions, e.g. in a cold store.

Paragraph 1.2(b) of Annex 1 of Directive 92/2/EEC states:

"Choose four samples from amongst the following critical points:

- top and bottom of the consignment adjacent to the opening edge of doors,
- top rear corners of the consignment (at a point as far away from the refrigeration unit as possible),
- centre of the consignment,
- centre of the front surface of the consignment (as close as possible to the refrigeration unit),
- top and bottom corners of the front surface of the consignment (as close as possible to the return air [inlet] to the refrigeration unit)."

This sampling plan may need to be modified for vehicles with more than one set of doors because the temperature distribution within the vehicle will be different. Four samples should be selected from amongst the suggested sampling points indicated in Figure 1.

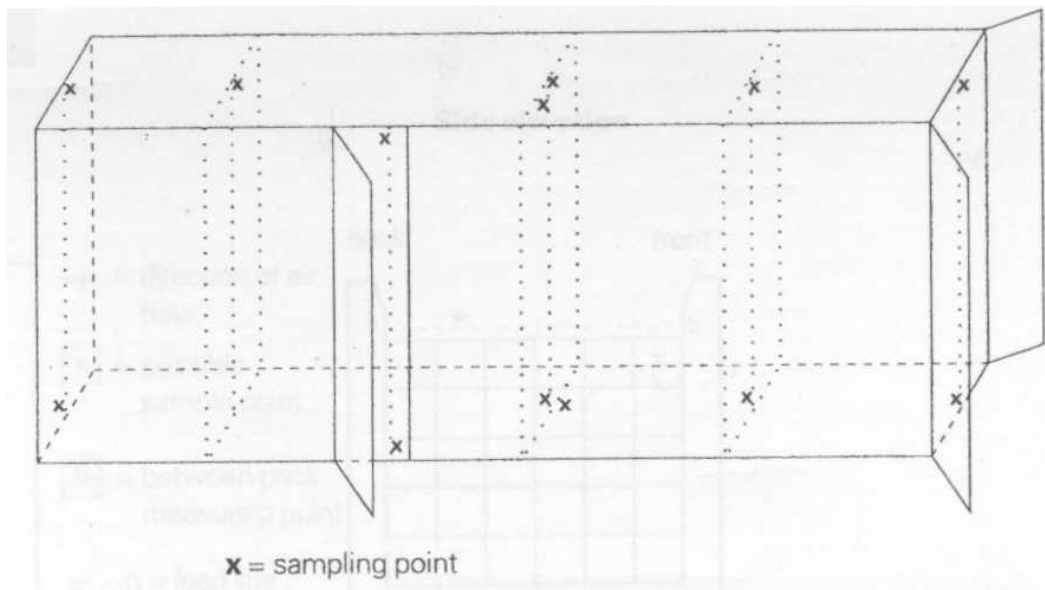


Figure 1. Sampling points for vehicles with more than one set of doors

3.7.8.3. Sampling: Retail Display Cabinets

Paragraph 1.3 of Annex I of Directive 92/2/EEC states:

"A sample must be selected for testing from each of three locations representative of the warmest points within the retail display cabinet used."

The temperature profile within a retail cabinet can be complex and even the same cabinet design may perform differently depending on its environment, the type of products it contains, and how these products are distributed within the cabinet.

External parameters such as draughts and lighting can also affect the temperature distribution within a cabinet. In horizontal cabinets the warmest packs will generally be located at the surface where they are exposed to radiant heat from the surroundings. Of these, packs furthest away from the cold walls of a contact cooling cabinet, normally down the centre, will have the warmest temperature (Figure 2). This will also be the case in combination cabinets.

In forced-air circulation cabinets the warmest packs will typically be located on the top layer at the air return side, usually at the front edge (Figure 3). However, since the location of the warm spots will vary with the performance of the cabinet, the officer may wish to verify that the positions are appropriate by the use of rapid temperature measurement methods that are sufficiently accurate for this purpose, e.g. thermochromic strips and/or an infra-red thermometer.

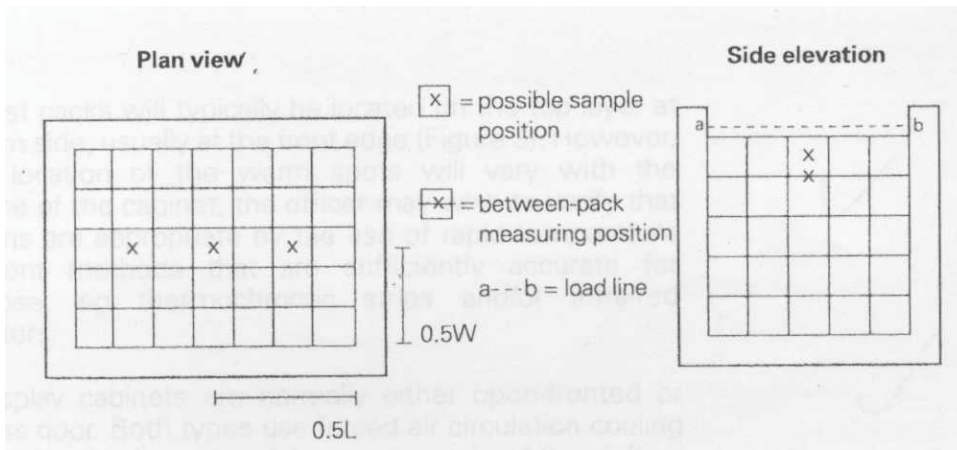


Figure 2. Horizontal cabinet – contact cooling

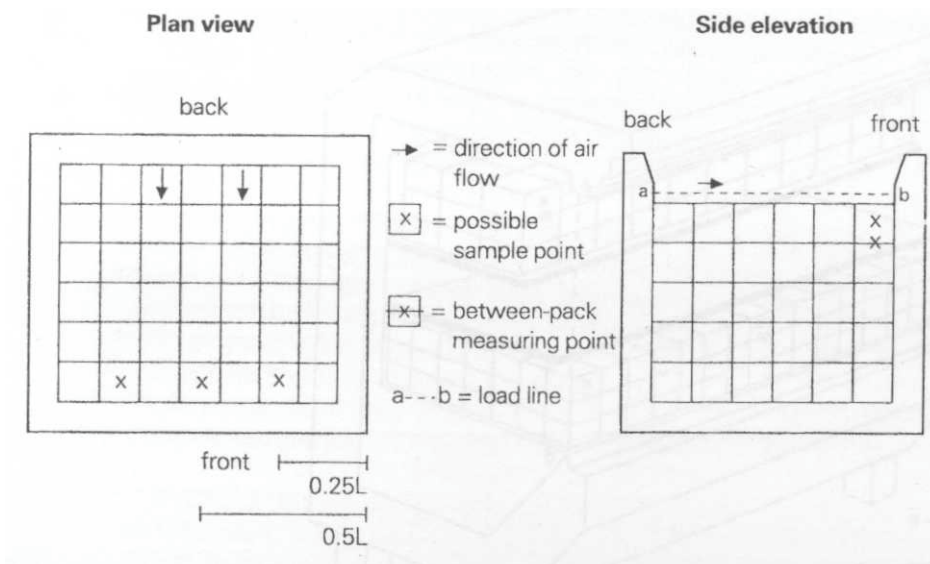


Figure 3. Horizontal cabinet – forced air circulation

Vertical display cabinets are normally either open-fronted or have a glass door. Both types use forced-air circulation cooling although design details vary and the exact pattern of the air flow will depend on the positioning of the fans. With open-fronted cabinets the warmest positions will generally be at the front of the top shelf (Figure 4). It is much more difficult to generalise the equivalent positions for glass door cabinets since the frequency of door openings and the length of time they are left open throughout the day will greatly affect the temperature of the food. Typically, packs closest to the door, which are exposed to radiant heat and furthest from the cooling source, will be the warmest (Figure 5). The use of rapid temperature measurement methods can aid the identification of "warm spots".

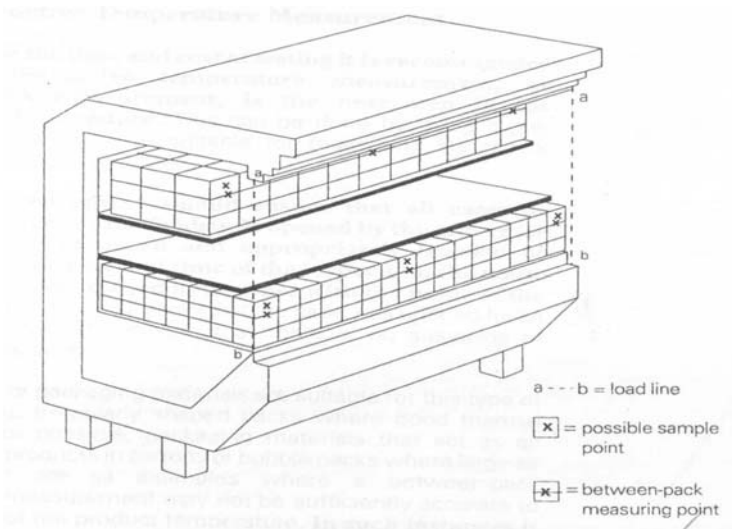


Figure 4. Open vertical cabinet

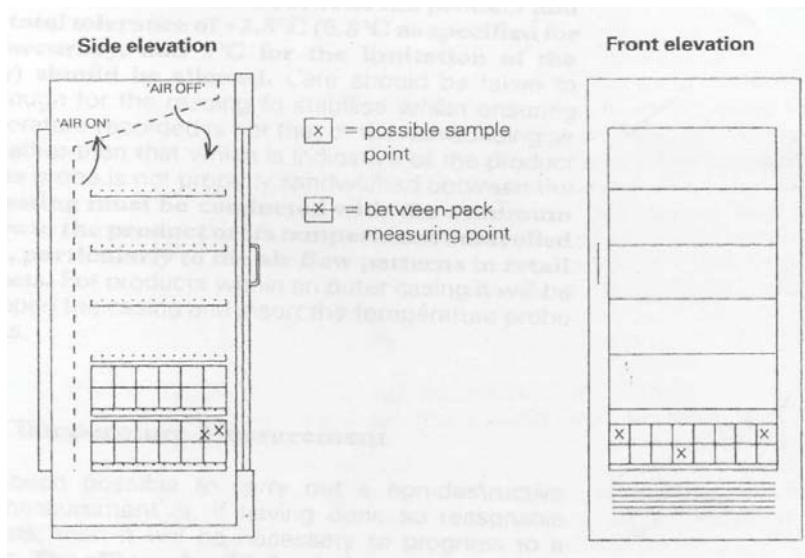


Figure 5. Vertical glass-fronted cabinet

In large retail outlets, where several identical cabinet units that are holding products which are similar in type and packaging are joined together, it may be sufficient to sample only one unit, providing any temperature records and/or other rapid methods do not indicate large air temperature discrepancies between the units.

3.7.9. Procedure for Product Temperature Measurement

(i) Pre-cooling of instruments

The temperature measuring probe and the product penetration instrument, such as an ice punch, a hand drill or an auger should be pre-cooled before measuring the temperature of the product. The pre-cooling method used should ensure that both instruments equilibrate as close to the product temperature as possible.

(ii) Preparation of samples for temperature measurement

The diameter of the hole made in a sample using the product penetration instrument should provide a close fit to that of the probe, and its depth will depend on the type of product (as described in (iii)). It is important to ensure that any instrument used for making a hole in a quick-frozen foodstuff is maintained in a sharp condition, and can be easily cleaned.

(iii) Measurement of product temperature

The sample preparation and its temperature measurement should be undertaken whilst the sample remains in the selected refrigerated environment. Measurement is as follows:

(a) Where the product dimensions allow, insert the pre-cooled probe to a depth of at least 2.5 cm from the nearest outside surface of the product.

(b) Where (a) is not possible the probe should be inserted to a minimum depth from the surface of at least 3 times the diameter of the probe. With some products, because of their small size, greater care has to be taken to avoid excessive rises in product temperature from unnecessary handling of the sample.

(c) Certain foods, because of their size or composition (eg green peas) cannot be drilled to determine their internal temperature. In these cases, the internal temperature of the food package should be determined by insertion of a suitable pre-cooled sharp-stemmed probe to the centre of the pack to measure the temperature in contact with the food.

(d) Read the temperature indicated when it has reached a steady value.

3.7.10. Dealing with Food which is at a Higher Temperature than the Prescribed Frozen Temperature

If a destructive temperature measurement confirms that the food is at a higher temperature than prescribed by the Regulations, it may not necessarily fail food safety requirements and may still be fit for consumption.

In most cases there will not be any need for action under Article 8 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991. The authorised officer should, however, advise the proprietor of the provisions of Article 13 of the Order, and discuss what action the proprietor proposes to take to deal with the quick-frozen foodstuff.

3.7.11. General Specification for Temperature Measuring Instruments

Officers should check the accuracy of their temperature measuring instruments either prior to, or as soon as practicable after, any formal action. Officers should refer to Paragraph 3.6.5 of this Practice Guidance, and adapt the methodology to the range -20°C to +30°C.

Temperature measuring instruments that are used to gather evidence for a prosecution should be properly calibrated by a scientifically valid method and have a current certificate of calibration. This may include the use of a calibration tank, provided the tank itself has a current certificate of calibration.

Temperature measuring instruments used for enforcement purposes should meet the following specification:

- (a) The response time should achieve 90% of the difference between the initial and final reading within three minutes;
- (b) The instrument (readout and probe) must have an accuracy of $+0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ within the measurement range -20°C to $+30^{\circ}\text{C}$;
- (c) The measuring accuracy must not be changed by more than 0.3°C during operation in the ambient temperature range -20°C to $+30^{\circ}\text{C}$;
- (d) The display resolution of the instrument should be 0.1°C ;
- (e) The accuracy of the instrument (readout and probe) should be checked at regular intervals;
- (f) The instrument (readout and probe) should have a current certificate of calibration;
- (g) The temperature probe can be easily cleaned / disinfected;
- (h) The temperature-sensitive part of the measuring device must be so designed as to ensure good thermal contact with the product;
- (i) The electrical equipment must be protected against undesirable effects due to the condensation of moisture.

CHAPTER 3.8: WASTE FOOD

3.8.1. Introduction

This Chapter provides guidance to District Councils on the control of food waste.

The legislative framework that controls the identification, categorisation, segregation, collection and disposal of food waste includes regulations and orders that are made under both the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 and the Disease of Animals (NI) Order 1981.

For the purposes of this chapter, “food waste” includes food material that is not fit or not intended for human consumption.

3.8.2. Inspection of Food Businesses

Any inspection of a food business, including inspections of mobile establishments / premises, ships, aircraft and trains, should include a check on the arrangements that the business has for the collection and disposal of food waste.

Checks should also include the arrangements in ports and airports for the collection and disposal of imported food waste from ships and aircraft (see Paragraph 4.4.3).

Checks should verify that threats to human or animal health which can arise from the illegal disposal of food waste, are effectively controlled by proper disposal in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.

3.8.3. Major Investigations

District Councils may become aware of instances of apparent food fraud involving the misuse of food waste that could have potentially serious implications for public or animal health, e.g. unsafe meat being diverted into the human food chain.

The investigation of such cases may have serious resource implications for District Councils, both in terms of time and other resources. Nevertheless, it is vitally important that the very serious risks to human health and animal health that such cases may involve are brought to the attention of the relevant enforcement authority and investigated without delay, and that all necessary steps are taken to deal with them thoroughly.

The resources required may impact on a District Council's ability to carry out its routine inspection and enforcement programme. If such circumstances arise, it is important that the District Council contact FSANI as soon as practicable.

FSANI and the District Council will then be able to discuss options, including whether support may be available, or whether the District Councils inspection programme should be re-prioritised to ensure that inspections of higher-risk premises are maintained.

CHAPTER 3.9: DISTANCE SELLING / MAIL ORDER

3.9.1. Introduction

This Chapter provides guidance to District Councils on the enforcement of food law in relation to the distance selling of food, and information on other generic legal requirements that relate to distance selling.

For the purposes of this Guidance, “the distance selling of food” means the advertisement of food for sale directly to consumers where the subsequent sale of the food to the consumer takes place without the buyer and seller meeting face-to-face. Examples of distance selling include the sale of food through Internet websites, mail order transactions, and telephone sales.

The enforcement issues for District Councils that relate to the distance selling of food depend primarily on the location of the advertiser and/or seller.

3.9.2. Location of the Seller

The ability of District Councils to enforce food law in relation to the distance selling of food depends on where the seller is based.

It is important to bear in mind that food bought via an Internet website involves a sale via the World Wide Web, and that the seller could therefore be located anywhere in the world.

If the seller is in the UK, the enforcement and consumer protection issues are likely to be within UK jurisdiction, and UK legislation will bind the seller.

Similarly, if the seller is based elsewhere in the EU, that Member State’s legislation, including EU legislation as transposed is likely to apply to the sale.

However, the difficulties are not so easily addressed when the seller is outside the EU because the enforcement powers of District Councils and consumer protection laws may not reach beyond the UK’s jurisdiction. There are, therefore, important distinctions between UK, EU and non-EU distance selling transactions.

3.9.3. Location of the Buyer

The location of the buyer in a distance selling transaction is important only insofar as it affects the ease with which the buyer may be able to invoke an appropriate remedy, should there be a problem with the transaction, e.g. food not as described, food unfit for consumption on delivery etc.

3.9.4. Distance Selling of Food from the UK

The distance selling of food from the UK takes place when the advertisement of food for sale or the sale transaction itself takes place within the jurisdiction of the UK legal system.

The distance selling of food from the UK is covered by relevant food law. Food that is sold by a distance selling method from the UK, and advertisements for such food, must therefore comply with exactly the same legal requirements as food sold from a high street supermarket or advertised in a UK national newspaper.

District Councils are therefore responsible for enforcing food law in relation to the distance selling of food from Northern Ireland, including food that is advertised or sold through Northern Ireland-based internet sites.

District Councils should therefore have appropriate means of monitoring the distance selling of food by businesses for which they act as home authority.

District Councils should include an assessment of relevant food hygiene, safety, advertising, compositional, and labelling matters in programmed inspections of businesses involved in the distance selling of food from Northern Ireland in their areas.

District Councils should also encourage distance sellers of perishable food that are based in their areas to adopt best practice by:

- Ensuring the maintenance of appropriate temperature controls during transit;
- Clearly marking consignments on the outermost packaging with the time and date of despatch and the appropriate durability indication.

3.9.5. Distance Selling of Food from the EU (Outside the UK)

The distance selling of food from the EU takes place when the advertisement of food for sale or the sale transaction itself takes place outside the jurisdiction of the UK legal system, but within the jurisdiction of another Member State.

UK consumers who purchase food from a distant seller in another Member State cannot rely on the protection of UK food law.

However, as most UK food law derives from EU single market rules, similar provisions to those that apply in the UK will apply in the other Member State.

District Councils should generally use the liaison role of the Food Standards Agency (See Chapter 2.5 of both the Code of Practice and of this Guidance) to resolve problems relating to the distance selling of food from the EU.

3.9.6. Distance Selling of Food from Third Countries

The distance selling of food from third countries takes place when the advertisement of food for sale or the sale transaction itself takes place outside the jurisdiction of any EU Member State.

UK consumers who purchase food from a distant seller in a third country cannot rely on the protection of UK food law.

3.9.7. Generic Distance Selling Legislation

Generic law regulating distance selling in the UK is set out in the Consumer Protection (Distance Selling) Regulations 2000²⁷, which implement Council Directive 97/7/EC in the UK.

The primary aim of this legislation is to facilitate cross-border distance selling consumer transactions within the EU by laying down basic levels of consumer protection that apply throughout the EU, irrespective of the Member State that has legal jurisdiction over the transaction.

The Regulations lay down minimum levels of information that must be provided to the consumer by distance sellers of goods or services in the EU. These include:

- The name of the supplier and a geographical (rather than an Internet) address;
- Description of the goods or services;
- The period that the offer remains open;
- The price (including all taxes);
- The right to withdraw;
- The arrangements for delivery of any goods.

The central UK Competent Authority with responsibility for these Regulations is the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). Enforcement in Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Industry Northern Ireland.

DTI, OFT and LACORS have each published guidance on the Regulations for businesses, consumers, and enforcement agencies. Copies of the guidance are available either directly from the LACORS website at www.lacors.gov.uk or via links from the LACORS website to the relevant DTI or OFT web addresses. If any further advice is required, officers should contact the Contract Regulation Unit at OFT.

3.9.8. Other References

A Guide to Good Practice for the mail order food industry, developed in accordance with Article 8 of Regulation 852/2004, is scheduled for publication in 2006.

²⁷ SI 2000/2334

CHAPTER 3.10: BOTTLED WATERS

3.10.1. Introduction

This Chapter provides guidance to District Councils on enforcement of the Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water Regulations (NI) 1999²⁸ as amended (the Regulations).

3.10.2. Legislation

The Regulations transpose into UK legislation the provisions of: Council Directive 80/777/EEC, as amended by Directive 96/70/EC, relating to natural mineral water and spring water and Council Directive 80/778/EEC covering spring waters and bottled waters, as amended by Council Directive 98/83/EC, relating to the quality of water for human consumption.

The Regulations were amended by The Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2003²⁹ which implement, in relation to spring water and bottled drinking water, Council Directive 98/83/EC relating to the quality of water intended for human consumption.

A further amendment, The Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2004³⁰ came into force on 9th April 2004 and implement Commission Directive 2003/40/EC establishing the list, concentration limits and labelling requirements for the constituents of natural mineral waters and the conditions for using ozone-enriched air for the treatment of natural mineral waters and spring waters.

3.10.3. Natural Mineral Waters

The Regulations require each NI natural mineral water source to be recognised by the District Council for the area in which the source is located.

Once recognition has been granted, the District Council is required to make periodic checks to ensure that the source remains free from all risk of pollution and that the composition of the water remains stable.

It is not permitted to sell water as natural mineral water if the source has not been recognised.

A list of recognised UK sources is available on the Food Standards Agency website at <http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/mineralwaters>.

The most recent list of all recognised sources within the EU is available on the EU's website at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/labellingnutrition/water/index_en.htm

²⁸ SR 1999 No. 301

²⁹ SR 2003 No.182

³⁰ SR 2003 No. 115

3.10.4. Recognition of Natural Mineral Waters

Applications for recognition of natural mineral waters in Northern Ireland are submitted in writing to the District Council. The District Council is required to assess all the information required by the Regulations.

District Councils must notify FSANI whenever they recognise a new natural mineral water, withdraw recognition, or approve a change in the name of the source or trade description of a natural mineral water.

District Councils should also notify the Belfast Gazette, of any recognition, withdrawal of recognition or change in the name of the source or trade description of a natural mineral water.

Natural mineral water cannot be tankered, unless it was tankered for the purposes of exploiting the *spring* before 15 July 1980. Hence transport of water from the spring to the packaging line must be in a closed pipeline made of a suitable material and the filling system must ensure that there is no microbiological contamination of the water before closure of its container.

3.10.5. Labelling of Natural Mineral Waters

The Regulations include detailed labelling requirements for containers of natural mineral water that must be met when natural mineral waters are packaged.

3.10.6. Spring and Other Bottled Drinking Water

The recognition and monitoring procedures by District Councils that apply to natural mineral waters do not apply to spring and other bottled drinking waters, although these waters are subject to specific compositional and microbiological standards that are set out in the Regulations.

Spring water is normally extracted from a private water supply and is, therefore, also subject to the requirements of the Private Water Supplies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1994³¹, which specify the frequency of local authority monitoring of a range of compositional and microbiological parameters.

However, like natural mineral water, spring water cannot be tankered, unless it was being transported in tankers on or before 23 November 1996. The right to tanker is linked to the *spring*, not the bottler.

3.10.7. Labelling of Spring and Other Bottled Water

Any bottled water that is described as “spring water” must meet the relevant labelling requirements in the Regulations.

Bottled drinking waters are subject to the general labelling requirements of the Food Labelling Regulations (NI) 1996³².

³¹ SR 1994 No. 237

³² as amended, SR 1996 No. 383

CHAPTER 3.11: MICROBIOLOGICAL CRITERIA REGULATION

3.11.1: Agency Guidance for Food Business Operators

The Agency issued revised guidance for food business operators in respect of Regulation (EC) 2073/2005 on Microbiological Criteria for Foodstuffs on 11 January 2006, to coincide with application of the Regulation, of which District Councils should be aware. This guidance can be found on the Agency's website:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/europeleg/eufoodhygieneleg/microbiolreg>

The Agency proposes to review the guidance document after 12 months to take account of experience gained in applying the regulation. It is therefore inviting comments on the practical application of the regulation and the guidance up to 31 December 2006.

Contact:

Joanna Higgins,
Campylobacter Strategy, Microcriteria, Research & Zoonoses Branch,
Microbiological Safety Division,
Food Standards Agency,
Room 816c,
Aviation House,
125 Kingsway,
London,
WC2B 6NH.

Phone: 020 7276 8960

Fax: 020 7276 8907

Email: micro.criteria@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

3.11.2: Further Development of the Agency Guidance

The primary aim of the above guidance is to help UK food business operators understand the requirements of new European legislation. The consultation held between November and December 2005 resulted in a number of requests for further detailed advice in areas, such as, enforcement, primary production, small businesses and training. Key stakeholders, including LACORS and CIEH, were invited to a meeting the Agency arranged in March 2006 to discuss taking this forward.

3.11.3: Other Guidance

District Councils should be aware that some trade organisations, such as the British Retail Consortium and Chilled Food Association, have produced guidance on complying with the regulation.

CHAPTER 3.12: IMPORT OF FOOD FROM THIRD COUNTRIES

See Annex 14 of this Guidance.

SECTION 4: INSPECTIONS

CHAPTER 4.1: INSPECTIONS

All relevant material on inspections is contained in the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 4.2: THE INSPECTION

4.2.1. Introduction

This Chapter deals with notice and co-ordination of inspections, and the monitoring of shellfish health marks.

4.2.2. Notice of Inspection

The general principle about pre-notification of inspections is set out in Regulation 882/2004 which states in Article 3(2) that *“official controls shall be carried out without prior warning, except in cases such as audits where prior notification of the feed or food business operator is necessary. Official controls may also be carried out on an ad hoc basis”*.

There will, however, be circumstances when it is advantageous to give advance notice, particularly when the purpose of inspection is to see a particular process in operation. Authorised officers should exercise discretion in this area guided by the overriding aim of ensuring compliance with food legislation (see also Paragraph 1.6.4 of the Code of Practice on obtaining entry to Crown Premises).

4.2.3. Co-ordination of Inspections

Where authorised officers of the District Council, or DARD (VS-VPHU) or DARD (QAB) need to inspect the same premises, there can be advantages for food businesses, District Councils and consumers in co-ordinating the inspections. This is particularly true of inspection of manufacturing premises, where co-ordination can make the whole inspection process more effective and efficient. However, there may often be practical difficulties in co-ordinating inspections. For example, premises may need to be inspected more frequently for some purposes than for others. There may be particular advantages in co-ordinating visits to consider a new process or product, or where there have been significant changes in quality control procedures.

Wherever it is practicable and appropriate to do so, enforcement authorities should co-ordinate inspections of food premises. The inspection team should include all the expertise necessary to inspect the premises in question and where appropriate further experts in particular fields of food technology³³

4.2.4. Shellfish Identification Marks

As part of the monitoring of the use of shellfish identification marks, District Councils should, from time to time, select a batch or consignment from a retail outlet or restaurant and seek to trace the batch or consignment back through a dispatch centre, and any purification centre, to the original gatherers to establish that records relating to the batch and the identification mark are in order. District Councils should co-operate with other Food Authorities in any random check through the production and distribution chain.

³³ The Institute of Food Science and Technology maintains a list of experts in particular fields.

If any checks suggest that movement documents, identification marks or records are not in order the District Council should carry out an investigation to establish where the procedures have not been properly observed. In such cases they should also consider increasing the frequency of random checks through the distribution chain until they are satisfied that the appropriate procedures are being followed.

CHAPTER 4.3: INSPECTION OF PRODUCT – SPECIFIC ESTABLISHMENTS – ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

All relevant information is contained in the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 4.4: INSPECTION OF SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT

4.4.1. Introduction

This Chapter supplements the information supplied in the corresponding Chapter in the Code of Practice to enable authorised officers to consider additional aspects relating to the inspection of ships and aircraft. It also provides, at Paragraph 4.4.7, inspection templates, which may be adapted, where appropriate, provided that the procedures outlined in the Code are not overlooked. A Ship Sanitation and Food Safety Report template can be found on the LACORS website (www.lacors.gov.uk).

4.4.2. General

The types of hazards that may be present in the shipboard/aircraft environment are vastly different to those that might be found in fixed premises.

Examples include:

- Hazards resulting from the various sources of water and its storage in onboard tanks;
- The 24 hour nature of operations onboard ships and aircraft;
- The multi-cultural and international nature of crews;
- The availability of provisions only when the vessel/aircraft is in port;
- The restricted storage space available for provisions (dry, chilled and frozen);
- The age and conditions onboard;
- The fixed layout of food production facilities which cannot be expanded or changed due to structural and safety issues.

The shipboard environment is essentially a closed community for long periods of time during voyages, which presents particular problems in relation to the hazards associated with food production and the potential results of contamination. In large passenger ships, for example, the presence of food contaminated by food poisoning bacteria or toxins could be devastating, amongst both passengers and crew. Even on smaller vessels, or vessels with smaller crews, an outbreak of food poisoning could have a significant impact on the ability to sail the vessel safely because critical members of the crew may be incapacitated.

The scale of food production onboard vessels varies greatly, from large passenger vessels and cargo vessels with large crew and passenger numbers (e.g. some cruise liners with up to 900 passengers and 800 crew) to smaller vessels crewed by 10 to 15 personnel.

Aircraft meals are mainly, but not exclusively, prepared prior to departure, some of which might be for return flights.

During any inspection of a ship or an aircraft, authorised officers must be aware of their own health and safety and have regard to any requirements of the port authority and the shipping or airline.

In many cases it would not be necessary to inspect aircraft on a regular basis, if sufficient information has been obtained from the airline and/or relevant Home Authority (HA) and has been verified.

When the service of notices is considered, it should be borne in mind that through case law, “proprietor” does not necessarily mean “owner”, as it is the person who carries on the food business. It might be the company running a shipping operator or it could be a company hired to operate the food business. Authorised officers will need to establish who the food business operator/food business proprietor is in each case.

Inspection reports should be copied to any food safety advisers employed by the shipping operator or airline.

4.4.3. Catering Waste

The disposal of international catering waste from third countries to landfill is regulated by the Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) Regulations (NI) 2004³⁴ in line with Article 4(1)(e) of EC Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1774/2002. DARD has identified significant risks to animal health if this waste is not dealt with effectively at landfill. Specific measures are needed to ensure that disease is not introduced into the UK from landfill sites, which receive this waste. A mechanism for suspending or amending the conditions of a landfill site approved to deal with such waste is in place, in the event that the conditions of approval are not observed.

4.4.4. Other Issues: Aircraft

Airlines should be encouraged to adopt, where necessary, approved codes of practice, for example, the IFCA³⁵/IFSA World Food Safety Guidelines, and to develop in-house supplier audits and aircraft audits and to make any reports available to the authorised officer.

Such reports, where available, should form part of the authorised officer’s initial checks. Authorised officers should also give consideration, where appropriate, to these Guidelines, which were first published in February 2003.

Flight caterers or secondary food suppliers should be requested to make details of meal ingredients available to their airline customers. Relevant cabin crew should have access to this information and be able to pass it on for the benefit of passengers who have allergies or food intolerances.

Authorised officers should be aware that there have been reported outbreaks of food-borne illness affecting the crew of aircraft, and airline policies might include the requirement for crew members to eat at different times to the passengers and from different menus.

Inspections of aircraft may be undertaken at the maintenance base, taking account of any documentation on, for example, food supply specifications,

³⁴ SR 2004 No 464

³⁵ The International Flight Caterers’ Association (IFCA) became The International Travel Catering Association (ITCA) in 2005

cabin crew training and food temperature control, that is supplied by the airline or HA.

When it is necessary to board an aircraft, the actual time spent on board should be as short as possible, as most of the above issues should be standard operating procedures included in the airline's documentation. However, if there are any causes of concern relating to the above, the authorised officer should notify the relevant company and HA, if designated, that increased surveillance may be undertaken, e.g. assessment of galley cleanliness, increased water sampling for analysis/examination, etc.

Delays to aircraft are costly. Aircraft operations should therefore not be interrupted unless there is an imminent risk to the health of passengers or crew. If flights are in transit, inspections should be undertaken only if absolutely necessary, based on background information relating to the specific type of aircraft, company policy, flight caterer, temperature control, etc. Authorised officers should also consider the practicalities of their inspection schedule and endeavour to work with the relevant crew/ground staff to avoid unnecessary difficulties, and bear in mind the primary objective of an airline is the safety of the aircraft, passengers and crew.

The Association of Port Health Authorities has published "*Airline Catering Guidance for Inspectors*".

4.4.5. Other Issues - Ships

If appointed, the HA for the shipping company should ensure that all relevant documentation is made available to it, (see below for examples of relevant documentation), for liaison with and the information of other relevant Food Authorities.

Recipient District Councils should use the previous inspection report to ensure that: (a) if necessary, follow-up inspections are undertaken at that time and/or (b) primary inspections are not carried out at a frequency of greater than annually, unless there is clear justification for doing so.

It is also good practice to send a copy of the report to the UK Food Authority which had carried out any previous inspection, in order that they may see what action, if any, had taken place as a result of their previous inspection of the vessel.

Ships may be inspected for training purposes so long as the purpose of the inspection is made clear to the Master and they agree to such an inspection taking place.

Examples of relevant documentation:

- Food specifications/suppliers;
- Water sample results;
- Hazard analysis (HACCP);
- Food temperature records;
- Food Handler Training Records.

4.4.6. Other References

Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice: Catering Guide – Ships; Chamber of Shipping, published by Chadwick House Group (ISBN 1-904306-42-X).

4.4.7. Inspection Templates – Aircraft – Food Safety Inspection Report Form

District Council: _____ Airport: _____

Name of Authorised Officer: _____ Designation: _____ Tel. No: _____

Date of Inspection: _____ Time of Inspection _____ Flight No: _____

Airline Company or Airline operating the aircraft: _____

Address: _____ Airline Tel. No: _____

Airline Person interviewed/Designation: _____

Aircraft Reg. No: _____ Aircraft type: _____

Home Authority: _____

- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Date of previous inspection:
(if known) | 2. Return catered: Yes/No | |
| 3. High risk foods served: Yes/No | 4. HACCP – based procedures
(v tick box if satisfactory) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Training/Exclusion procedure <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Pest control | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Time/Temp control (outbound) <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Temp control (return catering) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Cooking/Reheating <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Galley hygiene/storage areas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Cleaning/Waste control <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. Toilets | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Potable Water supply <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. Airline sampling (food/water) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Note: details of items 1 to 6 and 13 to 14 should be obtained from the airline (or Home Authority) prior to attending an aircraft.

Comments (including any samples procured)

Summary of Action taken to be taken by District Council (v tick box(es))

Satisfactory Outcome Follow-up with Airline HQ/HA

Prosecution Emergency Prohibition Notice Formal
Detention/Seizure

Hygiene Improvement Notice Letter to follow Verbal advice
(not to cabin crew)

Signature of Officer

Signature of Person interviewed

CHAPTER 4.5: ACTION FOLLOWING INSPECTION

All relevant information on action following inspection is contained in the Code of Practice.

SECTION 5: PRODUCT-SPECIFIC ESTABLISHMENTS

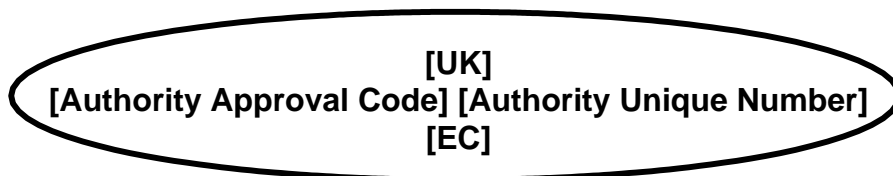
CHAPTER 5.1: APPROVAL OF PRODUCT-SPECIFIC ESTABLISHMENTS SUBJECT TO APPROVAL UNDER REGULATION 853/2004

5.1.1: Identification Marks

(See also Code of Practice, Paragraph 5.1.13)

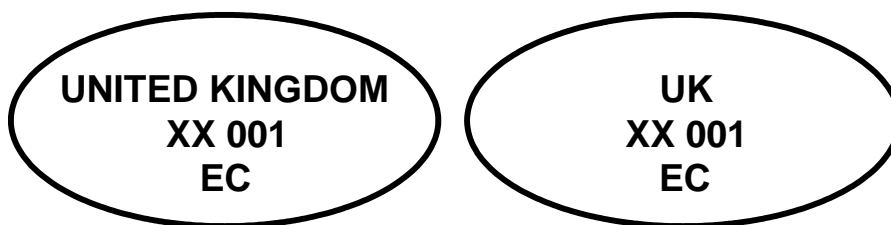
The requirements for the form of the identification mark which establishments subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004 must apply to their products as appropriate are set out in Annex II, Section I B of that Regulation. In accordance with Paragraph 5.1.13 of the Code of Practice the District Council should agree an identification mark with each establishment it approves which (a) incorporates the approval code it has allocated and (b) meets the requirements of Annex II, Section I B of Regulation 853/2004.

5.1.1.1: Example Identification Mark Formats



Note: Other formats are acceptable provided they comply with the requirements of Annex II, Section I B of Regulation 853/2004.

5.1.1.2: Example Identification Marks



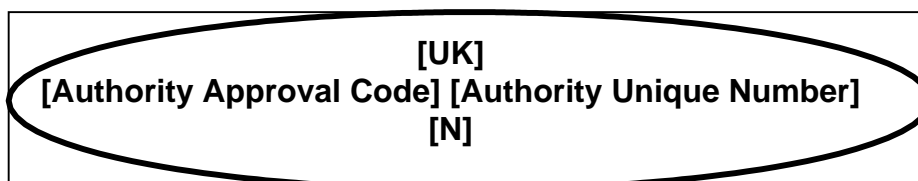
5.1.2: 'Special Mark' for Minced Meat/Meat Preparations/Meat Products: (Article 8 of Regulation 2073/2005)

(See also Code of Practice, Paragraph 5.1.13)

The UK has opted to use the transitional derogation provided by Article 8 of Regulation 2073/2005 concerning compliance with the value set in Annex I to that Regulation for *Salmonella* in minced meat, meat preparations and meat

products intended to be eaten cooked placed on the national market of a Member State. Relevant products must be marked with a 'special mark'.

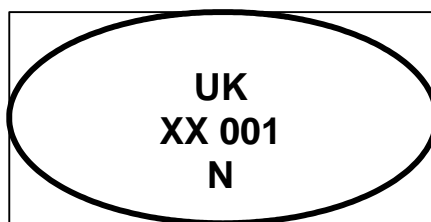
5.1.2.1: Format of 'Special Mark'



Specific Requirements:

1. The oval should touch the four sides of the surrounding oblong, as shown.
2. Within the oval there should be the letters UK, the approval code of the premises of manufacture/production, and the letter N, to denote that the product is for the national market only.
3. There is no size requirement for the special mark.
4. The general requirements given in Annex II, Section I, B(5) of Regulation 853/2004 for the Identification Mark must be met i.e. the special mark must be:
 - clearly displayed;
 - legible;
 - in indelible ink; and
 - the characters must be easily decipherable.

5.1.2.2: Examples of 'Special Mark'



CHAPTER 5.2: ENFORCEMENT OPTIONS IN PRODUCT-SPECIFIC ESTABLISHMENTS SUBJECT TO APPROVAL UNDER REGULATION 853/2004

All relevant material on enforcement options in establishments is contained in the Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 5.3: MATTERS RELATING TO LIVE BIVALVE MOLLUSCS

All relevant material on enforcement options in establishments is contained in the Code of Practice and in Annex 6 of this Guidance.

CHAPTER 5.4: MATTERS RELATING TO FRESH MEAT

Relevant material relating to fresh meat is contained in the Code of Practice and in Annex 5 of this Guidance.

SECTION 6: SAMPLING AND ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 6.1: SAMPLING AND ANALYSIS³⁶

6.1.1. Introduction

This Section concerns the procedures that should be followed when food samples are procured under Regulation 12 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and Article 29 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, and the associated requirements of the Food Safety (Sampling and Qualifications) Regulations (NI) 1991³⁷.

6.1.2. Procurement of Samples

The Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 allows samples to be procured either by “purchasing” or “taking”. The choice is at the discretion of the authorised officer, having regard to the policy of the District Council. Where the quantity or frequency of sampling gives rise to significant financial consequences for the owner of the food, the District Council should offer an ex-gratia payment if samples are not purchased. The officer should give the owner a receipt for, or a record of, all samples the officer has taken. If enforcement action is anticipated following microbiological examination or chemical analysis the sampling officer should purchase the sample.

6.1.3. Certificate by Public Analyst or Food Examiner

A Public Analyst or Food Examiner is required to analyse or examine samples as soon as practicable and, depending on local arrangements, to give the officer who submitted the sample a certificate specifying the result. District Councils should discuss with the Public Analyst or Food Examiner how these requirements are to be met, including the means by which results that indicate a significant risk to public health, or where legislative deadlines apply, such as water in poultry, can be notified without delay.

6.1.4. Avoiding Contamination

Care should be taken to prevent contamination of samples and instruments, and containers used for samples should be clean and dry. It is important to avoid the use of cleaning and sterilising methods that may leave residues on instruments or containers that could, in turn, affect the results of the analysis or examination (e.g. alcohol).

6.1.5: Continuity of Evidence

Food samples are normally dealt with in a food laboratory and faecal specimens in a clinical laboratory, operating independently of the District

³⁶ See also “Food Standards and Feeding Stuffs Sampling, Practical Guidance for Enforcement Officers” by the Food Standards Agency – published May 2004
; <http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/foodsampling/guidance/>

³⁷ SR 1991 No.198

Council. Laboratory personnel may therefore need to be reminded of the possibility of legal action, the need to treat food samples and faecal specimens as evidence, and to ensure the continuity of such evidence.

Records must therefore be kept of all stages of transport, including:

- Dates and times of transport;
- Identity of custodians;
- Date and time of receipt in the laboratory;
- Identity of the person receiving sample.

For food samples, the temperature of transport should be monitored, and recorded on receipt at the laboratory. If the sample has been posted, proof of posting or a record of the method of despatch to the Food Examiner or Clinical Microbiologist should be kept. The Food Examiner or Clinical Microbiologist should be made aware that the results of their examination of the food or faecal specimen(s) could be used as evidence in Court, and that by examining the sample/specimen, they may be required to produce a certificate of examination, give a sworn written statement, and/or give oral sworn testimony in court.

Other laboratory personnel may also be required to give evidence as to the handling of food samples and faecal specimens and the testing and examination thereof in a criminal prosecution.

Full traceability in the laboratory therefore needs to be ensured, including recording the identity of everybody who has been involved in handling and examining the sample or specimen, and the action they took. Specifically there should be a system at the laboratory for logging the sample or specimen's arrival, and its storage, which should be secure. For food samples, the temperature of storage should be such as to minimise microbial change, and be monitored using a calibrated thermometer or other similar device. Continuity preservation at the laboratory is vital so that there is certainty that the result relates to the sample/specimen submitted. There must be no possibility that the result could refer to a different sample or specimen. Neither must the results raise any doubt as to their reliability, or the reliability or accuracy of laboratory procedures. An individual in the laboratory should be capable of making a sworn statement and of providing sworn oral testimony on these points.

It should also be made clear that if the Food Examiner/Clinical Microbiologist does not carry out the actual examination, but has it conducted under their direction, the person who actually examines the sample or specimen may also be required to give evidence.

6.1.6: Samples for Analysis

6.1.6.1: Quantity of Samples for Analysis

The nature and quantity of any sample should be such as to enable the required analysis to be made. The nature of the samples that are appropriate will depend on the purpose for which the analysis is being undertaken. The quantity will vary according to the product and type of analysis to be carried out. The Public Analyst should be consulted in case of doubt.

National sampling protocols should be taken into consideration, where they exist. Some modification to the protocols may be necessary in the case of large consignments of imported foods.

6.1.6.2: Containers for Samples for Analysis

Samples of non-prepacked food or opened cans or packets, should first be placed in clean, dry, leak-proof containers such as wide-mouth glass or food quality plastic jars, stainless metal cans or disposable food quality plastic bags. Jars, bottles or cans should be suitably closed. Disposable food quality plastic bags should be sealed securely after filling, so that they cannot leak or become contaminated during normal handling. Samples of alcoholic drinks should be placed in glass bottles.

The contained final parts should each be secured with a tamper evident seal and labelled, specifying the name of the food, the name of the officer, the name of the District Council, the place, date and time of sampling and an identification number. Where necessary, it should then be placed in a second container, such as a plastic bag, which should be sealed in such a way as to ensure that the sample cannot be tampered with. A copy of the food label if available and any other relevant details should be submitted to the Public Analyst with a final part.

6.1.6.3: Transport and Storage of Samples for Analysis³⁸

Final parts of food which are perishable should be kept refrigerated or in a frozen state, as necessary. The method of storage used will differ, depending on whether the final part is to be submitted to the Public Analyst, or retained for possible submission to the Government Chemist.

The final part to be submitted to the Public Analyst should be transmitted as soon as practicable after sampling, particularly where tests are to be made for substances which may deteriorate or change with time (e.g. certain pesticides, sulphur dioxide, etc). In any case, where doubt exists about suitable storage or transport arrangements for samples for analysis, the Public Analyst should be consulted. Since retained final parts may need to be stored for several months prior to submission to the Government Chemist, it is important that they are appropriately stored.

³⁸ The Campden and Chorleywood Food Research Association publication "Guidelines for the preservation of official samples for analysis" (CCFRA Guideline No. 36) includes further guidance.

6.1.6.4: Samples which Present Difficulties in Dividing into Parts

An exception to division into three parts applies where the authorised officer is of the opinion that division of the sample is either not reasonably practicable, or is likely to impede proper analysis. Regulation 6(4) of the Food (Sampling and Qualifications) Regulations (NI) 1991 allows for the sample to be submitted for analysis complete without division into three parts. There is no final part for the seller/owner, neither is there a final part to be retained. This procedure must therefore be used with caution. Situations where this procedure may be used will depend on the tests to be carried out but may include the following:

- Where there is insufficient product available to comply with the procedures in Regulations 6(1) or 6(2);
- There is no way of storing a final part for further analysis as with tests for previously frozen meat.

This situation may also arise where foods are not pre-packed and are not homogeneous and it is difficult to divide the food into three parts, so that each part contains the same proportion of each ingredient, e.g. meat products with lumps of meat, pies where it is difficult to divide the pastry and the filling into three, fruit cocktail/yoghurts with fruit where an ingredient is to be quantified.

In any case, where a single sample is taken in accordance with Regulation 6(4) the owner must be notified of its submission for analysis.

Regulation 6(2) sets out an exception from the general procedures where the sample consists of unopened containers and opening them would, in the opinion of the authorised officer, impede proper analysis. In these circumstances the authorised officer should divide the sample into parts by putting containers into three lots and each lot should be treated as a final part.

Where any doubt exists, the Public Analyst should be consulted.

6.1.7: Samples for Examination

Samples for examination are not required to be divided into three parts, since the non-homogeneous distribution of bacterial contaminants means that no two samples will be the same. It is not appropriate to retain a part for examination later in the event of a dispute, as bacteria may not survive prolonged storage or conversely, may greatly multiply.

6.1.7.1: Quantity of Samples for Examination

The quantity of any sample procured should be such as to enable a satisfactory examination to be made. The quantity will vary according to circumstances, but should normally be at least 100 grams. In any case of doubt the Food Examiner should be consulted.

6.1.7.2: Handling of Samples for Examination

Full traceability in the taking and handling of the sample should be ensured, including the identity of those who have had dealings with the sample, and what they did with it. Samples of non-prepacked food, or from opened cans or packets of food, should be first placed in sterile, leak-proof containers or disposable sterile plastic bags. Disposable sterile plastic sampling bags should be sealed securely after filling, so that they cannot leak or become contaminated during normal handling. Advice should be sought from the Food Examiner in case of doubt. In any event, liaison with the Food Examiner before samples are submitted to the laboratory will ensure correct procedures are followed.

The samples, thus packaged, should be secured with a tamper evident seal and labelled, specifying:

- Type of food sample;
- Name of the Officer;
- The exhibit identification number (e.g.RG/1);
- The date, place and time of sampling.

Containers that may be easily damaged, or that cannot themselves be made tamper-evident, should then be placed in a second container, such as a plastic bag, which should be sealed in a such a way as to ensure that the sample cannot be tampered with. A copy of the food label, if available, and any other relevant details should be given to the Food Examiner, e.g. food handling techniques/storage methods observed in respect of the food sampled.

For general sampling information see the LACORS “Guidance on Food Sampling for Microbiological Examination”, January 2006. Annex 3 of that Guidance contains details of information to be given to the Food Examiner, when samples are submitted. Further guidance is available in Section 4 of the NIFLG “Food Sampling Policies and Associated Guidance”, February 1998.

Officers should take steps to ensure that, as far as possible, samples for examination reach the laboratory in a condition microbiologically unchanged from that existing when the sample was taken. During sampling it is vital that the sample is not contaminated by the sampling officer. Appropriate action should be taken to avoid contamination of the sample and microbial growth or death during sampling, transport and storage. The temperature of transport should be monitored and recorded.

6.1.7.3: Handling, Transport and Storage of Faecal Specimens for Examination

On occasions, officers will be required to investigate reported or suspected cases of food-borne illness and obtain faecal specimens. Officers should therefore have a ready supply of appropriate leak-proof containers for the collection of faecal specimens.

Such specimens should be collected as soon as possible after the onset of symptoms and submitted to the laboratory with relevant individual's details included on the container and on any accompanying documentation.

It is important that faecal specimens are transported to the laboratory as soon as possible; some important pathogens may not survive the pH changes that occur in stool specimens which are not promptly delivered to the laboratory, even if transported in a refrigerated state. Liaison with the laboratory will help ensure that the specimens receive prompt attention on their arrival.

6.1.7.4: Request for Examination

The officer should ensure that all relevant information is passed to the Food Examiner with the sample to ensure that the sample is subjected to the most appropriate examination and to enable the Examiner to interpret the results.

SECTION 7: MONITORING OF INSPECTIONS

All relevant material on monitoring of inspections is contained in the Code of Practice.

SECTION 8: ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

APHA	Association of Port Health Authorities
ABPO	Animal By-Products Order (NI) 2002
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CCDC	Consultant in Communicable Disease Control
CDSC (NI)	Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (Northern Ireland)
CIEH	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland
DARD (VS-VPHU)	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Veterinary Service Veterinary Public Health Unit
DARD (QAB)	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Quality Assurance Branch
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EC	European Commission
EEA	European Economic Area
EMIs	Egg Marketing Inspectors
EU	European Union
FLEP	Food Law Enforcement Practitioners
Framework Agreement	Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement
FSANI	Food Standards Agency for Northern Ireland
FVO	EU Food and Veterinary Office
HA	Home Authority
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points
IFST	Institute of Food Science and Technology
LACORS	Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services
MRM	Mechanically Recovered Meat
NIPHL	Northern Ireland Public Health Laboratory
OFT	Office of Fair Trading
OPOAO	other products of animal origin
REHIS	Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland
SRM	Specified Risk Material
SFI	Sea Fish Inspectorate
Seafish	Sea Fish Industry Authority
SFSORB	Scottish Food Safety Officers' Registration Board

Shellfish

TSE

UKAS

Bivalve molluscs, echinoderms,
tunicates and marine gastropods

Transmissible Spongiform

Encephalopathy

United Kingdom Accreditation Service

ANNEX 2: LINKS TO LEGISLATION, GUIDANCE AND FORMS (FOOD HYGIENE)

Food Law Code of Practice (Northern Ireland) / Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland)

<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/foodlaw/copni>

Regulations Relating to Northern Ireland

The Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 (SR 2006 No. 3):

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/sr/sr2006/20060003.htm>

Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 (SR 2006 No. 2):

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/sr/sr2006/20060002.htm>

EU Regulations

Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2002/l_031/l_03120020201en00010024.pdf

Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2004/l_191/l_19120040528en00010052.pdf

Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2004/l_226/l_22620040625en00030021.pdf

Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2004/l_226/l_22620040625en00220082.pdf

Regulation (EC) No. 854/2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2004/l_226/l_22620040625en00830127.pdf

Regulation (EC) No 1688/2005 implementing Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards special guarantees concerning salmonella for consignments to Finland and Sweden of certain meat and eggs:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l_271/l_27120051015en00170028.pdf

Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l_338/l_33820051222en00010026.pdf

Commission Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 laying down implementing measures for certain products under Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and for the organisation of official controls under Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, derogating from Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Regulations (EC) No 853/2004 and (EC) No 854/2004:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l_338/l_33820051222en00270059.pdf

Commission Regulation (EC) No 2076/2005 laying down transitional arrangements for the implementation of Regulations (EC) No 853/2004, (EC) No 854/2004 and (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Regulations (EC) No 853/2004 and (EC) No 854/2004:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l_338/l_33820051222en00830088.pdf

European Commission Guidance Documents

European Commission Guidance Document on Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/guidance_doc_852-2004_en.pdf

European Commission Guidance Document on Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 on the hygiene of food of animal origin:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/guidance_doc_853-2004_en.pdf

European Commission Guidance Documents on the implementation of procedures based on HACCP principles and facilitation of the implementation of the HACCP principles in certain food businesses:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/guidance_doc_haccp_en.pdf

Food Standards Agency Guidance Documents (other than the Code of Practice and Practice Guidance)

Draft FSA guidance on the requirements of food hygiene legislation:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/fsaguidefoodleg.pdf>

Draft Summary guidance on the new food hygiene regulations for businesses making or handling foods of animal origin:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/summguidpoao011205.pdf>

Draft Summary guidance on the new food hygiene regulations for businesses manufacturing food not of animal origin:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/summguidnonpoao011205.pdf>

Draft Summary guidance on the new food hygiene regulations for restaurants, caterers and businesses selling food to the final consumer:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/summguidcater011205.pdf>

Guidance on Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 of 15 November 2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/europeleg/eufoodhygieneleg/microbiolreg>

Draft Guide to Food Hygiene and other Regulations for the Meat Industry:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/draftguidehygienemeat>

Model Forms / Template Forms in Microsoft Word Format

Model Forms for use in connection with the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/worddocs/hygienerregsformsfeb06ni.doc>

Template Forms for use in connection with the Approval of Product-Specific Establishments

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/worddocs/approvalformfeb06ni.doc>

Model Application Form for the Registration of a Food Business Establishment:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/worddocs/registrationformfeb06ni.doc>

Model Notice of Temporary Closure of Production Area(s) (Live Bivalve Molluscs / Shellfish):

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/worddocs/shellfishformfeb06ni.doc>

Template Live Bivalve Molluscs / Live Shellfish Registration Document:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/worddocs/shellfishregfeb06ni.doc>

Central Register of Letters Sent by the Food Standards Agency to District Councils

Northern Ireland:

http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/webpage/centralref_nireland

UK:

http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/webpage/centralref_uk

ANNEX 3: APPROVAL OF PRODUCT-SPECIFIC ESTABLISHMENTS SUBJECT TO APPROVAL UNDER REGULATION 853/2004 - GENERAL

A.3.1: Introduction

Article 4 of Regulation 853/2004 stipulates that establishments handling products of animal origin for which Annex III to that Regulation lays down requirements may not operate unless they have been approved (which includes conditional approval). This requirement is, however, subject to a number of exemptions which are outlined in Paragraph A.3.3, below.

Relevant requirements of both Regulation 852/2004 and Regulation 853/2004 apply to establishments subject to approval under the latter regulation. Some of the following paragraphs have been reproduced from the Code of Practice for completeness.

A.3.2: Division of Enforcement Responsibilities

(From Code of Practice, Paragraph 5.1.2)

Responsibility rests with District Councils for the approval of, and enforcement in relation to stand alone establishments subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004 in respect of which control does not fall to an official veterinarian. These "Product-Specific" establishments will be producing and/or handling any, or any combination, of the following: Minced Meat, Meat Preparations, Mechanically Separated Meat, Meat Products, Live Bivalve Molluscs, Fishery Products, Dairy Products, Egg Products, Frogs Legs and Snails, Edible Co-products (including Rendered Animal Fats and Greaves, Treated Stomachs, Bladders, and Intestines, Gelatine and Collagen), and will include certain cold stores and certain wholesale markets.

In establishments, subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004 where control falls to an official veterinarian, which also produce Meat Products or Edible Co-products, referred to as integrated establishments, District Councils are responsible for enforcement in relation to those parts of the establishment in which the Meat Products or Edible Co-products are produced. In these establishments District Councils are also responsible for recommending approval in respect of Meat Product or Edible Co-product activities, to the Food Standards Agency through the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland (DARD) Veterinary Service Veterinary Public Health Unit (VS-VPHU).

The Food Standards Agency, through DARD (VS-VPHU), is responsible for the approval of establishments subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004 where control falls to an official veterinarian in accordance with Article 4(7) of Regulation 854/2004 and for enforcement in such establishments once approved. Such meat establishments include slaughterhouses, game handling establishments, cutting plants, cold stores integrated with these establishments and such establishments in which any combination of Minced Meat, Meat Preparations and Mechanically Separated Meat, are also produced.

DARD (VS-VPHU) will on behalf of the Food Standards Agency execute and enforce the relevant provisions of the Hygiene Regulations in respect of Collection Centres and Tanneries supplying raw material for the production of gelatine and collagen intended for human consumption.

Responsibility rests with the Food Standards Agency, through DARD Quality Assurance Branch (QAB), for approval of, and enforcement in relation to, raw milk processing establishments subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004.

A.3.3: Exemptions from the Requirement for Approval

A.3.3.1: Introduction

Exemptions from the requirement for approval are set out in Article 1 of Regulation 853/2004 which details the scope of the Regulation, and in Article 4 which stipulates that establishments subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004 shall not operate unless they have been approved. The following paragraphs deal with the various exemptions from the requirement to be approved.

A.3.3.2: Exemptions: Regulation 853/2004, Article 1 (Scope)

A.3.3.2.1: Article 1(2) of Regulation 853/2004: Food Containing Both Products of Plant Origin and Processed Products of Animal Origin

(From Code of Practice, Paragraph 5.1.4.2)

Article 1(2). Unless expressly indicated to the contrary, this Regulation shall not apply to food containing both products of plant origin and processed products of animal origin. However, processed products of animal origin used to prepare such food shall be obtained and handled in accordance with the requirements of this Regulation.

Article 1(2) of Regulation 853/2004 stipulates that “*Unless expressly indicated to the contrary, this Regulation does not apply to food containing both products of plant origin and processed products of animal origin*”. District Councils should be aware that the regulation does not set any minimum amounts of product of plant origin, or processed product of animal origin, that such food must contain.

Establishments engaged solely in the production of such food by assembling products of plant origin with processed products of animal origin which enter the establishment in that processed state, will not therefore be subject to Regulation 853/2004 and, as such, will not require approval. District Councils will need to consider the definitions of “processed products”, “unprocessed products” and “processing” in Article 2 of Regulation 852/2004 in this regard.

District Councils should be aware that establishments benefiting from this exemption would, in addition to compliance with Regulation 852/2004, need to comply with Article 1(2) of Regulation 853/2004 which requires such establishments to obtain the processed products of animal origin they use in compliance with Regulation 853/2004 (i.e. from approved establishments) and that those products are handled in accordance with that regulation.

A.3.3.2.2: Regulation 853/2004, Article 1(3)(a) and (b): Private Domestic Use Consumption

Article 1(3). *This Regulation shall not apply in relation to:*

(a) *primary production for private domestic use;*

(b) *the domestic preparation, handling or storage of food for private domestic consumption;*

Article 1(3) (a) and (b) of Regulation 853/2004 replicate the exemptions at Article 1(2) (a) and (b) of Regulation 852/2004 and emphasises the exclusion of these activities from the scope of the EC Hygiene Regulations.

A.3.3.2.3: Definition of Retail

Paragraphs A.3.3.2.4 *et seq* contain details of provisions in Regulation 853/2004 which either mention 'retail' or exclude retail activities from the scope of that regulation, unless expressly indicated to the contrary. It is therefore important, when considering such provisions, to be clear on the definitions of 'retail' and 'final consumer', which are given in Article 3(7) and 3(18) of Regulation 178/2002 respectively as follows:

'retail' means the handling and/or processing of food and its storage at the point of sale or delivery to the final consumer, and includes distribution terminals, catering operations, factory canteens, institutional catering, restaurants and other similar food service operations, shops, supermarket distribution centres and wholesale outlets;

'final consumer' means the ultimate consumer of a foodstuff who will not use the food as part of any food business operation or activity

Clarification of what is considered to be 'retail' is essentially given in the first part of the definition. The definition then goes on to provide some specific examples of activities which are considered to be 'retail', which expand on the core definition.

'Wholesale outlets' are included in the definition of 'retail'; the broader terms "wholesale", "wholesale activities" or similar are not used and District Councils should bear in mind this distinction. An example would be an establishment supplying its customers on a "cash and carry" basis, as long as an element of that supply is to the final consumer, as defined.

Although a 'wholesale outlet' may be considered to be 'retail' as defined, approval may nonetheless be required depending on the specific activities undertaken. If products of animal origin for which Annex III of Regulation 853/2004 lays down requirements are handled, and these products are not supplied to the final consumer exclusively, or are not supplied to other retail establishments on a "marginal, localised and restricted" basis, approval would be required.

Establishments claiming exemption will therefore need to be considered on a case by case basis.

District Councils should also bear in mind that 'Wholesale market' is defined separately in Annex I, Paragraph 8.2 of Regulation 853/2004 as follows:

'Wholesale market' means a food business that includes several separate units which share common installations and sections where foodstuffs are sold to food business operators

A.3.3.2.4: Regulation 853/2004, Article 1(3)(c), (d) and (e): Direct Supply of Small Quantities

Article 1(3). This Regulation shall not apply in relation to...

(c) the direct supply, by the producer, of small quantities of primary products to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer;

(d) the direct supply, by the producer, of small quantities of meat from poultry and lagomorphs slaughtered on the farm to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying such meat to the final consumer as fresh meat;

(e) hunters who supply small quantities of wild game or wild game meat directly to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer.

Article 1(3)(c)

Article 1(3)(c) of Regulation 853/2004 replicates the exemption at Article 1(2)(c) of Regulation 852/2004. Direct supply to a final consumer can be via mail order or internet sales as well as by delivery or collection. The final consumer does not have to be local to the primary producer. In respect of the supply of small quantities of primary products to 'local retail establishments', 'Local' should be interpreted in the same way as 'Localised' (see Paragraph 3.3.2.7).

Article 1(3)(d)

Requirements in respect of those producers benefiting from the exemption afforded by Article 1(3)(d) of Regulation 853/2004 are set out in Regulation 28 Schedule 5 to the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 . Guidance on this exemption is given in Annex 5, Paragraph A.5.4.5 of this Practice Guidance.

Article 1(3)(e)

Guidance on the exemption afforded by Article 1 (3) (e) of Regulation 853/2004 is given in Annex 5, Paragraph A.5.4.4 of this Practice Guidance.

A.3.3.2.5: Regulation 853/2004, Article 1(5)(a) and (b): General Retail Exemption

Article 1(5). (a) Unless expressly indicated to the contrary, this Regulation shall not apply to retail.

(b) However, this Regulation shall apply to retail when operations are carried out with a view to the supply of food of animal origin to another establishment.....

The intention of Regulation 853/2004 is to exempt businesses retailing products of animal origin to the final consumer (i.e. the public) and it is meant, in general, to apply to businesses that supply other businesses (e.g. caterers, pubs, restaurants, other retailers).

The effect of Article 1(5) is that, in general, Regulation 853/2004 does not apply to retail. The Regulation does, however, apply to retail if food of animal origin is supplied to another establishment unless the activities in Article 1(5)(b)(i) or (ii) are undertaken (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.6). The Regulation also applies to retail where this is expressly indicated. Such indications can be found in Annex III, Section VII, Paragraph 3 (Live Bivalve Molluscs) and Annex III, Section VIII, Paragraph 2 (Fishery Products) which stipulate that certain requirements of those respective Sections apply to retail.

A.3.3.2.6: Regulation 853/2004, Article 1(5)(b)(i) and (ii): Other Retail Exemptions

Article 1(5) (b) However, this Regulation shall apply to retail when operations are carried out with a view to the supply of food of animal origin to another establishment, unless:

(i) the operations consist only of storage or transport, in which case the specific temperature requirements laid down in Annex III shall nevertheless apply;

or

(ii) the supply of food of animal origin from the retail establishment is to other retail establishments only and, in accordance with national law, is a marginal, localised and restricted activity.

Article 1(5)(b)(i)

Article 1 (5)(b)(i) affords an exemption in respect of the supply of food of animal origin from a retail establishment to another establishment where the operations consist of only storage or transport. However, retailers benefiting from this exemption must, nonetheless, ensure that there is compliance with relevant temperature requirements in Annex III of Regulation 853/2004.

Article 1(5)(b)(ii)

Article 1(5)(b)(ii) affords an exemption for retailers which allows them to supply food of animal origin, which would ordinarily trigger the need for approval, from their retail establishment to other retail establishments, but only if this is a marginal and localised and restricted activity (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.7, below).

Approval would, however, be required if an establishment considered to be 'retail' as defined handles products of animal origin for which Annex III of Regulation 853/2004 lays down requirements and these products are supplied to other establishments and the supply is:

- To non-retail establishments e.g. manufacturers, and/or;
- To retail establishments, but the supply involves activities beyond those which can be considered marginal, localised and restricted.

A.3.3.2.7: “Marginal, Localised and Restricted”

The concept of marginal, localised and restricted activity is described in Recital 13 of Regulation 853/2004 as follows:

...when the supply of food of animal origin from a retail establishment to another establishment is a marginal, localised and restricted activity. Such supply should therefore be only a small part of the establishment's business; the establishments supplied should be situated in its immediate vicinity; and the supply should concern only certain types of products or establishments.

'Marginal'

'Marginal' is described in Recital 13 of Regulation 853/2004 as 'only a small part of the establishment's business'.

The European Commission Guidance Document on Regulation 853/2004 provides that 'marginal' may also be interpreted as a "small amount of food of animal origin" in absolute terms, but an interpretation of this phrase in Northern Ireland has been limited only to fresh or processed meat, including meat products, but excluding wild game and wild game meat (see Annex 5).

In respect of products of animal origin other than these, District Councils should interpret "a small part of the establishment's business" as meaning

up to a quarter of the business in terms of food;

'Localised' / 'Local'

'Localised' is described in Recital 13 of 853/2004 as being in 'the immediate vicinity' of the supplying establishment.

District Councils should interpret both 'localised' and 'local' as meaning:

Sales within the supplying establishment's own county plus the greater of either the neighbouring county or counties or 30 miles/50 kilometres from the boundary of the supplying establishment's county.

In this regard, District Councils should interpret "county" as meaning:

An administrative county in Northern Ireland (e.g. Co. Fermanagh) or a county of the Republic of Ireland (e.g. Co. Louth)

This makes allowance for the imbalance between closely spaced urban authorities and widely spaced remote populations, as well as those on the boundaries or bordered by the sea.

'Restricted'

'Restricted' is described in Recital 13 of Regulations 853/2004 as 'concerning only certain types of products or establishments'. Having to list establishments and products is seen as bureaucratic and a potential barrier to trade and there are, in any case, other legal requirements for the traceability of food products. In relation to the meat sector, District Councils should interpret "restricted" as set out in Annex 5 Paragraph A 5.4.2. In respect of other products of animal origin, District Councils should consider whether the supply is in some way restricted in relation to either:

- *The products being supplied i.e. by product category as referenced in Regulation 853/2004 (e.g. dairy products, fishery products etc), or;*
- *The type of retail establishment supplying the products, and / or;*
- *The type of retail establishment(s) being supplied with the products*

A.3.3.3: Exemptions: Regulation 853/2004, Article 4 (Requirement for Approval)

A.3.3.3.1: Regulation 854/2004, Article 4(2)

...establishments handling those products of animal origin for which Annex III to this Regulation lays down requirements shall not operate unless the Competent Authority has approved them with the exception of establishments carrying out only:

(a) primary production;

(b) transport operations;

(c) the storage of products not requiring temperature-controlled storage conditions;

or

d) retail operations other than those to which this Regulation applies pursuant to Article 1(5)(b).

Article 4(2) of Regulation 853/2004 excludes the above activities from the scope of the Regulation.

A.3.4: Conditional Approval

(Includes the text of Code of Practice, Paragraph 5.1.9)

Article 31(2)(d) of Regulation 882/2004 permits the granting of conditional approval to an establishment, following an on site visit, which does not fully comply with the requirements of food law, but only if the establishment meets all the infrastructure and equipment requirements.

In this context, District Councils should consider 'infrastructure' to relate not only to the physical structure of the establishment, but also to the systems and services necessary, for the food business to be able to produce safe food. Such systems would include a procedure or procedures based on the HACCP principles, in accordance with Article 5 of Regulation 852/2004.

District Councils should bear in mind that a food business operator can only make an application for the *approval* of establishments under their control; the decision whether or not to grant conditional approval to an establishment which does not fully comply rests with the District Council. Professional judgement should be used in deciding whether it would be appropriate to grant conditional approval, on a case by case basis.

If conditional approval is granted, a further visit must be carried out within three months of the conditional approval being granted in accordance with Article 31(2)(d) of Regulation 882/2004. This visit should be a secondary inspection (see Paragraph 4.1.3 of the Code of Practice). In appropriate circumstances as set out in Article 31(2)(d) of Regulation 882/2004, conditional approval may be extended, but this is restricted to a maximum of six months from the date of the

initial granting of conditional approval. Professional judgement should be used in deciding whether it would be appropriate to extend conditional approval, on a case by case basis.

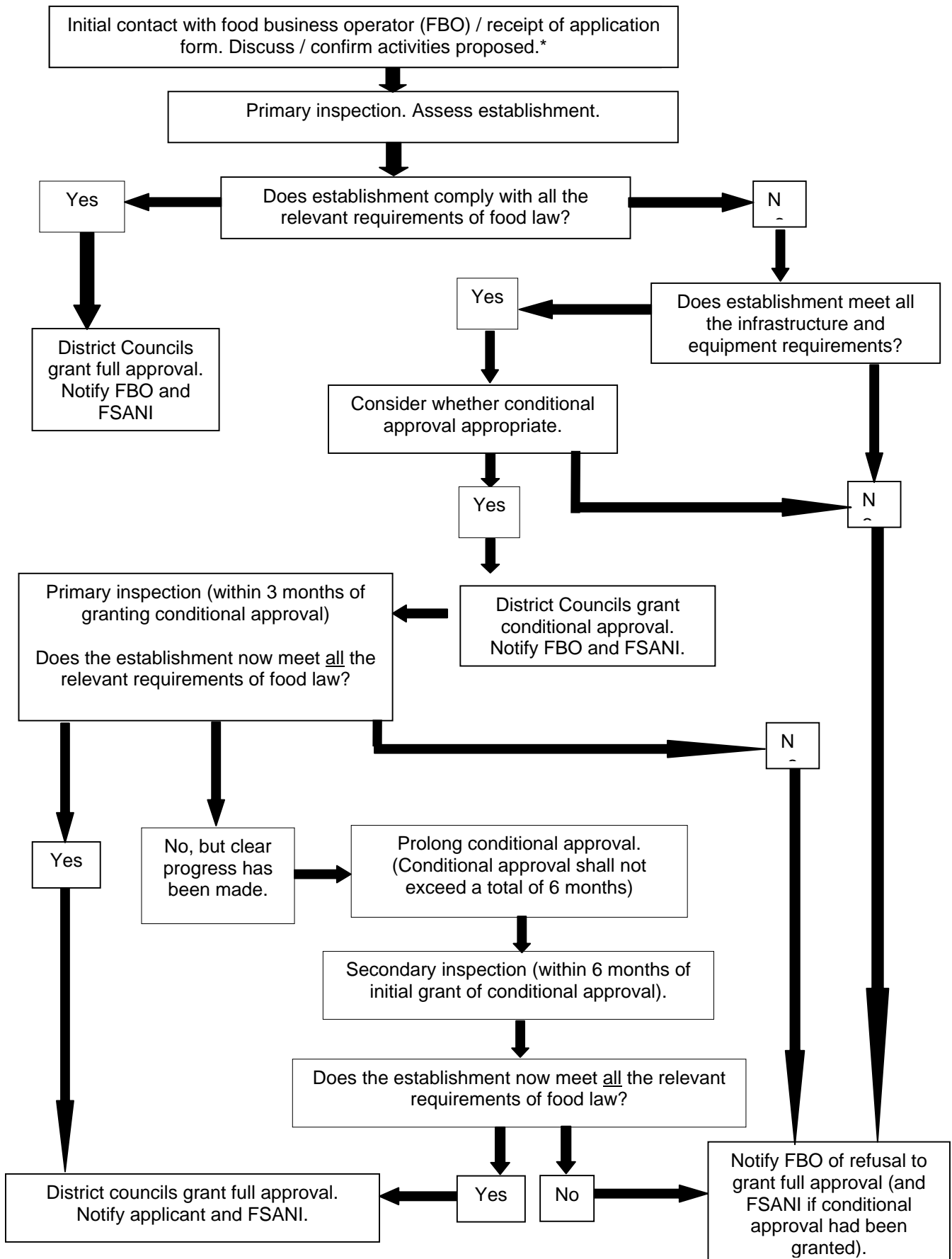
A.3.5: Approval Procedures

(From Code of Practice, Paragraph 5.1.5)

Article 31(2)(a) of Regulation 882/2004 obliges Competent Authorities to establish procedures for food business operators to follow when applying for the approval of their establishments in accordance with Regulation 853/2004. Procedures for handling applications for approval are set out in Paragraphs 5.1.6 *et seq* of the Code of Practice. District Councils should ensure that they, and food business operators, follow these procedures as appropriate. Any deviations from these procedures should be recorded and retained by the District Council and should, where possible, be agreed with the District Council beforehand.

An overview of the approval process is set out in a flow chart at Annex 4. A series of template forms is also provided at Annex 11 to assist District Councils in the administration of approvals. Whilst the content of these documents should be regarded as the minimum required, District Councils may adapt them as necessary to meet local requirements.

ANNEX 4: APPROVAL PROCESS FLOWCHART



*If application relates to a live bivalve mollusc purification centre, copy application to FSANI and request joint visit.

ANNEX 5: MEAT

A.5.1: Guidance

A Guide to the Food Hygiene and other Regulations for the Meat Industry has been produced for UK meat plant operators, particularly for those whose premises require approval and veterinary control.

A working draft of this Guide can be found on the Agency's website at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat>

A Food Safety Management Diary for meat producers has been produced for voluntary use and can be found at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/foodmandiary2006.pdf>

A.5.2: Approval of Establishments

The Food Standards Agency through DARD (VS-VPHU) is responsible for approving establishments subject to veterinary control (i.e. slaughterhouses, cutting plants placing fresh meat on the market and game handling establishments) as well as any integrated cold stores, meat products, minced meat, meat preparations, mechanically separated meat premises and edible co-products plants.

District Councils are responsible for approving establishments that are not subject to veterinary control (except for integrated premises described above) and for registering establishments that are exempt from approval. DARD (VS-VPHU) will consult with District Councils on the suitability of integrated premises for approval purposes.

A.5.3: Enforcement in Meat Establishments

The Food Standards Agency through DARD (VS-VPHU) is responsible for enforcement in meat establishments that require veterinary control (see A.5.2 above).

A.5.3.1: Integrated Establishments

The Food Standards Agency through DARD (VS-VPHU) is responsible for enforcement in minced meat, meat preparations, mechanically separated meat plants and cold stores that are integrated with an approved slaughterhouse, cutting plant or game handling establishment.

A.5.3.2: Stand-Alone Establishments

District Councils are responsible for enforcement in stand-alone establishments that produce meat products, minced meat, meat preparations, mechanically separated meat edible co-products and in establishments exempted from approval under Regulation 853/2004.

A.5.3.3: Cold Stores

European Commission guidance advises that wholesale meat cold stores require approval on the basis that they are used in relation to activities for which Annex III of Regulation 853/2004 lays down requirements. It has been decided to follow this guidance. There is no requirement for veterinary control of cold stores and District Councils are therefore responsible for approving cold stores and for enforcement in cold stores, except where they are integrated with approved slaughterhouses, cutting plants or game handling establishments in respect of which FSANI through DARD (VS-VPHU) is responsible for enforcement.

Stand-alone cold stores supplying the final consumer exclusively (i.e. retail) or supplying the final consumer and other establishments (including caterers) on a “marginal, localised and restricted” basis are not subject to approval, but will be subject to the relevant requirements of Regulation 852/2004.

A.5.3.4: Wild Game

There are limited exemptions for individual hunters and retail establishments (see A.5.4 below) but otherwise, establishments that process wild game require approval as game handling establishments under veterinary control. This includes processors that have been supplying only the national market under District Council control and certain small-scale processors that do not qualify for the hunter and retailer exemptions and for which EU agreement may be sought to vary the level of official veterinary control. Until the approval process is completed, they remain subject to District Council enforcement and may continue to supply game meat within the UK while complying with Regulation 852/2004 Annex II. Primary production of game stops when it enters the handling establishment and therefore all food business operators who process game into game meat must have food safety management plans based on HACCP principles.

The supply of game through game handling establishments is also now subject to the specific rules of Regulation 853/2004. One such rule is that a “trained person” must examine game immediately after killing. Game handling establishments should therefore only accept game that has undergone such an examination. However, in particular circumstances, when a trained person is not available, deer may be delivered with the head and pluck for post-mortem inspection. Guidance on the “trained person” requirement can be found in the separate guidance on the supply of wild game outside approved premises as referred to in Paragraph A.5.4.4 below, but the most robust way of demonstrating the necessary knowledge is by possessing a vocationally related qualification (VRQ).

Regulation 854/2004 contains rules for the Competent Authority, and includes a requirement for official post-mortem inspection. This requirement will not be implemented in unlicensed premises until after they are approved. In the meantime the operator should, through his HACCP based procedures, ensure that any game meat placed on the domestic market is fit for human consumption. Operators of premises licensed prior to 31 December 2005 should continue to present carcasses of wild game animals intended for export to the official veterinarian.

A.5.3.5: Edible Co-products

District Councils are responsible for enforcement in stand alone and integrated establishments producing edible co-products (i.e. treated stomachs, bladders, intestines, rendered animal fats and greaves, collagen and gelatine).

Separate guidance on these products can be found on the Agency's website at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/meatregsguid/coproductbyproductguide>

A.5.4: Exemptions from Approval

(See also Annex 3)

A.5.4.1: Retail Establishments (Regulation 853/2004, Article 1(5)(b)(ii))

The exemption is for retail establishments that supply products of animal origin to the final consumer, or that supply other establishments (including caterers) on a marginal, localised and restricted basis.

A major change as far as butchers are concerned is that, whereas the previous definition of "*final consumer*" in the meat hygiene Regulations included caterers, the definition in the new Regulations does not. "*Final consumer*" is now defined as "*the ultimate consumer of a foodstuff who will not use the food as part of any food business operation or activity*", i.e. the public. This means that establishments supplying caterers will be considered to be supplying other establishments as opposed to supplying the final consumer.

The Regulations require establishments that cut meat that is placed on the market (i.e. rather than supplied for further processing.) to be approved as cutting plants and subject to veterinary control, unless that supply is on a marginal, localised and restricted basis. Catering butchers who supply all or most of their production to the catering trade will therefore in principle be subject to approval, as well as retail butchers supplying caterers and/or other establishments in excess of the marginal threshold.

A.5.4.2: Retail Establishments - "marginal, localised and restricted" supply to other establishments

In respect of fresh or processed meat including meat products, the terms 'marginal', 'localised' and 'restricted' (see A.5.4.1 above) should be interpreted as:

- 'Marginal:

Recital 13 of Regulation 853/2004 interprets "marginal" as 'a small part of the establishment's business', but European Commission guidance provides that it may also be interpreted as 'a small amount of food of animal origin in absolute terms'. Thus:

- (i) " a small part of the establishments business" means "**up to a quarter of business in terms of food**"; and

(ii) “ a small amount of food of animal origin” means, in relation to meat (fresh or processed, excluding wild game and wild game meat) **up to two tonnes per week**, subject to the establishment having a genuine retail element to its operation supplying the final consumer with part of its production of meat .

(iii) If either (i) or (ii) applies, except in relation to wild game and wild game meat, when only (i) applies, the establishment may be exempt from approval under regulation 853/2004.

and

- “Local” / “localised” (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.7).

and

- “Restricted”

For wild game and wild game meat, supply is subject to the game having been examined by a trained person. Large wild game carcasses must be accompanied by a trained person’s declaration stating that no abnormalities were observed either before or after shooting. For other meat, restrictions relate to the amounts of meat supplied.

A.5.4.3: Guidance on the cutting of meat for direct sale by farmers (e.g. at farmers' markets)

The "marginal, localised and restricted" exemption will allow a butcher to cut meat on a farmer's behalf and return it to that farmer for onward sale, provided this is a marginal part of that butcher's business and the farmer being supplied is local. As this has a similar effect to the "*Guidance on the cutting of meat for direct sale by farmers*", this guidance became obsolete on 1 January 2006.

A.5.4.4: Wild Game (Primary Producers/Hunters)

The Regulation 853/2004 Article 1(3)(e) exemption repeats the one at Regulation 852/2004 Article 1(2)(c) allowing primary producers to supply small quantities of wild game carcasses (i.e. in-fur/in-feather) either direct to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer (see Paragraph A.5.4.2). Primary producers, whether individual hunters or shooting estates, are exempt from both Regulation 852/2004 and Regulation 853/2004.

The Regulation 853/2004 Article 1(3)(e) exemption applies only to individual hunters who prepare wild game meat from carcasses they have shot themselves. Only small quantities of this meat may be sold either direct to the final consumer or to local retailers directly supplying the final consumer (see Paragraph A.5.4.2). However, because the meat is not a primary product, the hunter is exempt only from Regulation 853/2004, not from Regulation 852/2004.

For these exemptions, the UK is interpreting supply of "small quantities" as being under 10,000 small wild game carcasses or under 300 large wild game carcasses per year. In the case of the hunter claiming a Regulation 853/2004 Article 1(3)(e) exemption, the meat he supplies would have to be part of this

amount, rather than in addition to it. Supply direct to a final consumer can be via mail order or internet sales as well as by delivery/collection. The interpretation of “local” is the same as for “localised” (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.7).

The summary table in Appendix 1 to this Annex, provides information on what elements of the various regulations apply to the hunting of wild game and its placing on the market.

Separate guidance on the supply of wild game outside approved premises can be found on the Food Standards Agency website at <http://food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat>.

A.5.4.5: On farm slaughter and cutting of small quantities of poultry and lagomorphs

Regulation 853/2004 does not apply to the direct supply, by the producer, of small quantities of meat from poultry or lagomorphs slaughtered on the farm to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying such meat to the final consumer (Article 1(3)(d))³⁹. Article 1(4) goes on to say that the rules governing the persons and activities benefiting from this exemption (in addition to those in Regulation 852/2004) will be set out in national law. These national rules are set out in Schedule 5 to the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006.

A.5.4.5.1: Which producers benefit from this exemption?

The exemption applies to producers of poultry (i.e. farmed birds except ratites) or lagomorphs (i.e. rabbits, hares and rodents) who slaughter their own animals on the farm of production, as long as only *small quantities* of meat are supplied.

The UK is interpreting ‘small quantities’ as:

- producers annually slaughtering under 10,000 birds or lagomorphs; or
- producers annually slaughtering over 10,000 birds or lagomorphs who are members of an appropriate assurance scheme and who either (a) dry pluck by hand or (b) slaughter for 40 days per year or less.

The limit of 10,000 birds or lagomorphs in the first category should allow for some fluctuation in annual throughput around that level provided that it does not habitually exceed a combined limit of 10,000 a year.

Although there is no limit to the number of birds or lagomorphs that producers in the second category may slaughter, the Food Standards Agency anticipates that the restrictions will limit production to relatively small quantities. In judging whether an assurance scheme is appropriate, regard should be had as to whether the scheme has requirements that go beyond minimum legal requirements in relation to food safety and hygiene and whether it has independent verification arrangements. FSANI can advise in cases of doubt.

³⁹ As amended by Article 3 of Regulation (EC) 2076/2005 (Transitional and Implementing Measures)

A.5.4.5.2: Where can the meat be sold?

Meat produced under this exemption may be supplied:

- direct to the final consumer,
- or
- direct to local retail establishments directly supplying such meat to the final consumer.

In the first category, direct supply to the final consumer would include mail order or internet sales, as long as the supply is *direct* to the consumer. Such supplies are not necessarily limited to meat in the form of fresh meat. They could be in the form of meat products or preparations.

In the second category, the supply must be direct to local retail establishments (in the form of fresh meat, meat preparations or meat products), and could include the supply by the producer to restaurants or other catering establishments. The retail establishments supplied must be *local*. 'Local' supply is interpreted as being the same as 'localised' (see paragraph A3.3.2.7) and, in addition, anywhere within the UK in the two weeks preceding Christmas and Easter and (for geese) Michaelmas (*late September*).

A.5.4.5.3: What rules apply?

Regulation 852/2004 applies to producers who benefit from this exemption. This includes, among other things, the requirement to register the establishment with the local District Council, to maintain procedures based on HACCP principles and to comply with general hygiene and training requirements. The national rules in Schedule 5 to the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 regarding labelling and record keeping also apply.

The labelling rules require that the meat bear a label or other marking clearly indicating the name and address of the farm where the bird or animal was slaughtered. This requirement is in addition to any labelling particulars required by the Food Labelling Regulations (NI) 1996 (as amended).

The record keeping rule requires the producer to keep a record in adequate form to show the number of birds and the number of lagomorphs received into, and the amounts of fresh meat despatched from, the premises during each week. Such records, in order to be adequate, should at least record this information by species of animal slaughtered. The records should be retained for one year and be made available to an authorised officer of the District Council on request.

A.5.5: Meat products, Minced Meat and Meat Preparations – Cutting of meat

Paragraph 2 of Section VI of Annex III to Regulation 853/2004 has the effect that premises that cut meat exclusively for the manufacture of meat products, minced meat, meat preparations or mechanically separated meat need to

comply with the relevant requirements of Annex III of Regulation 853/2004 for red or white meat cutting plants, but will not need approval as cutting plants.

A.5.6: Meat Preparations and Meat Products Obtained by Mechanical Separation from Bones or Sinew

A new generation of separating machines can separate meat from bones or sinew, where the material obtained (e.g. Baader meat, desinewed meat) retains most of its muscle fibre structure. Hence such material does not meet the definition of Mechanically Separated Meat in Annex I of EC Regulation 853/2004, where the mechanical process results in the loss or modification of the muscle fibre structure. Neither can such material be considered as minced meat because it is produced under pressure and not by cutting. Such material would appear to fall within the definition of a meat preparation of Annex I of EC Regulation 853/2004, which includes meat that has been reduced to fragments, or undergone a process insufficient to modify the internal muscle fibre structure and thus to eliminate the characteristics of fresh meat.

Premises which produce such material by utilising fresh meat from a cutting plant, and have satisfied themselves that the material they produce meet the requirements of meat preparations above should therefore:

- be approved as meat preparations establishments by District Councils when the premises are stand-alone premises;
- be approved as meat preparations establishments by FSANI through DARD (VS-VPHU) when integrated with a slaughterhouse, cutting plant or game handling establishment;
- comply with the hygiene and microbiological testing rules for meat preparations, not those for minced meat or mechanically separated meat.

A.5.7: Slaughter for private domestic consumption

Where slaughter is carried out for private domestic consumption and the meat is not placed on the market (whether free of charge or not) such activity falls out of the scope of both Regulation 852/2004 and Regulation 853/2004. However, it is unlawful to supply the meat of cattle, sheep and goats to any third party, including family members, unless the TSE Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002 (as amended) and the EU Animal By-Products Regulations 1774/2002 have been complied with. In practice this is only possible if the meat has been slaughtered in an approved slaughterhouse. A more detailed guide is at Appendix 2 to this Annex.

ANNEX 5, APPENDIX 1: The Wild Game Sector - Which Regulations Apply to Which Activities?
THE WILD GAME SECTOR: WHICH REGULATIONS APPLY TO WHICH ACTIVITIES?

WHICH REGULATION IS APPLICABLE?	Regulation 852/2004	Regulation 853/2004	Regulation 854/2004
ACTIVITY			
1. Shooting for own consumption	No Art 1.2a exemption	No Art 1.3a exemption	No
<u>Supply direct to final consumer or to local retailers (directly supplying final consumer) of small quantities of:</u>			
2. Whole carcasses by primary producer (hunter or estate)	No Art 1.2c exemption National rules apply ¹	No Art 1.3c exemption	No
3. Meat from carcasses (produced by hunter from own shooting)	Yes Premises to be registered as food business ⁴ and to operate under Annex II	No Art 1.3e exemption National rules apply ¹	No
4. Participants in UK Pilot Project on supply of wild game meat on a small scale, localised basis from carcasses sourced locally. • This is a type of approved game handling establishment	Yes	Yes² Premises to be approved by CA ³	Yes²
5. <u>Supply of whole carcasses to approved game handling establishments either direct from shoot or from game larder operated by primary producer</u>	Yes Premises to be registered as food business ⁴ and to operate under Annex I	Parts relating to primary producer ("trained person ⁵ " requirements and hygiene practices e.g. initial handling, temperature controls and transport)	Parts relating to primary producer's documentation and hygiene practices, including OV ⁶ examination of "trained person ⁵ " information
6. <u>Supply of whole carcasses to approved game handling establishments not by the primary produce</u>	Yes Premises to be registered as food business ⁴ and to operate under Annex II (including any game larders and vehicles)	Parts relevant to documentation originally supplied by "trained person ⁵ ", plus temperature controls, hygienic handling and transport	Parts relevant to supplier's hygiene practices, plus OV ⁶ to check supply of documentation from "trained person ⁵ "
7. <u>All other (non-retail) establishments preparing wild game meat for placing on the UK domestic or export market</u> • These are approved game handling establishments	Yes	Yes Premises to be approved by CA ³	Yes

¹ Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 (as amended by General Food Regulation (NI) 2004). "Small quantities" limits currently set by Food Standards Agency (after consultation with stakeholders) as 10,000 small wild game carcasses per year or 300 large wild game carcasses per year (subject to review in due course)

² Details of proposed variation in official veterinary controls and precise criteria for inclusion in UK Pilot Project to be advised

³ Competent Authority (i.e. the Food Standards Agency)

⁴ By the District Council

⁵ Either the gamekeeper or game manager on the hunting party/in the immediate vicinity or a hunter who has completed training provided to the satisfaction of the Competent Authority (see H2, Annex III, Section IV, Chapter I)

⁶ Official Veterinarian

ANNEX 5, APPENDIX 2: Private Slaughter of Livestock - Guidance for District Councils in Northern Ireland

1. Private slaughter is the killing of an animal for the personal consumption of the owner. Such slaughter and consumption is often considered to be a human right of the animal's owner.
2. Article 4 of Regulation (EC) 853/2004 provides that no person shall carry on the business of a slaughterhouse or place on the market products of animal origin for human consumption unless the premises are approved under that Regulation (exception – see paragraph 5 below). The legality of slaughter outside approved premises therefore depends on whether placing on the market is intended. “Placing on the market” is widely defined for the purposes of the Hygiene Regulations to mean “the holding of food for the purposes of sale, including offering for sale or any other form of transfer, whether free of charge or not, and the sale, distribution and other forms of transfer themselves”. The transaction underlying a private slaughter (i.e. the supply of a carcass back to the owner) in general amounts to placing on the market under the above definition because:
 - a) in general there would be the supply of food in the course of a business;
 - b) such supply would in essence amount to a contract for the supply of goods, rather than of services, in that what is returned after slaughter (i.e. the carcass or dressed meat) is fundamentally different in kind from what was delivered to the slaughterhouse or slaughterman (i.e. the live animal); and
 - c) The Hygiene Regulations contain no derogation for private slaughter (other than that described in paragraph 6 below).
3. The TSE Regulations (NI) 2002 as amended, make provision for the enforcement of EC Regulation 999/2001 on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE). That Regulation in effect resulted in a change to the position as to private slaughter. Like all EC Regulations it is directly applicable in all Member States (i.e. it is automatically the law in those States with effect from the date from which it applies).
4. As far as private slaughter is concerned, the EC TSE controls apply to the extent provided for by Regulation 999/2001. It applies not only when a sale of meat for human consumption takes place, but also where there is supply to a third party in the community. This means that the controls apply in all situations where a third party is involved. **It is, therefore, no longer lawful for the farmer to supply privately killed meat to the rest of his household without the TSE Regulations having been applied, as they are considered to be a third party.** The only exception is a truly private kill where a farmer slaughters the animal himself, processes it himself, and consumes it himself.

5. The TSE Regulation **only** applies to those TSE susceptible species under SRM controls: bovine (cattle), ovine (sheep) and caprine (goat) species. Porcine (pig) species, poultry, farmed game species and rabbits are not under SRM controls and may be supplied by a farmer to the rest of his household - though not to any other third party. Any slaughter of an animal for placing on the market for human consumption would need to take place in an approved slaughterhouse, as now, except as permitted for the direct supply, by the producer, of small quantities of meat from poultry or lagomorphs slaughtered on the farm to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying such meat to the final consumer as fresh meat (See A.5.4.5 above concerning on-farm slaughter of small quantities of poultry and lagomorphs).
6. There is also legislation to protect the welfare of farmed livestock (both red meat animals and poultry) during the slaughter or killing process. Whenever such livestock is slaughtered (death caused by bleeding after stunning) or killed (immediate death), it must be carried out in accordance with the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations (NI) 1996 (as amended). This is enforced by the DARD (VS-VPHU) in approved slaughterhouses. Outside approved premises i.e. on-farm, the Regulations are enforced by The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) . These Regulations make it an offence to cause or permit any avoidable excitement, pain or suffering to any animal or bird during the slaughter or killing process. They also require everyone carrying out such operations to have the knowledge and skill necessary to perform the tasks humanely and efficiently in accordance with the Regulations. Only the permitted stunning and killing methods laid down in the Regulations may be used. The Regulations also require most people involved in the slaughter or killing process to be licensed, although there are a number of exemptions from this requirement. These exemptions include:
 - the slaughtering or killing of an animal or bird by the owner for his/her private consumption;
 - the use of a free bullet to kill an animal in the field; and
 - the killing of a bird by dislocation of the neck on premises on which the bird was reared.
7. DARD is responsible for legislation on animal health and welfare. The Humane Slaughter Association has produced a leaflet entitled On-farm slaughter of Livestock for Consumption. This provides detailed information on legislation and best practice for farmers on humane slaughtering on-farm. Contact points are at Annex A.

For further information, please see extended guidance at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/meatregsguid/livestockguidance/>

ANNEX 5, APPENDIX 2, Annex A, Private Slaughter of Livestock: Guidance for District Councils in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Contact Points

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		e-mail:jim.ross@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

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DARD Veterinary Service, Veterinary Public Health Unit

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	Manor House Estate Loughgall	Fax: 02890525012
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	Belfast BT 61 8JA	

DARD Animal Welfare and Trade Branch – Disposal of Animal By-Product Issues

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ANNEX 5A: GUIDANCE FOR FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ON HALAL FOOD ISSUES

A.5A.1: Background

Halal is an Arabic word which means 'permissible', a related word in the Qur'an is *Tayyab* which means wholesome and fit for human consumption. With regard to food described as *Halal*, it means food that Muslims are permitted to consume under Islamic law. The opposite of *Halal* is *Haram*, which means 'prohibited by God, unwholesome, foul'. It follows, for example, that any meat that has not been rendered *Halal* by Islamic slaughter or that is liable to cause ill health, e.g. meat that is contaminated and unfit for consumption, cannot be considered *Halal*. Meat also cannot be considered *Halal* if it is past its "minimum durability marking". If a Muslim is sold *Haram* food, it is viewed very seriously, as it causes them to eat food prohibited in Islam and, in addition, it may be a form of fraud or deception.

Muslims regard Al Qur'an as the very words of God as revealed to the last prophet Muhammed, and is the primary source of Islamic law. In the Al Qur'an there are prohibitions on the consumption of pork, blood, carrion and alcohol, among other things. For a product to be *Halal* (lawful) for Muslim consumption, and described as such, all the ingredients should be *Halal*. The Muslim requirement for food to be *Halal* applies whether the food business operator is preparing, handling, processing, manufacturing, packaging, storing, importing, distributing, supplying, transporting or selling food, whether for profit or not, from a factory, warehouse, shop, restaurant, van, village hall, community centre or vending machine.

A.5A.2: Examples of where the requirements of food law relate to *Halal* requirements

There are many similarities between aspects of *Halal* requirements and aspects of food law. A *Halal* food business operator must not only comply with food law but with the Islamic Shariah (Law) related to food. The requirements of the Islamic dietary laws are that:

- Meat, and other foods, including food ingredients, whether home-produced or imported, must be *Halal*.
- Meat must be obtained from *Halal* sources, e.g. an abattoir must have the facilities and personnel to undertake *Halal* slaughter. See Appendix 1 for further information on Islamic Shariah (Law) relating to *Halal* slaughter, provided by the Food Standards Agency's Muslim Organisations Working Group.
- Meat must be wholesome and meet food safety requirements - if meat is unfit for human consumption it cannot be considered *Halal*, even if slaughtered in the prescribed manner.

To be *Halal*:

- The animal should be alive or deemed to be alive at the actual time of slaughter and slaughter must be carried out in compliance with Islamic

Shariah and the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations (NI) 1996 (as amended)⁴⁰. Animals/birds must be slaughtered by severance of neck arteries and jugular veins.

- No pork or pork ingredients must be present in the food.
- No alcohol or other intoxicants must be used.
- Any animal product, such as gelatine, must be produced from animals slaughtered in accordance with the Islamic Shariah.
- Any animal fat or meat must come from animals slaughtered in accordance with the Islamic Shariah.
- Any preparation area and the equipment used should be kept in such a manner as to prevent cross contact, contamination or mixing *Halal* food with non-*Halal* food.

Displaying *Halal* and non-*Halal* meat on the same premises does not in itself render *Halal* meat non-*Halal*. If open, unpackaged *Haram* food is stored and displayed alongside *Halal* meat, there would have to be clear separation and suitable labelling. However it should be noted that, as any direct or indirect contact between *Halal* and *Haram* food (e.g. use of the same knives or chopping boards etc) would render *Halal* meat and poultry as *Haram*, this could be difficult to achieve in practice.

There is no legal requirement to label food as being non-*Halal*. If a description "HALAL" is made, then it must be clear which product the description refers to, if the business is not to run the risk of committing offences of mis-describing the foods on sale.

At present there are few recognised systems of certifying that a particular food is *Halal*. However, certain Muslim organisations are collaborating to develop an umbrella certification board for *Halal* foods.

Officers carrying out routine inspections or following up complaints should whenever possible consider, apart from hygiene issues, checking whether food claiming to be *Halal* is actually *Halal*. This may be done, for example, in any informal food sampling programme, of canned meat, where the presence of pork in what is purported to be *Halal* meat would obviously be *Haram* to a Muslim and may well contravene food law in terms of composition and labelling.

Where officers suspect misdescription of fresh meat they should liaise with the Official Veterinarian (OV)– through DARD (VS-VPHU).

In summary, officers are asked to consider action, where appropriate, against food business operators who sell and mis-describe *Halal* foods, in the same way as they would for any contravention of food law in food premises generally.

Acknowledgement: The Agency is grateful for the help and advice received from members of the Food Standards Agency's Muslim Organisations Working Group in the preparation of this document.

⁴⁰ Under Regulation 22 "Schedule 5 (which relates to the stunning and killing of animals) shall not apply to any animal which is slaughtered in accordance with Schedule 12 (which relates to slaughter by a religious method)".

ANNEX 5A, APPENDIX 1

Islamic Shariah (law) relating to slaughter of animals or poultry

Animal and birds should have preferably been raised in a natural environment.

- Their feed should not contain animal-based products.
- Animals and poultry at farms or lairages must be cared for properly. They must be fed and watered before slaughter.
- They must receive ante-mortem inspection so that only healthy animals are brought in for slaughter.
- In the slaughterhouse animals must not be able to see other animals being slaughtered, nor must they have sight of blood. This requires cleaning the area before the next slaughter.
- There must be no cruelty to animals or poultry at any time.
- The slaughter man must be a Muslim, who has been properly trained and licensed.
- All slaughtering must be carried out in a licensed slaughterhouse.
- Places where pigs are slaughtered should be avoided.
- The slaughter man must use a sharp knife (which must not be sharpened in front of the animal). He must sever the jugular veins and carotid arteries as well as the oesophagus and trachea, but not the spinal cord as this restricts convulsion, which in turn restricts the pumping out of blood.
- At the time of slaughter he must pronounce *Bismillah Allahu Akbar* (In the name of God, God is the Greatest) on each animal or bird.
- At all times the meat and general hygiene regulations must be complied with.
- Any carcasses found unfit on post mortem inspection must not be used for food for human consumption.

NB: This is included for information

ANNEX 6: LIVE BIVALVE MOLLUSCS

A.6.1: Introduction

This Annex provides specific guidance to District Councils on the application and enforcement of the live bivalve mollusc aspects of Regulations 852/2004, 853/2004 and 854/2004. In line with Annex III, Section VII(1) of Regulation 853/2004, references to live bivalve molluscs in this Annex also include live echinoderms, tunicates and marine gastropods, with the exception of guidance on the provisions on the purification of live bivalve molluscs.

A.6.2: The Local Market Exemption

As per Article 1 (3) (c) Regulation 853/2004 does not apply to the direct supply of small quantities of live bivalve molluscs to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer. In respect of live bivalve molluscs, a small quantity shall be considered to be a total amount of not more than 25 tonnes in a calendar year. The total amount may be made up of any species subject to the maximum limits for individual species as set out in the table below:

A.6.3: Table

Species	Annual Maximum amount
Cockles	25.0 tonnes
Oysters	5.0 tonnes
King Scallops	5.0 tonnes
Queen Scallops	10.0 tonnes
Mussels	20.0 tonnes
Other Live Bivalve Molluscs	10.0 tonnes
Marine Gastropods	20.0 tonnes

While Regulation 853/2004 does not apply to this allowance it is still the responsibility of the harvester to ensure that the live bivalve molluscs meet the end product standards set down for placing them on the market. Any amount of the catch which include live bivalve molluscs must have originated from an 'A' class area, which designates the product as suitable for placing on the market with no further treatment required.

A.6.4: Heat Treatment

Live Bivalve Molluscs which are to undergo an approved heat treatment process or other processing, e.g. freezing, are subject to the requirements of Regulation 853/2004 that relate to live bivalves up to the point where processing begins in an approved establishment. After that point they are considered to be fishery products.

The controls that must be exercised over any heat treatment process for bivalve molluscs from Class B or Class C areas are set out in Annex III, Section VII, Chapter II A(5) of Regulation 853/2004.

A.6.5: Shellfish Liaison Arrangements

The District Councils lead officer will be FSANI's first point of contact in relation to non-routine matters concerning the enforcement of the Regulations.

It is essential for the effective enforcement of the Regulations that adjoining District Councils, maintain effective liaison arrangements.

All District Councils in areas in which there are commercial live bivalve mollusc harvesting activities should be represented at the Northern Ireland Shellfish Industry Forum.

The liaison group functions should include:

- The identification of local live bivalve mollusc relaying areas (if any) (working with the industry);
- Joint sampling plans to monitor the quality of live bivalve molluscs from designated areas (and new production areas);
- Arrangements for the issue of registration documents;
- Arrangements for the making of Closure Notices covering waters from more than one District Council area;
- Arrangements for the detention/recall of bivalve molluscs affected by any Closure Notice;
- Effective local notification procedures to advise interested parties of action taken under the Regulations (where such notification is required by the Regulations);
- Co-ordination of local monitoring procedures to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Regulations.

A.6.6: Notification of Designated Live Bivalve Mollusc (LBM) Production Areas and Relaying Areas

The FSANI will supply a list of designated live bivalve mollusc production and relaying areas to District Councils annually and, where necessary, additions and changes to the lists during the year.

District Councils should forward relevant details of designated LBM production areas and approved relaying areas to members of the local shellfish industry, including harvesters, handlers, operators of dispatch and purification centres and other individuals and organisations likely to be substantially affected by the designation of bivalve mollusc production areas and approved relaying areas.

It may be necessary from time to time for FSANI to re-classify a bivalve mollusc production area. Relevant District Councils will be informed by FSANI whenever this is done. District Councils should forward all public information concerning the re-classification of production areas to members of the local shellfish industry as described above.

A.6.7: Monitoring of Registration Documents

District Councils should be aware of the commercial advantages of abusing the registration document procedure, e.g. by suggesting that live bivalve molluscs have been taken from waters producing molluscs with a better microbiological quality.

It is not possible for District Councils to monitor every landing in their areas, or to detect abuses in the use of registration documents by concentrating resources at this point.

An appropriate system of monitoring for batches described as being from class A, B and C areas is to take samples and consider the test results against the standards referred to in Annex III Section VII Chapter V of Regulation 853/2004. On a cautionary note, it should be recognised that shellfish *E. coli* monitoring from any one production area may show significantly variable results, both temporally and spatially, due to environmental and other factors e.g. class C areas may occasionally yield single results <230 *E.coli*/100g (for this reason classifications are based on a time series of data rather than single results). Therefore a batch sample returning a single result that meets the requirements of a particular classification category should not be considered conclusive proof that the batch originated from the same class of production area.

District Councils will find that liaison with Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Fisheries Branch is helpful in monitoring the harvesting of live bivalve molluscs and other shellfish.

The registration document in respect of each batch of shellfish must be date stamped on delivery of the batch to a dispatch centre, purification centre, relaying area, or processing plant by the operator of the centre or area. Operators are required to retain registration documents for at least 12 months. Gatherers are also obliged to keep a copy of completed movement documents for the same period.

A.6.8: Sampling by Operators

Operators of approved purification / dispatch centres should also have adequate laboratory arrangements to ensure that the live bivalve molluscs comply with the microbiological standards set out in Annex III, Section VII Chapter V of Regulation 853/2004.

Officers should be aware that the Regulations do not prescribe a frequency for these microbiological tests.

In determining what level of sampling is appropriate, District Councils should have regard to any advice issued by FSANI or LACORS or contained in voluntary guidelines produced by relevant trade associations.

A.6.9: Laboratories Used in Connection with Dispatch or Purification Centres

Laboratories used by operators of dispatch or purification centres to examine samples to meet their obligations under Annex III Section VII, Chapter V of Regulation 853/2004 must be recognised by the District Council. The laboratory may be directly associated with the approved centre, or may be a Food Examiner at NIPHL, or any other appropriate laboratory.

However, recognition by the District Council will depend on the laboratory using methods for microbiological examination that are acceptable to FSANI. The current recognised method is appended to the paper entitled “Modification of the standard method used in the United Kingdom for counting *Escherichia coli* in live bivalve molluscs”, published in Volume 1 of Communicable Disease and Public Health of 3 September 1998. District Councils may also wish to consider whether the laboratory is/should be accredited for the relevant method(s) and participates in a recognised external quality assurance scheme. The current method specified in the Regulation is a five tube, three dilution, Most Probable Number (MPN) test.

A.6.10: Sampling of Live Bivalve Molluscs by District Councils

Sampling by District Councils should be aimed at verifying the results of tests carried out by producers and operators of centres. Test results that are inconsistent with those shown in the centre’s own records should be followed up by further investigations and tests.

A.6.11: Information on Standards to be Applied

Information on the standards required by the Regulations may be found in a series of operating manuals for the different types of purification system used in the UK and a further guidance document “Procedures to Minimise Risks to Food Safety in Bivalve Mollusc Purification” published by the Sea Fish Industry Authority (Seafish). These documents contain recommendations designed to help shellfish processors achieve high quality standards, as well as to comply with the requirements of the Directive. In some instances the guidance makes recommendations for good industry practice, which go beyond the requirements of legislation. These documents are available on the Seafish Website www.seafish.org.

District Councils may refer to the guidelines to establish a consistent approach to the requirements of the Regulations but should avoid using, in support of formal enforcement action, those parts that are directed towards the achievement of good industry practice and high quality standards.

A.6.12: Molluscs and Other Shellfish Which Fail to Satisfy Requirements

In accordance with Regulation 25 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006, any live bivalve molluscs or other shellfish that have not been produced, processed or distributed in accordance with the Regulations may be treated, for the purposes of Article 8 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 as failing to comply with food safety requirements and may be seized and taken before a Justice of the Peace to be condemned, implementing Directive 91/67/EEC on the animal health conditions governing the placing on the market of aquaculture animals and products.

A.6.13: Transfer of Seed Molluscs to Designated Production Areas

Live bivalve molluscs may be transferred from areas that are not designated as production areas for “growing on” within a production area of any Class. Such molluscs must be genuine “seed shellfish”. In fisheries regulated for conservation purposes under the Seafish (Conservation) Act 1967, transfers may only be carried out on approval of the holder of the Regulating Order for that fishery.

Transfers of “seed bivalve molluscan shellfish”, i.e. immature bivalve molluscs taken from an unclassified area, to be used to seed a classified production area are permitted, provided that they remain in the designated production area for a period of not less than six months before they are harvested for human consumption. This does not permit the movement of adult or partially developed bivalve molluscan shellfish from an unclassified area for further short-term growth before marketing. It is restricted to the seeding of new areas or the re-seeding of existing classified production areas. If new areas are seeded they must be classified before harvesting can take place. Harvesters should inform the relevant District Council if any such movements are contemplated.

A.6.14: Closure Notices (temporarily closing harvesting areas)

(See also Chapter 5.3 of the Code of Practice)

It is recommended that the District Council should issue a Closure Notice as the appropriate means to notify interested parties where it is satisfied that the consumption of species covered by the Regulation taken from the area is likely to cause a risk to public health. A Closure Notice might be considered appropriate where, for example, the designated mollusc production area was subject to sudden or accidental pollution which affected the quality of the production area. The use of a Closure Notice may also be appropriate where there is a local problem with environmental pollution caused by chemical contamination or toxin producing plankton

There may also be circumstances when it would be appropriate for the District Council to consider seeking the opinion of appropriate experts such as the consultant in communicable disease control and Consultant Microbiologist at NIPHL.

A model Closure Notice can be found at Annex 9 to the Code of Practice.

ANNEX 6, APPENDIX 1: Guidance for District Councils in Northern Ireland – Live Bivalve Molluscs / Shellfish

GUIDANCE FOR DISTRICT COUNCILS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

LIVE BIVALVE MOLLUSCS / SHELLFISH

Approval of Establishments

1. When does a harvester or handler of shellfish need to consider becoming an approved dispatch centre?

Regulation 853/2004, Annex 1(2) defines a dispatch centre as ‘any on-shore or off-shore establishment for the reception, conditioning, washing, cleaning, grading and wrapping and packaging of live bivalve molluscs fit for human consumption.’ All dispatch centres must be approved. As fishing vessels are considered primary production, fishing vessels do not need approval for washing and grading live bivalve molluscs at sea. Fishing vessels will need to be registered.

The Regulation (853/2004/EC, Annex III, Section VII, Chapter I) requires all live bivalve molluscs destined to be placed on the market to enter the market via a dispatch centre. At the dispatch centre they are wrapped, identification marked and sampled. The dispatch centre need not be on the shoreline but could be some distance away, even in another Member State.

2. May inland markets become dispatch centres?

Yes. The market would need to meet the approval conditions in the same way as other dispatch centres. Approval as a dispatch centre is not necessary to enable a market to unwrap parcels of live shellfish already sent from a dispatch centre and to split up the parcels for sale to retailers or consumers.

3. Are separate approval numbers needed for dispatch and purification centres operating from the same site?

No. Where both exist on the same premises then the same number should be used for the dispatch centre and for the purification centre. Different suffixes (D and PC) are no longer used to separately identify dispatch and depuration centres.

4. What locations are considered suitable for dispatch centres and depuration centres?

Regulation 853/2004, Annex III, Section VII, Chapter III requires dispatch and purification centres to be located on land that is not subject to flooding by ordinary high tides or run-off from surrounding areas.

- 5. Does the dispatch centre working area need to be physically identifiable from the purification centre working area, when both activities are carried out on the same premises?**

The need to separate clean from contaminated live shellfish would dictate this. It would also be in the interests of the business to have separate areas in the event of enforcement action on either the dispatch or purification centre. In small plants this is subject to a risk assessment by the District Council.

Registration documents

- 6. Can a District Council issue registration documents to gatherers of shellfish in another District Councils area?**

Registration documents should generally be issued by the District Council with responsibility for the harvesting area. This ensures that up to date information about any public health issues relating to the harvesting area may be given to gatherers. However, a District Council may allow gatherers to apply to it for registration documents for gathering in another District Councils area. In these circumstances the two District Councils should liaise regarding the issue of the registration documents and ensure that arrangements operate effectively to assist industry and avoid abuse. Inter-authority arrangements of this kind should normally be restricted to adjoining District Councils.

Identification Marking

- 7. If a dispatch centre is selling live shellfish to individual consumers on a retail basis, does the identification mark need to be applied to each sale?**

Regulation 853/2004 does not, generally, apply to retail. Under this regulation there is only a requirement for identification marks to accompany consignments of live shellfish prior to retail sale. After live shellfish are sold the retailer should retain a copy of the registration document for at least 12 months, or for as long as the Competent Authority requires. Therefore, where a dispatch centre is acting as a retailer, record keeping of the dispatch of batches of live shellfish through the retail outlet may suffice. The position is similar for live shellfish sold by mail order.

Seed Shellfish

- 8. What is the minimum period for on growing of seed mussels before they can be harvested for human consumption?**

The minimum period for growing on genuine seed mussels should be six months.

ANNEX 6, APPENDIX 2: Model Registration Document

LIVE BIVALVE MOLLUSCS / LIVE SHELLFISH REGISTRATION DOCUMENT

(Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 – Article 7 / Annex III, Section VII, Chapter 1)

Registration Document

No.....

Issued by:

Date of Issue:

Name of gatherer

Signature of gatherer

.....

District Council where shellfish landed

Address of gatherer

.....

Date of gathering

Location of production area
[described in as precise detail as
practicable] and, if live bivalve molluscs,
class of production area (A, B* or C*)

.....

Name of shellfish species being moved
(common and scientific name) and
quantity of shellfish being moved

Place of destination and (if applicable)
approval number

.....

*When shellfish originate from a production area classified as B or C:

Relaying area

Duration of relaying

OR

Address of Purification Centre

.....

Date of Receipt

Place of Receipt

[Date of Signature]

REMINDER – This document is to be kept by the person receiving the shellfish for a period of not less than 12 months and the gatherer is to keep a copy for the same period.

ANNEX 7: FISHERY PRODUCTS

A.7.1: Introduction

This Annex provides specific guidance to District Councils on the application and enforcement of the fishery products aspects of Regulations 852/2004, 853/2004 and 854/2004.

A.7.2: Competent Authority

The Food Standards Agency is the UK central Competent Authority with lead responsibility for these Regulations.

District Councils are responsible for enforcement of the EU food hygiene Regulations at their local level, and therefore approve fishery products establishments, register certain markets and fishing vessels, and otherwise enforce the EU food hygiene Regulations.

A.7.3: Scope of Approval

The Regulations do not apply to retail unless expressly indicated. They would however apply when operations are carried out to supply fishery products to other establishments.

Auctions and wholesale markets are required to have approval and should be inspected at regular intervals to check for compliance with hygiene and temperature requirements and subject to Regulation 853/2004 Annex III Section VIII Chapter II.

A.7.4: Direct supply of small quantity of Fish.

The Regulations do not apply the direct supply of small quantities of fishery products (i.e. primary products) to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer. For the purposes of fishery products (not including live bivalve molluscs) a small amount is a total amount of not more than 25 tonnes of fishery products in a calendar year. While the Regulations do not apply to this allowance it is still the responsibility of the harvester to ensure that these products meet the end product standards set down for placing these fishery products on the market. Any amount of the catch which include live bivalve molluscs must have originated from a class 'A' area, which designates the product as suitable for placing on the market with no further treatment required.

A.7.5: Conditions During and After Landing

One of the public health and quality measures in the Regulations is periodic inspection and checks on the fitness for human consumption of fish at the time of landing or before the first sale. Where fishery products are sold at a market associated with the landings, these inspections should take place in that auction hall or wholesale market. It should not normally be necessary for any

inspections to be carried out at the time of landing. An organoleptic examination of the fishery products would normally satisfy this requirement.

A District Council may authorise the transfer of fishery products from the landing (ex-quay) into containers for immediate delivery to an approved establishment or auction or wholesale market for the checks to be carried out there. Deferring the checks to be carried out later in an auction or wholesale market should not normally require any special arrangements with the receiving District Council.

Deferring checks to an approved establishment must, however, be subject to liaison and agreement with the receiving District Council, and have regard to the compliance record of the receiving establishment and confidence in its management. Authorisation of such deferred checks should be withdrawn if there is any suspicion of non-compliance with the requirements of the Regulations.

If an organoleptic examination of any product raises doubt as to the freshness of the product, the District Council may consider submitting the product for chemical analysis or microbiological examination.

With respect to the landing of fresh fish, checks required under the Regulations are without prejudice to other checks that may be required under EC marketing standards regulations by other statutory agencies.

Authorised officers should, where necessary, liaise with other statutory inspectors, e.g. DARD Fisheries Division to ensure that any enforcement action taken is appropriate

A.7.6: Information on Standards to be applied

Guidance on the requirements of the Regulations may be obtained from the Sea Fish Industry Authority (Seafish).

District Councils may use the guidance as a reference in establishing a consistent approach to the requirements of the Regulations. District Councils should, however, exercise caution and avoid using, in support of formal enforcement action, those parts of the Seafish guidance that is directed towards the achievement of good industry practice and high quality standards.

ANNEX 7, APPENDIX 1: Guidance Note for District Councils in Northern Ireland – Fishery Products

GUIDANCE NOTE FOR DISTRICT COUNCILS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

FISHERY PRODUCTS

Approval of Fishery Products Establishments: General

1. Which establishments handling fishery products are subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004?

Under Article 4 of Regulation 853/2004, establishments handling products of animal origin for which Annex III of that Regulation lays down requirements (including fishery products) require approval. There are however a number of exemptions from this requirement.

Article 1(2) of Regulation 853/2004 has the effect of exempting establishments engaged only in the production of food containing both products of plant origin and processed fishery products (e.g. sandwich makers) from approval, provided that the fishery products used enter the establishment as processed products. In such cases compliance with the relevant requirements of Regulation 852/2004 is required and the processed fishery products must be obtained and handled in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 853/2004.

Certain establishments such as those carrying out 'primary production' and 'retail' (as defined in Article 3(7) of Regulation 178/2002) establishments carrying out certain activities are also exempt from the requirement to be approved, although some provisions of Regulation 853/2004 are nonetheless applicable. Retailers exempt from approval are required to comply with Annex III, Section VIII, Chapter III, Parts A, C and D, and Chapter IV and V of Section VIII (Fishery Products), of Regulation 853/2004. Primary production establishments exempt from approval are required to comply with Annex III, Section VIII (Fishery Products) of Regulation 853/2004 as appropriate. Annex III, Section VIII, Paragraphs 2 and 3 of Regulation 853/2004 refer respectively. Regulation 852/2004 will apply as appropriate to primary producers and retailers which are exempt from approval.

In order to decide whether a retail activity is or is not exempt from approval, Article 1(5) of Regulation 853/2004 must be considered. If a retail operation consists of transport and storage only then it will not require approval. Although the regulation generally applies to retail when food operations are conducted with the purpose of supplying another establishment, a retail establishment without approval may supply products of animal origin which would normally trigger the need for approval, but only to other retail establishments on a marginal, localised and restricted (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.7).

Food businesses claiming exemptions from the requirement to be approved must be considered on a case by case basis.

2. What are the requirements in respect of the form and application of identification marks?

Annex II, Section I of Regulation 853/2004 sets out the requirements for the application and form of, and method of marking in relation to, identification marks.

3. If the ownership of an approved establishment changes, does the new food business operator need to apply for approval and the business reassessed?

Under Regulation 853/2004, an approval relates to an establishment and not the business occupying the establishment or the food business operator, so the new operator of an establishment would not have to seek approval in order to continue the activities for which approval was granted as long as there is compliance with the relevant regulations. The new operator is, however, obliged to provide the Competent Authority with up-to-date information on the establishment in accordance with Article 6(2) of Regulation 852/2004 and is therefore obliged to inform the relevant District Council of the change in circumstances.

4. When the Regulations refer to temperature recording devices, does this mean that readings can be taken and logged manually?

Annex II, Chapter I(2)(d) of Regulation 852/2004 stipulates that, where necessary, it should be possible to monitor and record temperatures at which foodstuffs are maintained. The Regulation does not stipulate that the recording of temperatures should be done automatically, which implies that manual recording is allowed. However, for freezer vessels or establishments on land where the freezing of fishery products is undertaken, there is a requirement that a temperature recording-device is installed (see Regulation 853/2004 Annex III, Section VIII, Chapter I(C) (Requirements for Freezer Vessels) and Chapter III(B) (Requirements for Frozen Products (on land))).

Definitions of 'Retail' and 'Final Consumer'

5. What is 'retail'?

The definition of 'retail', which is given in Article 3(7) of Regulation 178/2002, is as follows:

'retail' means the handling and/or processing of food and its storage at the point of sale or delivery to the final consumer, and includes distribution terminals, catering operations, factory canteens, institutional catering, restaurants and other similar food service operations, shops, supermarket distribution centres and wholesale outlets

See also Paragraph A.3.3.2.3.

6. Who is the 'final consumer'?

The definition of 'final consumer', which is given in Article 3(18) of Regulation 178/2002, is as follows:

'final consumer' means the ultimate consumer of a foodstuff who will not use the food as part of any food business operation or activity

Auction Halls and Wholesale Markets

7. Do auction halls and wholesale markets need to be approved?

Under Article 2(1)(c) of Regulation 852/2004 an 'establishment' is defined as 'any unit of a food business'. Regulation 853/2004 defines 'wholesale market' as 'a food business that includes several separate units which share common installations and sections where foodstuffs are sold to food business operators'.

It is the case that wholesale outlets are included under the definition of 'retail' in Regulation 178/2002 (see Q&A 5, above). However, for such establishments to fall within this definition, an element of their sale or delivery of food should be to the final consumer.

Auction halls and wholesale markets which cannot be considered to be 'retail' as defined would need to be approved and would be subject to the relevant requirements of both Regulation 852/2004 and Regulation 853/2004.

Auction halls and wholesale markets considered to be 'retail' as defined would not require approval. Such establishments would, however, only be permitted to supply the final consumer and other retail establishments on a marginal, localised and restricted basis (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.7).

8. Do individual stalls / units within auction halls and wholesale markets need to be approved?

Individual stalls / units within auction halls and wholesale markets are classed as establishments. If the stall / unit can be considered to be 'retail' as defined (see Q&A 2 and 4, above) and is supplying only the final consumer or the final consumer and other retail establishments on a marginal, localised and restricted basis (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.7) approval would not be required.

Otherwise, the stall / unit would require approval and would be subject to the relevant requirements of both Regulation 852/2004 and Regulation 853/2004.

9. Could such facilities as wash basins and lavatories be communal to a number of establishments?

Regulation 852/2004 sets out the general hygiene requirements for food business establishments. As regards wash basins and lavatories in wholesale markets (see Q&A 7), it is for the District Council to decide whether separate facilities, for different units within the market (see Q&A 8) are necessary in the

interests of public health or whether the communal facilities are sufficient for compliance with the Regulation.

10. Are communal filleting premises permissible?

The Regulations do not specify whether or not communal filleting premises are permissible. Provided that control arrangements are adequate, ensuring that filleting is carried out to avoid contamination or spoilage then communal filleting premises would not be precluded. However, a separate establishment for communal filleting is likely to require approval.

Retail

11. Do retailers who also sell fishery products on a wholesale basis need to be approved?

Establishments falling under the definition of 'retail' as defined (see Q&A 5 and 7, above) which also sell wholesale other than to the final consumer and/or other retail establishments on a marginal, localised and restricted basis (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.7) would require approval. Such establishments would be subject to the relevant requirements of both Regulation 852/2004 and Regulation 853/2004.

12. Do retail establishments engaged in the processing of fish need to be approved?

Unless they are only selling processed fish to the final consumer and to other retail establishments on a marginal, localised and restricted basis (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.7), retail establishments would require approval.

13. Do cash and carries need to be approved?

The definition of 'retail' in Article 3(7) of Regulation 178/2002 (see Q&A 5, above) includes 'wholesale outlets'. Cash and carries may therefore fall into this category and could, depending on their specific activities, be exempt from approval. Although a wholesale outlet may be considered to be 'retail' as defined, if it is not supplying final consumers exclusively and/or other retail establishments on a marginal, localised and restricted basis (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.7) approval would be required.

14. Do retail fishmongers who also process fish (including smoking) and, if applicable, supply retail fish vans, need to be approved?

Retail fishmongers that sell their own processed products, but only to the final consumer, would not be subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004. If a retail fishmonger sells its own processed products to other establishments (including those in the same ownership) it will be subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004, unless the other establishments are retail establishments and the supply is marginal, localised and restricted (see Paragraph A.3.3.2.7).

Cold Stores

15. Do cold stores need to be approved?

European Commission guidance advises that wholesale meat cold stores require approval on the basis that they are used in relation to activities for which Annex III of Regulation 853/2004 lays down requirements. It has been decided to apply this guidance across the board. There is no requirement for veterinary control of cold stores and District Councils are therefore responsible for approving fish cold stores and for enforcement in such establishments. Stand-alone cold stores supplying the final consumer exclusively (i.e. retail) or supplying the final consumer and other establishments (including caterers) on a “marginal, localised and restricted” basis are not subject to approval, but will be subject to the relevant requirements of Regulation 852/2004.

Sandwich Makers

16. Do sandwich makers need to be approved?

Owing to the exemption provided by Article 1(2) of Regulation 853/2004, sandwich makers will not be subject to approval under that Regulation if the fishery products they use to make the sandwiches enter their establishment as processed products. However, the processed fishery products used in the production of the sandwiches must be obtained and handled in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 853/2004. Such sandwich makers will still need to comply with the relevant requirements of Regulation 852/2004.

Fishery Products Manufacturers

17. Does a non-retail establishment supplying a company or a contractor, which then supplies the final consumer need to be approved?

As the establishment is non-retail, approval would be required unless all the products they make contain both products of plant origin and processed fishery products and the fishery products used enter the establishment as processed products (see Article 1(2) of Regulation 853/2004). In this case, the processed fishery products used must be obtained and handled in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 853/2004, and compliance with the relevant requirements of Regulation 852/2004 would be required.

18. Do airport caterers which supply fishery products to companies, which then supply airlines need to be approved?

As they cannot be considered to be retail as defined, such industrial catering establishments would require approval unless all the products they make contain both products of plant origin and processed fishery products and the fishery products used enter the establishment as processed products (see Article 1(2) of Regulation 853/2004). In this case, the processed fishery products used must be obtained and handled in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 853/2004, and compliance with the relevant requirements of Regulation 852/2004 would be required.

Cleaning Substances

19. Is there a list of approved detergents and similar substances for maintaining general conditions of hygiene in establishments and in respect of equipment?

No. Chemicals suitable for use in the food industry are governed by other legislation.

Fish Farms

20. Do fish farms require approval?

No. The farming of fish is primary production. Regulation 852/2004 will apply as appropriate and, although approval is not required, there must nonetheless be compliance with Annex III, Section VIII (Fishery Products) of Regulation 853/2004 as appropriate (Annex III, Section VIII, Paragraph 3(a) of that Regulation refers). Annex III, Section VIII, Paragraph 4(b)(1) of Regulation 853/2004 makes specific mention of fish farms. Fish farms are also subject to separate animal health legislation.

Landings of Fishery Products

21. Do District Councils have to carry out checks for histamine and other compounds listed in Regulation 854/2004 on all consignments of fish?

According to Annex III, Chapter II(C) of Regulation 854/2004, random checks for histamine are to be carried out to verify compliance with permitted levels laid down under community legislation. District Councils will decide when these checks are necessary, but these are likely to take place should the freshness of the product be in doubt. Other checks are required under Annex III, Chapter II of Regulation 854/2004. Checks must also be carried out by food business operators as required by Annex III, Section VIII, Chapter V(B) of Regulation 853/2004.

22. What legislation is applicable to quaysides where fish are landed?

There are no structural requirements for quaysides laid down in the regulations. However, handling practices for the unloading and landing of fish and some requirements relating to equipment are specified in Annex III, Section VIII, Chapter II of Regulation 853/2004.

Seafish Guidelines for Facilities and Equipment during Landing, Storage, Auction, and Dispatch from the Landing Area contain recommendations for quaysides and suggests that the following should be in place:

- Laboratory arrangements for the purpose of carrying out sampling in accordance with the Regulations;

- Documented cleaning schedules with details of any checks, including sampling, carried out by the occupier to establish the efficacy of proposed cleaning and disinfection methods;
- Documented maintenance schedules. These should specify the checks to be carried out and any reporting arrangements;
- Documented pest control arrangements, including copies of any contracts with external pest control companies;
- Details for calibrating and monitoring automatic temperature control equipment, where required by the Regulations;
- Staff hygiene training programme, including records of training undertaken to date;
- Written company policy on staff illness and exclusion from work;
- Medical certificates for all staff;
- Details of traceability system, including checks on incoming raw materials, arrangements for controlling application of the health mark and correct use of commercial documentation. Details should include arrangements for documenting these procedures. It may also be appropriate to request examples of identification marked labels;
- Emergency withdrawal procedure;
- Up to date list of suppliers;
- Up to date list of customers (National, EU, 3rd Country).

ANNEX 8: RAW MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS

A.8.1: Introduction

This Annex provides specific guidance to District Councils with regard to Raw Milk and Dairy Products.

A.8.2: Enforcement

District Councils approve dairy product establishments, and otherwise enforce the Regulations except in the cases listed below:

Requirements in Regulation 5(1)(a) of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 relating to the approval of production holdings and the subsequent supervision and inspection of approved production holdings are dealt with on behalf of the The Food Standards Agency by DARD (QAB). Separate guidelines are issued for enforcement of these requirements;

Controls in Regulation 29 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 on the sale of raw cows' drinking milk, i.e. cows' milk that is supplied raw to the final consumer or to distributors, from farms direct to consumers, temporary guests or distributors and standards for such milk in Schedule 6. These are also dealt with by DARD (QAB) (the separate guidelines mentioned above also cover enforcement of these requirements); DARD is responsible for carrying out official tests for tuberculosis and brucellosis where appropriate.

In premises where milk is bottled and milk products manufactured FSANI through DARD (QAB) is responsible for approval. DARD (QAB) will consult with District Councils on the suitability of such premises for approval.

These premises will also be subject to joint food law enforcement by DARD (QAB) and District Councils.

A.8.3: Food Business Operators Selling Raw Milk and Cream

Article 10(8) of Regulation 853/2004 allows member states to maintain national rules on the retail sale of raw milk and cream.

The restrictions on sales of raw milk intended for direct human consumption are set out in Schedule 6 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 and are enforced by the DARD (QAB) at farm level.

DARD (QAB) is also responsible for enforcing the requirements of Schedule 6 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006 in respect of sales of raw drinking milk intended for direct human consumption, other than cow's milk.

A.8.4: Reusable Containers

The requirements for equipment to be clean and to disinfect reusable containers mechanically may be difficult to comply with, particularly for some smaller establishments. Dairies that obtain clean bottles from central units will not normally require mechanical bottle washing facilities, providing the clean

bottles are not exposed to any risk of contamination during storage and before being filled at the dairy. Bottle washing and storage can take place in the same room where products are handled, but at different times or in a separate area - providing hygiene is not compromised.

A.8.5: Health Requirements for Raw Milk Production

Food business operators are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of Regulation 853/2004, Annex III, Section IX, Chapter 1 are met through private veterinary inspections at regular intervals. The frequency of such inspections will be dependent on the individual circumstances. Such inspections can take place when a farmer's private veterinary surgeon is present for other purposes. Food business operators will need to keep evidence of such visits e.g. a receipt/invoice - and of any follow up action taken if problems occur – for checking by authorised officers. Purchasers (or processors) of raw milk are also required to ensure, e.g. through contracts, that checks have been carried out to assess compliance with relevant animal health standards. Immediate problems that may affect the safety of milk will normally be notified to DARD (QAB) by private veterinary surgeons or DARD Veterinary Service. Longer-term issues arising from records could also be referred to Food Authorities. Where DARD (QAB) suspect that requirements are not being complied with, or that follow up action has not been taken, they should raise the matter with the purchaser/processor, or in the case of producer/retailers of raw milk with the producer direct, and advise them to take appropriate advice e.g. from their private veterinary surgeon.

A.8.6: Criteria and Standards for Raw Milk

In the case of the standards laid down in Regulation 853/2004, Annex III, Section IX, Chapter III, Paragraph 3 for plate counts and somatic cell counts, the Regulations specify a minimum frequency of sampling by the food business operator or the purchaser. Authorised officers need to ensure that food business operators are carrying out the specified sampling programme. Authorised officers should check Food Business Operators' records, and when they have concerns about the test results, consider random official checks to satisfy themselves that the required standards are being met. Arrangements relating to milk for heat-treatment are set out in Annex III, Section IX, Chapter II of Regulation 853/2004, as amended by Article 8 / Annex VII(2)(d) of Regulation 2074/2005.⁴¹

A.8.7: Temperature Requirements for Milk Used for the Manufacture of Dairy Products

Regulation 853/2004, Annex III, Section IX, Chapter II, Paragraph 1 stipulates that the acceptability of raw milk applies from the arrival of the milk at a processing establishments. Paragraph 2 allows temperatures and times

⁴¹ Regulation (EC) No. 2074/2005 laying down implementing measures for certain products under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and for the organisation of official controls under Regulation (EC) No. 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, derogating from Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Regulations (EC) No. 853/2004 and (EC) No 854/2004

specified for treatment of raw milk to be exceeded for "technological reasons". These reasons will include cases where higher temperatures may be essential to the manufacture of certain products e.g. cheeses and also instances over a weekend for example when establishments are unable to process milk within the specified period. Authorisation by the District Council is required whenever it is anticipated that these times will be exceeded.

A.8.8: Heat Treatment of Raw Milk and Milk Products

Requirements for pasteurisation and ultra heat treatment are set out in Annex III, Section IX, Chapter II of Regulation 853/2004, as amended by Article 8 / Annex VII(2)(d) of Regulation 2074/2005.

A.8.9: Phosphatase Testing

The statutory test method, as detailed in Commission Decision 91/180/EEC⁴² (and as specified in Schedule 11 of the now revoked Dairy Products (Hygiene) Regulation (NI) 1995⁴³) should continue to be used until further notification.

⁴² Commission Decision 91/180/EEC: Commission Decision of 14 February 1991 laying down certain methods of analysis and testing of raw milk and heat-treated milk.

⁴³ SR 1995 No. 201, as amended

ANNEX 9: EGG PRODUCTS AND LIQUID EGG

A.9.1: Introduction

This Annex provides specific guidance to District Councils on the enforcement of Section X, Chapter II of Regulation 853/2004. This lays down the public health rules for the manufacture and placing on the market of egg products and liquid egg for human consumption.

The Regulations lay down requirements for:

- establishments;
- raw materials for the manufacture of egg products;
- special hygiene requirements for the manufacture of egg products;
- analytical specifications; and
- labelling and identification marking.

A.9.2: Scope of the Regulations

The Regulations apply to establishments manufacturing egg products and liquid egg for human consumption, which would be food businesses involved in the production of:

- processed products resulting from the processing of eggs, or various components or mixtures of eggs, or from the further processing of such processed products; or
- liquid egg for onward transportation to approved processing establishments.

All establishments need to be approved if the Regulations apply to them.

None of the requirements in Section X, Chapter II of Regulation 853/2004 apply to retail, as defined by Regulation 178/2002, so establishments such as bakers and caterers that process eggs are not subject to any of the requirements of Regulation 853/2004.

A.9.3: Types of Approved Premises

Premises requiring approval fall into two categories:

- (i) premises where egg products are manufactured and placed on the market, i.e. where processing takes place; and
- (ii) premises where liquid egg is produced for later processing by an approved egg product manufacturer, i.e. egg producers or packing centres.

Category (ii) exists because egg packing centres may prefer to break out eggs, including cracked eggs, to produce liquid egg rather than risk breakage before they are sent to a category (i) processing establishment. Such approvals must require that the eggs are broken out as soon as possible and the resulting liquid egg frozen or chilled for transport to another approved establishment. If chilled, the storage temperature must not exceed 4°C and the storage period before processing must not exceed 48 hours. Any establishment approved for category ii) only, must comply with the same requirements for approval as egg product manufacturers in category i). When notifying FSANI of approvals, the District Council should specify whether the approval is for i) or ii) and if the premise is also a packing centre.

A.9.4: Dirty Eggs

Eggs may not be broken out unless they are clean and dry. Dirty eggs may be cleaned, but District Councils must ensure that any washing, drying and disinfecting of eggs is separated from all other operations of the business.

A.9.5: Centrifuging or Crushing

The Regulations prohibit the use of centrifuges or crushing to obtain egg contents or obtain egg whites from shells for human consumption. However, centrifuges may be used for the disposal of waste, and in such cases, the centrifuge must be situated completely separately from other operations of the approved establishment. Authorised officers should satisfy themselves that centrifuged material can not contaminate egg products intended for human consumption. Waste material must be denatured upon entry to the centrifuge, for example by use of a dye.

A.9.6: Identification Marking

The general requirements for identification marking laid down in Annex II, Section I of Regulation 853/2004 must be complied with and are set out in Chapter 5.1.13 of the Code. However, there are additional specific requirements for egg products. Regulation 853/2004, Annex III, Section X, Chapter II, Part V requires that consignments of egg products to be used as an ingredient in the manufacture of another product must have a label giving the temperature at which the egg products must be maintained and the period during which conservation may thus be assured.

A.9.7: Pasteurisation and Heat Treatment

The Regulations do not prescribe a time / temperature combination for the heat treatment of eggs, but they do require that the process must eliminate microbiological hazards or reduce them to an acceptable level. Processing is not required for egg white intended for the manufacture of dried or crystallised albumen destined subsequently to undergo heat treatment.

District Councils will need to be satisfied that the heat treatment process is sufficient to ensure a reduction in the level of micro-organisms in the egg product to any levels laid down in EC Regulations on microbiological criteria.

Where a non-standard process is proposed, the onus is on the occupier to show that adequate research has been carried out into its effectiveness. In establishments where heat processing takes place, District Councils should establish that the operator of the heat process has an acceptable and appropriate level of expertise.

A.9.8: Analytical Specifications

Part IV of Annex III, Section X, Chapter II of Regulation 853/2004 lays down analytical specifications that the end product must not exceed. Although there are no prescribed EU methods for testing for lactic or butyric acids, methods do exist. Where such methods are used, due consideration should be given to the reliability of the results. Where samples are tested, the results should be compared with the standards specified.

Authorised officers may help occupiers develop sampling plans since these also are not prescribed in the Regulations.

A.9.9: Temperature Control

The Regulations require that products that have not been stabilised so as to be kept at room temperature must be cooled to not more than 4°C. Products for freezing must be frozen immediately after processing.

A.9.10: Storage and Transport

Establishments must keep eggs and egg products separate to avoid contamination. If separate rooms are not available, egg products may be stored in separate containers and areas.

Storage rooms must be capable of maintaining any required temperature controls.

Regulations 853/2004 does not cover egg products that are stored in separate establishments such as depots or warehouses outside approved egg products establishments. Such storage is covered by Regulation 852/2004.

A.9.11: Egg Marketing (See also Annex 10)

Egg packing centres, whether or not approved to produce liquid egg under the Regulations, are the responsibility of DARD (QAB) in respect of egg quality and marketing regulations and are inspected by Egg Marketing Inspectors (EMIs).

ANNEX 10: EGG PACKING CENTRES

Responsibility for hygiene inspections of egg packing centres has transferred from District Councils to DARD (QAB).

ANNEX 11: APPROVAL OF PRODUCT-SPECIFIC ESTABLISHMENTS SUBJECT TO APPROVAL UNDER REGULATION 853/2004 - TEMPLATE FORMS

Template forms which may be used by authorised officers in connection with the approval of product-specific establishments are provided from A.11.1 to A.11.6, as detailed in the following table:

Practice Guidance Reference	Template Form
A.11.1	Application for Approval
A.11.2	Notification of Grant of Full Approval / Conditional Approval
A.11.3	Notice of Decision Not to Grant Approval
A.11.4	Notice of Decision to Withdraw Approval / Conditional Approval
A.11.5	Notice of Decision to Suspend Approval / Conditional Approval
A.11.6	Notification of Refusal to Grant Full Approval to an Establishment which is Conditionally Approved

As stated in Paragraph 5.1.5 of the Code of Practice, although the content of these documents should be regarded as the minimum required, District Councils may adapt them as necessary to meet local requirements.

Full names of managers of the establishment	1.	2.	3.
	Job titles	1.	2.
Full Names of others In control of the business	1.	2.	3.
	Job titles	1.	2.

PART 4 – Use of the establishment

Which of the following activities will be conducted in / from the establishment (tick all that apply)?

- Stand-alone cold store
- Wholesale market
- Manufacture
- Other processing (please specify)
- Packing
- Storage
- Distribution
- Cash and carry / wholesale
- Catering (preparation of food for consumption in the establishment)
- Retail (direct sale to consumers or other customers)
- Market stall or mobile vendor
- Other (please specify)

PART 5 – Transport of products from the establishment

How will products be transported from the establishment (tick all that apply)?

- Your own vehicle(s)
- Contract / Private Haulier
- Purchaser's own vehicle(s)
- Other (please specify)

PART 6 – Supply of products from the establishment to other establishments

Which of the following will be supplied with products from the establishment (tick all that apply)?

- Other businesses that manufacture or process food
- Wholesale packers
- Cold stores that are not part of the establishment to which this application relates
- Warehouses that are not part of the establishment to which this application relates
- Restaurants, hotels, canteens or similar catering businesses
- Take-away businesses
- Retail shops, supermarkets, stalls, or mobile vendors that you own

- Retail shops, supermarkets, stalls, or mobile vendors that you do not own
- Members of the public direct from the establishment to which this application relates
- Other (please specify)

PART 7 – Other activities on the same site

Will any of the following activities be conducted on the same site as, or within, the establishment to which this application for approval relates?

	YES	NO	APPROVAL CODE
Slaughter, including pigs, sheep, cattle, poultry, game etc:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Cutting fresh (including chilled and frozen) meat, poultry meat or game:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Storage of fresh (including chilled and frozen) meat, poultry or game:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

PART 8 – Information and documentation

The following information is required in order to process your application and should be sent with this application form if possible. Please indicate which information you are sending now (N.B. information that is not sent now will still be required before your application can be determined).

- A detailed scale plan of the (proposed) establishment showing the location of rooms and other areas to be used for the storage and processing of raw materials, product and waste, and the layout of facilities and equipment
- A description of the (proposed) food safety management system based on HACCP principles
- A description of the (proposed) establishment and equipment maintenance arrangements
- A description of the (proposed) establishment, equipment, and transport cleaning arrangements
- A description of the (proposed) waste collection and disposal arrangements
- A description of the (proposed) water supply
- A description of the (proposed) water supply quality testing arrangements
- A description of the (proposed) arrangements for product testing
- A description of the (proposed) pest control arrangements
- A description of the (proposed) monitoring arrangements for staff health
- A description of the (proposed) staff hygiene training arrangements
- A description of the (proposed) arrangements for record keeping
- A description of the (proposed) arrangements for applying the identification mark to product packaging or wrapping

PART 9 - Products to be handled in the establishment / activities

Which of the following activities will be conducted in the establishment? Indicate by giving the approximate quantities to be handled in kilograms or litres per week (tick all that apply).

PART 9(1) – Minced Meat and Meat Preparations

- Handling minced meat
- Handling meat preparations

Full details of activities and specific products handled

--

How many tonnes of minced meat in total will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
---	--

How many tonnes of meat preparations in total will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
---	--

PART 9(2) – Mechanically Separated Meat

Full details of activities and specific products handled

--

How many tonnes of mechanically separated meat in total will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
---	--

PART 9(3) – Meat Products

Full details of activities and specific products handled

--

How many tonnes of meat products will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

PART 9(4) – Live Bivalve Molluscs (Shellfish) / Fishery Products

Full details of activities and specific products handled

--

How many tonnes of Live Bivalve Molluscs (Shellfish) / Fishery Products will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
---	--

PART 9(5) – Raw Milk / Dairy Products

	Raw Milk
	Dairy Products

Full details of activities and specific products handled

--

How many litres of Raw Milk will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
---	--

How many litres / tonnes of Dairy Products will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

PART 9(6) – Eggs (not Primary Production) / Egg Products

Full details of activities and specific products handled

--

How many tonnes of Eggs will be packed in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

How many litres of Egg Products will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
---	--

PART 9(7) – Frogs’ Legs and Snails

	Frogs’ Legs
	Snails

Full details of activities and specific products handled

--

How many tonnes of frogs’ legs in total will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
---	--

How many tonnes of snails in total will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

PART 9(8) – Rendered Animal Fats and Greaves

	Rendered Animal Fats
	Greaves

Full details of activities and specific products handled

--

How many tonnes of rendered animal fats will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
---	--

How many tonnes of greaves will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

PART 9(9) – Treated Stomachs, Bladders and Intestines

	Treated Stomachs
	Treated Bladders
	Treated Intestines

Full details of activities and specific products handled

--

How many tonnes of treated stomachs in total will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

How many tonnes of treated bladders in total will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

How many tonnes of treated intestines in total will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

PART 9(10) – Gelatine

Full Details of Activities

--

How many tonnes of gelatine in total will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

PART 9(11) – Collagen

Full Details of Activities

--

How many tonnes of collagen in total will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

PART 9(12) – Stand-alone Cold Store

Full details of activities and specific products handled

--

How many tonnes of product will be handled in the establishment per week on average?	
--	--

PART 10 – APPLICATION

I hereby apply, as food business operator of the establishment detailed in Part 1, for approval to use that establishment for the purposes of handling products of animal origin for which Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 lays down requirements, as set out in the relevant Parts of this document.

Signature of Food Business Operator

--

Date

--

Name in BLOCK LETTERS

--

If you need any help or advice about how to complete this form, or about the products to which the Regulation relates, or the circumstances in which approval under the Regulation is required, please contact the officer named below.

When you have completed this form and collected the other information required, please send it to:

--

Contact Name:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

IMPORTANT

Please notify any changes to the details you have given on this form, in writing to the District Council at the address shown.

A11.2: Notification of Grant of Full Approval / Conditional Approval

Notification of Grant of Full Approval / Conditional Approval* of a Food Business Establishment Subject to Approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004

To be completed by the District Council and sent to the food business operator

PART 1 – Name and address of food business operator

TO:	IMPORTANT You must notify any change to the details on this form, including any changes in the operations carried out and products handled in the establishment, in writing to the approving District Council at the address shown.	[District Council Logo]
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PART 2 – Introduction

Further to your application dated _____ for approval of your establishment in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004, approval / conditional approval* is GRANTED in respect of the establishment shown in Part 3, and the scope of operations, activities and other matters set out in the relevant Parts of this document.

The approval code that has been allocated to this establishment is shown at the end of this document. It must be used in the format stipulated by, and when required by, Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004.

In accordance with Regulation 12 of the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006, any person who is aggrieved by a decision of a District Council not to grant a full approval may appeal against that decision to a Magistrates Court. The time limit for lodging an appeal is one month from the date on which this notice was served on you. You may wish to consult a legal adviser about the implications of this notice and your right of appeal against this District Council's decision on your application. The name and address of the Magistrates Court at which you should lodge your appeal is

PART 3 – Trading name and address

Trading name of establishment

Full postal address
Postcode:

The establishment has been APPROVED in accordance with Article 31(2)(c) of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004.

The establishment has been CONDITIONALLY APPROVED in accordance with Article 31(2)(d) of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004.

PART 3(1) – Conditional Approval (To be completed when conditional approval has been granted)

The requirements of the Regulations with which you have failed to comply are:

Regulation / Article No.	Requirement

The reasons you have failed to comply with the requirements of the Regulations are:

Regulation / Article No.	Details of non-compliance

The measures you need to take in order to comply with the requirements of the Regulations are:

Regulation / Article No.	Measures needed to secure compliance

In accordance with Article 31(2)(d) of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004, this District Council will visit your establishment within three months of this conditional approval being granted in order to make an assessment of progress in complying with the above requirements.

PART 4 – Food business operator

Name and full address
of Food Business Operator

Postcode:

PART 5 – Scope of approval / conditional approval*

This approval/conditional approval* authorises the handling of the following type(s) of product in the establishment shown in Part 3 of this document in respect of the specific activities and products detailed below:

- Minced Meat
- Meat Preparations
- Mechanically Separated Meat
- Meat Products
- Live Bivalve Molluscs (Shellfish)
- Fishery Products
- Dairy Products
- Eggs (not Primary Production) / Egg Products
- Frogs' Legs / Snails
- Rendered Animal Fats and Greaves
- Treated Stomachs, Bladders and Intestines
- Gelatine
- Collagen

Full Details of Activities and Specific Products Handled:

The establishment shown at Part 3 has been granted the following derogations:

Approval Code:

**Date Approval /
Conditional Approval*
Granted:**

Signed:

Name:

Designation:

Date:

Name and address of District Council:

Contact Name:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

IMPORTANT

You must notify any change to the details on this form, including any changes in the operations carried out and products handled in the establishment, in writing to the approving District Council at the address shown.

* District Council to delete as appropriate

A.11.3: Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant Approval

Notice of Decision to REFUSE to Grant Approval to a Food Business Establishment Subject to Approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004

To be completed by the District Council and sent to the food business operator

PART 1 – Name and address of food business operator

TO:	IMPORTANT You must not use the establishment detailed in Part 3 for ANY purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 unless this District Council has granted approval or conditional approval.	[District Council Logo]
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PART 2 – Notification of decision

Further to your application dated _____ for approval of your establishment in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004, approval is REFUSED in respect of the establishment shown in Part 3, and the scope of operations, activities and other matters set out in the relevant Parts of this document.

The decision to refuse your application was made for the reason(s) set out in Part 4 of this document.

The establishment must therefore not be used for any purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 UNLESS THIS DISTRICT COUNCIL GRANTS APPROVAL OR CONDITIONAL APPROVAL.

In accordance with Regulation 12 of the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006, any person who is aggrieved by a decision of a District Council to refuse to grant an approval may appeal against that decision to a Magistrates Court. The time limit for lodging an appeal is one month from the date on which this notice was served on you. You may wish to consult a legal adviser about the implications of this notice and your right of appeal against this District Council's decision on your application. The name and address of the Magistrates Court at which you should lodge your appeal is _____.

PART 3 – Trading name and address of the establishment

Trading name of establishment

Full postal address

Postcode:

PART 4 – Reasons for refusal

Your application for approval has been refused because you have failed to comply with the requirements of the Regulations as indicated below.

The requirements of the Regulations that you have failed to comply with are:

Regulation / Article No.	Requirement

The reasons you have failed to comply with the requirements of the Regulation are:

Regulation / Article No.	Details of non-compliance

Signed:	
Name:	
Designation:	
Date:	

Name and address of District Council:

Contact Name:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

<p>IMPORTANT</p> <p>You must not use the establishment detailed in Part 3 for ANY purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 unless this District Council has granted approval or conditional approval.</p>
--

A.11.4: Notice of Decision to Withdraw Approval / Conditional Approval

Notice of Decision to WITHDRAW the Approval / Conditional Approval* of a Food Business Establishment Subject to Approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004

To be completed by the District Council and sent to the food business operator

PART 1 – Name and address of food business operator

TO:

IMPORTANT

With immediate effect, you must not use the establishment detailed in Part 3 for ANY purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 or use the associated approval code on any product unless this District Council has granted approval or conditional approval.

[District Council Logo]

PART 2 – Notification of decision to withdraw approval / conditional approval*

This is formal notice that the approval / conditional approval* granted by this District Council (or by a predecessor District Council) on _____ in respect of the establishment shown in Part 3 of this document, which is subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004, to handle the products of animal origin indicated in Part 4 of this document, has been WITHDRAWN in accordance with Article 31(2)(e) of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004. The decision to withdraw the approval / conditional approval* was made for the reason(s) set out in Part 5 of this document.

With immediate effect you must cease the use of the establishment detailed in Part 3 for ANY purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004, or use the associated approval code _____ on any product, **UNLESS THIS DISTRICT COUNCIL GRANTS APPROVAL OR CONDITIONAL APPROVAL.**

In accordance with Regulation 12 of the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006, any person who is aggrieved by a decision of a District Council to withdraw an approval/conditional approval* may appeal against that decision to a Magistrates Court. The time limit for lodging an appeal is one month from the date on which this notice was served on you. You may wish to consult a legal adviser about the implications of this notice and your right of appeal against this District Council's decision on your application. The name and address of the Magistrates Court at which you should lodge your appeal is

.

PART 3 – Trading name and address of the establishment

Trading name of establishment	<input type="text"/>
-------------------------------	----------------------

Full postal address	<input type="text"/>
Postcode:	<input type="text"/>

PART 4 – Product(s) of animal origin for which approval / conditional approval* had been granted

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Minced Meat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Meat Preparations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mechanically Separated Meat |

- Meat Products
- Live Bivalve Molluscs (Shellfish)
- Fishery Products
- Dairy Products
- Eggs (not Primary Production) / Egg Products
- Frogs' Legs / Snails
- Rendered Animal Fats and Greaves
- Treated Stomachs, Bladders and Intestines
- Gelatine
- Collagen

PART 5 – Reasons for withdrawal

The approval / conditional approval* has been withdrawn because you have failed to comply with the requirements of the Regulations as identified below.

The requirements of the Regulations that you have failed to comply with are:

Regulation / Article No.	Requirement

The reasons you have failed to comply with the requirements of the Regulation are:

Regulation / Article No.	Details of non-compliance

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Designation: _____

Date: _____

Name and address of District Council: 	Contact Name: Telephone: Fax: E-mail:
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IMPORTANT

With immediate effect, you must not use the establishment detailed in Part 3 for ANY purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 or use the associated approval code on any product unless this District Council has granted approval or conditional approval.

*District Council to delete as appropriate

A.11.5: Notice of Decision to Suspend Approval / Conditional Approval

Notice of Decision to SUSPEND the Approval / Conditional Approval* of a Food Business Establishment Subject to Approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004

To be completed by the District Council and sent to the food business operator

PART 1 – Name and address of food business operator

TO:	IMPORTANT With immediate effect, you must not use the establishment detailed in Part 3 for any purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 or use the associated approval code on any product until such time as the District Council lifts this suspension.	[District Council Logo]
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PART 2 – Notice of decision to suspend approval / conditional approval*

This is formal notice that the approval / conditional approval* granted by this District Council (or by a predecessor District Council) on _____ in respect of the establishment shown in Part 3 of this document, which is subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004, to handle the products of animal origin indicated in Part 4 of this document, has been **SUSPENDED** in accordance with Article 31(2)(e) of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004. The decision to suspend the approval / conditional approval* was made for the reason(s) set out in Part 5 of this document.

With immediate effect you must cease the use of the establishment detailed in Part 3 for ANY purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004, or use the associated approval code _____ on any product, **UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THIS DISTRICT COUNCIL LIFTS THE SUSPENSION.**

In accordance with Regulation 12 of the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006, any person who is aggrieved by a decision of a District Council to suspend an approval or conditional approval may appeal against that decision to a Magistrates Court. The time limit for lodging an appeal is one month from the date on which this notice was served on you. You may wish to consult a legal adviser about the implications of this notice and your right of appeal against this District Council's decision on your application. The name and address of the Magistrates Court at which you should lodge your appeal is

PART 3 – Trading name and address of the establishment

Trading name of establishment

Full postal address

Postcode:

PART 4 – Product(s) of animal origin for which approval / conditional approval* had been granted

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Minced Meat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Meat Preparations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mechanically Separated Meat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Meat Products |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Live Bivalve Molluscs (Shellfish) |

- Fishery Products
- Dairy Products
- Eggs (not Primary Production) / Egg Products
- Frogs' Legs / Snails
- Rendered Animal Fats and Greaves
- Treated Stomachs, Bladders and Intestines
- Gelatine
- Collagen

PART 5 – Reasons for suspension

The approval has been suspended because you have failed to comply with the requirements of the Regulations as identified below.

The requirements of the Regulations that you have failed to comply with are:

Regulation / Article No.	Requirement

The reasons you have failed to comply with the requirements of the Regulation are:

Regulation / Article No.	Details of non-compliance

The measures you need to take in order to comply with the requirements of the Regulation are:

Regulation / Article No.	Measures needed to secure compliance

Signed: _____
Name: _____
Designation: _____
Date: _____

Name and address of District Council:

Contact Name:

 Telephone:

 Fax:

 E-mail:

<p>IMPORTANT</p> <p>With immediate effect, you must not use the establishment detailed in Part 4 for any purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 or use the associated approval code on any product until such time as the District Council lifts this suspension.</p>

* District Council to delete as appropriate

A.11.6: Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant Full Approval to an Establishment which was Conditionally Approved

Notice of Decision to REFUSE to Grant Full Approval to an Establishment subject to Approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004, which was Conditionally Approved under Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004

To be completed by the District Council and sent to the food business operator

PART 1 – Name and address of food business operator

TO:	IMPORTANT With immediate effect, you must not use the establishment detailed in Part 3 for any purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 or use the associated approval code on any product unless this District Council has granted approval or conditional approval.	[District Council Logo]
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PART 2 – Notification of decision

Your establishment, as detailed in Part 3, which is subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 and was conditionally approved in accordance with Article 31(2)(d) of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 to handle the products of animal origin indicated in Part 4 of this document has been REFUSED full approval.

The decision to refuse to grant full approval was made for the reason(s) set out in Part 5 of this document.

With immediate effect you must cease the use of the establishment detailed in Part 3 for ANY purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004, or use the associated approval code on any product, **UNLESS THIS DISTRICT COUNCIL GRANTS APPROVAL OR CONDITIONAL APPROVAL.**

In accordance with Regulation 12 of the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006, any person who is aggrieved by a decision of a District Council to refuse to grant an approval may appeal against that decision to a Magistrates Court. The time limit for lodging an appeal is one month from the date on which this notice was served on you. You may wish to consult a legal adviser about the implications of this notice and your right of appeal against this District Council's decision on your application. The name and address of the Magistrates Court at which you should lodge your appeal is .

PART 3 – Trading name and address of the establishment

Trading name of establishment

Full postal address

Postcode:

PART 4 – Product(s) of animal origin for which conditional approval had been granted

- Minced Meat
 Meat Preparations

- Mechanically Separated Meat
- Meat Products
- Live Bivalve Molluscs (Shellfish)
- Fishery Products
- Dairy Products
- Eggs (not Primary Production) / Egg Products
- Frogs' Legs / Snails
- Rendered Animal Fats and Greaves
- Treated Stomachs, Bladders and Intestines
- Gelatine
- Collagen
- DELETE THIS ROW**

PART 5 – Reasons for refusal

Full approval has been refused because you have failed to comply with the requirements of the Regulations as indicated below.

The requirements of the Regulations that you have failed to comply with are:

Regulation / Article No.	Requirement

The reasons you have failed to comply with the requirements of the Regulations are:

Regulation / Article No.	Details of non-compliance

Signed: _____
Name: _____
Designation: _____
Date: _____

Name and address of District Council:

Contact Name:

IMPORTANT

With immediate effect, you must not use the establishment detailed in Part 3 for any purpose which would render the establishment subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 or use the associated approval code on any product unless this District Council has granted approval or conditional approval.

ANNEX 12: APPROVAL OF PRODUCT-SPECIFIC ESTABLISHMENTS SUBJECT TO APPROVAL UNDER REGULATION 853/2004 – DISTRICT COUNCIL FILES

List of Contents

The following guidance is offered to District Councils in order to support and improve consistency in the content and structure of files produced for establishments which require formal approval.

A properly structured file containing all the relevant information is important to the District Council. It provides a history of the establishment concerned and how it has developed; it provides continuity for new officers; it facilitates monitoring exercises and will assist the District Council in demonstrating its competence.

Each file should contain:

- The application form;
- a plan or plans of the establishment indicating:
 - i. The layout of the establishment;
 - ii. The location of equipment;
 - iii. Work flows for each product line;
 - iv. Water distribution system within the establishment including all outlets and sampling points;
 - v. Drainage layout;
 - vi. Pest control - baiting and/or trapping points within the establishment and external areas;
- a synopsis of the establishment which briefly describes what type of establishment it is, products produced, volume of product, type of trade, number of employees, approval number and what it is approved for. This synopsis should be no more than one side of an A4 sheet;
- pre-approval inspection report;
- planned programme of works to achieve approval;
- approval notification document specifying:
 - i. Details of activities to which the approval relates;
 - ii. Approval number;
 - iii. Classification;
 - iv. Special hygiene direction(s);
 - v. Any derogations that have been granted;
 - vi. Any other conditions or limitations specified by the District Council;
 - vii. Any arrangements acceptable to the District Council;

Note: All relevant information and documentation to be included in file;

- labels (printed, reprinted and use of) and commercial documents bearing the identification mark;
- letter indicating the District Council's involvement in the planning and implementation of the establishment's hygiene training of staff;
- inspection reports on premises in chronological order;
- correspondence with establishment in chronological order;
- copies of notices or other formal action taken in chronological order;
- copy of company's emergency withdrawal plan and traceability system including names, telephone numbers, etc, of key personnel within the company;
- copy of any other documents that have been provided by, or copied at, the approved premises, including:
 - i. HACCP documentation;
 - ii. supplier information;
 - iii. product list;
 - iv. raw material, product and water test results;
 - v. process records;
 - vi. management and key contact names and contact details;
 - vii. photographs and digital images;
 - viii. product recall procedures;
- results of all samples taken by the District Council;
- location of any off-site facilities

ANNEX 13: APPROACH TO ENFORCEMENT - REQUIREMENT FOR FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES BASED ON HACCP PRINCIPLES

A.13.1: Introduction

The requirement for food safety management procedures based on HACCP principles is a significant change for food businesses. The legislation is flexible and allows businesses to comply in different ways. This is particularly important for small, less developed and catering businesses where traditional HACCP is difficult to apply.

A.13.2: Enforcement Approach

Enforcement should continue to be graduated and educative.

A.13.3: Regulation 852/2004

Regulation 852/2004 requires food businesses to put in place and maintain food safety management procedures (based on HACCP principles). The Food Standards Agency has produced guidance materials to help businesses to comply with this legislation, which will be available through District Councils and through the Food Standards Agency's web site.

Food premises that present a clear and imminent danger to public health should have formal enforcement action taken against them to secure improvement.

For food premises that do not present a clear and imminent danger to public health, the focus of enforcement visits should be to help the business improve its standards of food safety. For enforcement, *in practice this means:*

- *Questioning the person responsible for food safety in the premises to ensure that significant hazards are understood and controlled, and where understanding and control is lacking – helping the business to improve.*

With limited time and resources, enforcers should concentrate on significant hazards to public health, ensuring that the person responsible for food safety understands these hazards and knows how to control and manage them. This is an educative approach. The expectation is that businesses improve their standards over time, taking account of the understanding they gain from the enforcement officer and other sources. Where a business does not improve – given reasonable time, after being offered guidance, Improvement Notices and other more formal enforcement activity can be used. This is a graduated approach.

A.13.4: Flexibility

Regulation 852/2004 will not simply add documentation and record keeping to an existing requirement for hazard analysis. In fact, the Regulation is much more flexible, and requires food businesses to establish procedures in the

business that control food safety hazards, and integrate these procedures with documentation and record keeping appropriate to the size and nature of the business.

Whilst larger, more complex businesses, and businesses that have a high level of understanding of food safety management may choose to demonstrate compliance with the legislation by putting in place a traditional HACCP system, others may do so with simpler approaches that take account of this flexibility. This section describes this flexibility for small businesses.

Whilst some businesses will wish to follow the traditional 7-principle HACCP framework this may not be easily understood or implemented by others – particularly small businesses. There is no requirement to use this 7-principle approach as long as the same outcome is achieved – safe food being produced.

For enforcement, *in practice, compliance at a high level, means:*

- *obtaining assurance that the person responsible for food safety understands significant hazards and has them under control e.g. by questioning;*
- *seeing that there are some written procedures that demonstrate how the business controls these hazards at all times;*
- *seeing some evidence that these procedures are followed, and that they are reviewed and kept up to date.*

Where a business is especially low-risk (e.g. sweet shop, greengrocer, market stall etc) presenting only basic hygiene hazards, it may be sufficient that the business has a guide to good hygiene practice and understands and applies it. Documentation and record keeping may not be necessary.

Further guidance (entitled “Implementation of procedures based on the HACCP principles and facilitation of the implementation of the HACCP principles in certain food businesses”) on flexibility has been produced by the Commission. This is available at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/index_en.htm

The key points are:

- Flexibility applies to all food businesses
- The manager of a business should have the skills necessary to maintain a food safety management system proportionate to their business, and not simply be trained in HACCP principles. These skills can be gained in many ways, formal training is not the only route.
- Staff in a business should have the skills needed to undertake their duties and follow the food safety procedures in the business. Training for staff should be proportionate and reflect the flexibility guidance. Formal training may not be necessary to achieve the objective of having the required competencies. In practical terms, on the job training might be appropriate, attendance at a formal training event is not necessary.

- Monitoring key activities in the business (critical control points) need not be numeric and can be based on sensory observation, craft skills and supervision.
- Incident recording is an appropriate and proportionate form of record keeping in many businesses
- Corrective actions must supplement incident recording.

In order to help businesses develop appropriate procedures and to adopt a graduated approach to its enforcement, it is important to understand how to judge progress. The chart below describes the components of the legislation and how an enforcement officer might judge progress towards complying with it in small businesses.

The following chart breaks down the components of the legislation into the standard 7 principles of HACCP, with some of the flexibility in the legislation identified. Although guidance materials may use this 7-principle framework, it is not necessary for this approach to be used. Provided the same outcome is achieved, safe food being produced, this can be achieved by substituting, in a simplified but effective way, some or more of the seven principles. This is clarified in the further Commission guidance on flexibility. Similarly, the terminology or 'jargon' of HACCP need not be used, and may be confusing to some businesses.

This breakdown is based on the Agency approach 'Safer Food Better Business', but should be useable to identify compliance in a business using other similarly flexible tools, or where the business has devised its own procedures.

<p>1. Identify any hazards that must be prevented eliminated or reduced;</p>	<p>Mapping Hazard Analysis with tools such as flow-charts may not be suitable for all businesses. It is sufficient that the business has thought about its activities in a structured way. The effect of the analysis and the procedures produced should be to ensure that safe food is always produced.</p> <p>The traditional HACCP approach of controlling some hazards through pre-requisite programmes of Good Hygienic Practice and others through the HACCP system may not be appropriate, particularly in small businesses where it is not readily understood. Whatever the format of the guidance, the business must be managing all significant hazards including those traditionally controlled through Good Hygienic Practice.</p> <p>For enforcement, in practice, this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeing some evidence that the person responsible for food safety has thought about their business and identified significant hazards and knows how to control them – for some businesses it may be appropriate to follow standard advice from the Agency, industry guides, advice from trade</i>
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	<i>bodies etc.</i>
<p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>	<p>Identify the critical control points (CCPs) at the steps at which control is essential;</p> <p>and Establish critical limits at CCPs;</p> <p>Critical control points and their limits may not always be helpful ways of thinking about food safety for small businesses and they may instead identify generic controls - like thorough cooking, together with the ways of ensuring they know this has happened.</p> <p>The legislation is flexible in stating the requirement that establishing a critical limit does not always imply that a numerical value must be fixed. This is in particular the case where monitoring procedures are based on visual observation, for example a business may rely on sensory information such as colour change, juices running clear, stews bubbling etc. Businesses must understand how these methods control hazards and be sure they are effective. This validation can be done by the business themselves (on the basis of experience), or it may be appropriate to use pre-validated procedures that follow established best practice, produced by the Agency, trade bodies or others.</p> <p>For enforcement, in practice, this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeing some evidence that the business is following procedures that include steps where the significant hazards are controlled – for many businesses it may be appropriate to follow standard advice.</i>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Establish procedures to monitor the CCPs;</p> <p>Management of food safety through the procedures detailed above will need to be demonstrated. This can be shown in many ways. In some larger businesses this may be achieved by monitoring protocols and record keeping. In other businesses – particularly where the person responsible spends significant time in the food preparation areas, this may be demonstrated by their ability to supervise their operation – that their procedures are being followed. It will be important to establish that if the procedures are followed, safe food will result.</p> <p>Monitoring may in many cases be a purely sensory exercise, for example a regular visual verification of the temperature of cooked food by a colour change.</p> <p>For enforcement, in practice, this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeing some evidence that the business is monitoring their procedures, either using physical checks such as noting temperatures or via sensory checks such as noting that a stew or sauce is bubbling. The person responsible for food safety should be able to explain the chosen method of monitoring.</i>

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5.	<p>Establish corrective actions to be taken if a CCP is not under control;</p> <p>It is also important that the business knows what to do when things go wrong – the corrective action that needs to be taken.</p> <p>For enforcement, in practice, this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Questioning the person responsible for food safety management to ensure adequate supervision of staff and equipment so as to assure that procedures are being followed and safe food produced, and that when things go wrong appropriate action is taken.</i>
6.	<p>Establish procedures to verify whether the above procedures are working effectively;</p> <p>The business will need to demonstrate that its procedures are verified and reviewed and kept up to date, and that changes to menus, types of foods and cooking methods, and new equipment are reflected. In larger businesses, verification is often achieved by third parties, but for smaller businesses it is sufficient that the business carries out periodic reviews of its procedures and methods, and takes account of good practice and safe methods.</p> <p>For enforcement, in practice, this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeing evidence that the procedures in a business are reviewed to ensure they continue to be appropriate and reflect changes in the business.</i>
7.	<p>Establish documents and records to demonstrate the effective application of the above measures;</p> <p>Documentation and record keeping are particularly onerous for smaller businesses and the new legislation is clear that this should be well balanced and limited to what is essential with regard to food safety. Records should include the corrective action that has been taken.</p> <p>For enforcement, in practice, this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seeing documentation that is up to date and describes the main procedures or methods used in the business to control the most important hazards;</i> • <i>Seeing some periodic records that represents evidence that these procedures were followed. This does not have to record every monitoring and supervisory activity and in small caterers, exception reporting will be acceptable.</i>

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>For simple small businesses following good hygienic practice guides, documentation and record keeping may not be necessary.</i> |
|--|

A.13.5: Role of District Councils

The new legislation will require the industry to raise its standards to that already achieved by the best businesses. The flexibility means that all food businesses should be able to comply.

In accordance with the legislation, businesses are required to implement appropriate food safety management procedures. Different support models are appropriate for different types of business. The expectation is that larger businesses and manufacturers will continue to develop and use traditional HACCP systems. The approach developed by the Food Standards Agency, Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) is one approach considered suitable for use by small caterers. The 'Safe Catering' and 'CookSafe' support models, developed in Northern Ireland and Scotland respectively, are also suitable for a wide range of caterers.

Proper implementation of the appropriate support model will constitute compliance with Article 5 of Regulation 852/2004. Correctly implemented, Safer Food Better Business, Safe Catering' or 'CookSafe will allow a food business to demonstrate compliance.

Once the legislation is in force, the same educative and graduated approach will be expected. Businesses should either have in place or be seen to be making progress toward having effective food safety management systems. Enforcement officers should try to educate and give businesses an understanding about what is required. For businesses that are not a threat to public health, it is expected that formal enforcement action should only be taken where the business:

- Has been given reasonable opportunity to implement food safety management;
- Has been directed to appropriate training, if needed; and
- Has been provided with appropriate guidance.

The graduated approach should seek to educate businesses and improve their standards in realisable steps. Guidance material should be broken down in such a way that the enforcer and business can agree that by their next visit, so much progress should have been made. The Agency's advice, 'Safer Food Better Business, is broken down into the 4Cs (cooking, cleaning, chilling and cross-contamination) and it may be appropriate to set a business one of these 'Cs' at a time. Other guidance material can also be divided into 'chunks' like this. Where fundamental skills are missing, enforcers should point businesses at sources of the competencies – guidance materials, books, courses etc. Enforcers should look to the business to make reasonable progress through the material and make appropriate changes in their practices before the graduated approach progresses from education to more formal infraction methods. A food safety management system should give assurance that the business knows how to produce safe food, has procedures in place that assure this, and repeatedly does produce safe food. Whether a business has an effective food

safety management system in place is a judgement for enforcement officers. For enforcement, in practice, this means:

- *Judging whether the business has appropriate procedures in place so that it would continue to produce food safely if things went wrong – staff absences, unexpected demand etc., and seeing some evidence that this is the case.*

ANNEX 14: IMPORT OF FOOD FROM THIRD COUNTRIES

GUIDANCE FOR DISTRICT COUNCILS ON THE IMPORT OF FOOD FROM THIRD COUNTRIES

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Appendix 1: Glossary of terms

A.14.1: Introduction

All District Councils have responsibilities for certain aspects of imported food controls. The purpose of this guidance is to set out and assist District Councils on the level and type of activity to achieve effective and consistent enforcement on imported food.

The guidance focuses on the principal legislation relating to the import of food not of animal origin (FNAO). From 1 January 2006, FNAO import controls are harmonised at Community level by Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules (EU Regulation 882/2004). The provisions of the EU Regulation are directly applicable but are given effect at national level by the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 (and parallel legislation in England, Scotland and Wales). This legislation replaced the previous legislation (principally, the Imported Food Regulations (NI) 1997) but the general approach in the new legislation is similar.

A.14.1.1: Scope

The scope of this guidance extends to imported FNAO and imported products of animal origin (POAO). It has been revised in the light of EU Regulation 882/2004 on Official Feed and Food Controls. The guidance does not cover control activities for POAO at Border Inspection Posts (BIP), where central guidance produced by DEFRA is available¹. However, it does provide enforcement guidance for District Councils relating to illegally introduced POAO. The guidance covers food controls only – animal feed is subject to separate enforcement guidance issued by FSANI.

Except where a specific distinction is made this guidance applies to all District Councils, both inland and at points of entry. For the purpose of this guidance “imported food” means food imported into NI from outside the European Union (“third countries”); “point of entry” means a seaport, airport at which imported food is introduced into NI.

District Councils with a point of entry provide the first line of control on imported food to ensure it is safe and complies with EU and UK requirements. However, it is important that controls are also in place at Enhanced Remote Transit Sheds (ERTS), ships suppliers, and other premises inland, as significant amounts of FNAO will not have been subject to checks at points of entry and there is a possibility that POAO may have entered the UK illegally. Further details of the roles and responsibilities of District Councils and other government agencies and departments can be found in FSANI’s Resource Pack on Imported Food Control².

This guidance incorporates relevant information from:

Good practice guides contained in the Syniad/APHA/FSA Benchmarking Study³ into the port health function involving port health participants from seaports, LACORS and other Government Departments.

The FSANI's Resource Pack on Imported Food Control provided to food authority delegates at national update training seminars ².

This guidance includes summaries of some statutory provisions. However, these are indicative and for general guidance only.

A.14.2: Status of this Guidance

This document should be considered as centrally issued guidance for the purpose of the Framework Agreement on District Council Food Law Enforcement (the latest version is available on the Agency's website)⁴. Amendments have been made to the Standard in the Framework Agreement to clarify its application to imported food control (Amendment issued in June 2004).

This guidance should also be read in conjunction with the Food Law Code of Practice issued under Article 39 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, which has been reviewed and re-issued under Regulation 22 of the Food Hygiene Regulations (NI) 2006, and Regulation 6 of the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006. The Code of Practice provides direction and guidance on the District Council approach to enforcement generally.

A.14.3: Imported Food Legislation (FNAO)

A.14.3.1: EU Regulation 882/2004

This introduces EU-wide harmonised rules for import controls for FNAO. The requirements (at Articles 15 to 25) extend to foods not already covered by Directive 97/78/EC (POAO Veterinary Checks regime). These cover controls in relation to materials and articles in contact with food as well as cleaning and maintenance products and processes, and pesticides.

A.14.3.2: The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006

The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 give effect to Articles 15 to 25 of EU Regulation 882/2004. These Regulations replace the Imported Food Regulations (NI) 1997. Parallel legislation is in place in England, Scotland and Wales.

The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 include a mechanism for ensuring that where there is a serious or imminent risk to public health, control measures may be put in place. In particular, it may be used to ensure that Emergency Decisions made at EU level are implemented without delay. It does so by giving FSANI powers to make declarations regarding import conditions for particular products. These conditions would apply with immediate effect.

A.14.3.3: Other legislation

For certain areas, for example, contaminants, there are specific EU harmonised requirements for foods which can be applied at point of import as well as inland. These EU requirements are implemented in the UK by separate legislation but the powers to deal with non-conforming food at import are those contained in the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006. Separate and detailed European Commission guidance on the contaminants legislation is available at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/chemicalsafety/contaminants/aflatoxin_guidance_en.pdf

A.14.3.4: 'High risk' FNAO

EU Regulation 882/2004 (Article 15(5)) provides that the Commission may issue a list of 'high risk' FNAO. These products will be identified on the basis of known or emerging risk, and will be subject to increased import controls at the point of entry. The frequency and nature of such checks will be specified by the Commission when the products are identified. The enhanced controls provided for by these arrangements include; prior notification, import through designated ports only, and specified documentary and physical checks at points of entry.

As the Commission had not yet issued a list of 'high risk' products, it is not possible at this stage to legislate for these products at a national level. It is proposed that once the list of products has been issued by the Commission, the national legislation will be amended appropriately.

In the meantime, current safeguard measures will continue to apply and further measures may be introduced under the provisions of the EU General Food Law Regulation (178/2002) such that public and animal health protection will not be compromised by the delay. These measures provide similar enhanced requirements such as specified checks and, where relevant, entry through designated ports.

A.14.4: Service Planning

The Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement includes service planning guidance. Section 2.3 of the framework ("Scope of the food service") and Section 2.4 ("Demands on the food service") provide for District Councils to set out the scope of the responsibilities and service provided and to describe any external factors that may impact on their service. Where relevant, District Councils should include in these sections imported food responsibilities and the control arrangements in place.

District Councils with a point of entry should include details of resources allocated for imported food control work in their service plans.

A.14.5: Documented Policies and Procedures

All District Councils should ensure that their written policies and procedures cover imported food having regard to the work that might reasonably be anticipated within the administrative district and jurisdiction of the council.

Procedures relating to examination of imported food including deferred examinations under The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 should cover both food safety and food standards issues, where applicable.

Such procedures may be audited by FSANI and should be suitable and sufficient for these purposes. They should make public, information on their control activities and their effectiveness.

A.14.6: Authorisation

All District Councils should ensure that at least one officer is properly authorised to undertake imported food control work and related enforcement action. One of the key issues which needs to be considered in any review of authorisations is the identification of the specific legislation where enforcement powers originate. This will affect the content and wording of authorisation documentation.

For food safety and food standards matters this should include authorisation under the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 and under hygiene and processing Regulations issued under it, including any relevant contaminants legislation.

Officers should also be authorised to enforce relevant Regulations issued under the European Communities Act 1972 (e.g. The General Food Regulations (NI) 2004). However, the European Communities Act does not contain the specific enforcement powers, its primary function is to provide a mechanism by which Regulations can be enacted. Powers of enforcement for Regulations made under the Act are usually contained in the Regulations themselves. Therefore, the Agency's view is that all Regulations relevant to imported food control should be specifically referred to in authorisation documents, including officers' credentials. As such these should, for example, include:

The Products of Animal Origin (Import and Export) Regulations (NI) 1998 as amended,

The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) Regulations (NI) 2004 as amended,

Emergency Control Regulations e.g. The Food (Chilli, Chilli Products, Curcuma and Palm Oil) (Emergency Control) Regulations (NI) 2005, and

The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006.

The Agency's view is that officers do not need to be specifically authorised to enforce declarations made under Regulation 33 of the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006.

General advice on the authorisation of officers has been developed by LACORS. District Councils may also wish to consult their own legal advisors on this matter⁵.

A.14.7: Qualifications / Experience of Authorised Officers

Officers authorised to undertake imported food control work and enforcement action should be appropriately qualified, experienced and competent to carry out the range of tasks and duties they are authorised to perform, in line with the relevant requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice, and subsequent documents. Staff should be kept up to date in their area of competence and receive regular additional training as necessary.

All District Councils should have at least one officer competent in imported food controls. Relevant update training could include:

- Attendance at FSANI enforcement training on imported food control; and
- Familiarisation with FSANI's Resource Pack on Imported Food Control²; or
- Other relevant training of an equivalent content e.g. in-house training or cascade training relating to (a) & (b) above.

A.14.8: Information

District Councils with a point of entry in their territory should maintain up to date information on:

- The port operator.
- Access to port/Customs areas, including Enhanced Remote Transit Sheds (ERTS).
- Stakeholders, including import agents and airlines/shipping operators.
- Trade type (volume, nature, and trade routes).
- Facilities where imported food inspection can be carried out and arrangements for storage of detained/seized goods. DEFRA has issued further specific advice on operating procedures for sharing facilities at BIPS¹⁴.
- Equipment available for carrying out inspections and sampling of imported food.
- Details of appointed and specialist laboratories for analysis and/or examination of samples that are able to provide an appropriate service for sample analysis (in particular relation to the time-scale of analysis and issue of results).
- Health and safety requirements.
- Security requirements.

District Councils with a point of entry or ERTS should establish routine local liaison and communication with relevant local organisations for the purpose of general exchange of information on food imports and for the effective handling of incidents. These contacts could include, where appropriate:

- HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs)
- DARD Veterinary Service
- Northern Ireland Public Health Laboratory
- The Horticultural Section of DARD QAB which has combined responsibility for Plant Health & Seeds and horticultural marketing.
- Port operator; import agents; Transit Shed \ ERTS operators,
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)
- Neighbouring District Councils

Contact details and information on the roles and responsibilities of relevant central government departments and other organisations can be found in FSANI's Resource Pack on Imported Food Control ².

Where relevant, District Councils should ensure that their officers have access to secure areas under the Aviation and Maritime Security Act 1990. Information on this may be obtained from the port operator.

A.14.9: Records

A.14.9.1: Identifying and recording food importers

All District Councils should ensure that food premises and traders in their district that import food are identified and recorded in premises/trader databases and included in inspection programmes as appropriate.

Completed food premises registration forms can be used to assist identification of food premises as importers, so far as the EU Hygiene Regulation 852/2004 provides for this.

For the purposes of identifying and recording food businesses and systems falling under the official controls, District Councils should refer to the scope of EU Regulation 882/2004 as detailed in Articles 14 and 15. Relevant activities should be identified on the appropriate files together with an indication of the type and origin of foods being imported.

To help identify food importers, District Councils may conduct desktop exercises using such information sources as local knowledge, telephone directories or Internet searches. Records can be refined further after visits to food premises and/or communications with food business proprietors and other local government departments as part of routine programmed activities.

A.14.9.2: Records of consignments and examinations

District Councils with a point of entry should ensure that, where available, information relating to the number and type of food consignments is maintained together with relevant information on the checks made to determine compliance with legal requirements. Where information is recorded, the level of information about food examinations (including examinations undertaken at ERTS) and deferred examinations should provide consignment traceability and permit effective internal monitoring. This information should include any identifying reference for the consignment examined, country of origin, information on the nature of the food and the checks carried out and, where any enforcement action or sampling has been undertaken, the details of the agent and/or consignor/consignee. Records of sampling checks and records relating to emergency controls should be held for up to three years.

A.14.9.3: Arrangements for points of entry without permanent District Council presence

Where there is no permanent District Council presence at an airport or seaport, and it is not considered by the council to be a point of entry for food, the District Council should (at least once every three months) contact the port operator, HMRC and/or other commercial operators to confirm the port's status regarding food activities and/or obtain information about the volumes, types, countries of origin and customs status of food entering the port since the last such enquiry. District Councils should keep a record of these exchanges for a period of three years.

The purpose of these arrangements is to provide District Councils with updated information on food being imported. This will enable risk-based judgements to be made on the targeting of enforcement action and to ensure that emergency controls or restrictions on certain foods are being enforced. This includes at the designated point of entry, and requirements relating to documentary checks and associated statutory sampling (further details on risk-based checks can be found in Section A14.14).

A.14.10: Reporting and Notification Arrangements

A.14.10.1: Nominated officer for imported food controls

Every District Council with a point of entry should appoint a nominated officer with the necessary competency in imported food control to be a point of contact with FSANI on imported food matters. The details of the nominated officer or changes to the nominated officer should be notified to FSANI's Meat Hygiene and Imported Food Unit⁶.

A.14.10.2: Monitoring returns

All District Councils should complete any relevant enforcement monitoring returns required by the Agency.

In April 2005 FSANI wrote to all District Councils seeking baseline data on imported food law enforcement activity, to be used as a measure for the Government's initiative to achieve a 'step change' in District Council delivery and co-ordination of imported food controls. In order for the Agency to monitor imported food control work, councils should comply with future requests for such data.

District Councils should also supply any other information reasonably requested by FSANI. This may relate to information about the import of specific food products, or food from certain countries. It may relate to information required by the European Commission in connection with emerging public health issues or for inclusion in the National Control Plan or annual reports that the UK will be required to produce in accordance with the requirements of Articles 42 and 44 of EU Regulation 882/2004. Commission Decisions also require monitoring returns to be made to the Commission through FSANI.

A.14.10.3: Notification of food hazards or incidents

All District Councils should send details of any imports rejected, either at the point of entry or inland, where there is a direct or indirect risk to health to FSANI's General Food Hygiene and Incidents Branch⁷ using the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) notification form. This will include imports rejected for reasons such as chemical, microbiological or foreign body contamination or imports from a country which is not authorised to export that category of products to the EU.

In addition, with regard to testing for residues of veterinary medicines in Annex IV of EU Regulation 2377/90, as amended (such as nitrofurans and chloramphenicol) or those not approved for use, details of ALL positive results should be sent to FSANI using the RASFF notification form. Where available, copies of the health certificate and the airway bill or bill of landing should also be forwarded to FSANI's General Food Hygiene and Incidents Unit⁷ at:

esther.chartres@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk or
kathryn.baker@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Guidance on completing the RASFF notification form has already been provided to District Councils. Authorities who have access to the European Commission's Circa website, will be able to download copies of the template for the RASFF notification form⁸.

The District Councils should also notify local customs of the decision and the final destination of the consignment if it is to be allowed to be re-exported.

All District Councils should notify FSANI of a serious localised incident or a wider problem under the Food Alert System as soon as a decision has been taken that one has occurred, using the appropriate contact details and

reporting arrangements set out in the Food Law Code of Practice and any subsequent documents.

A.14.10.4: Notification of illegal imports of POAO

A notification should be made to DEFRA's Illegal Imports via DARD whenever illegally imported POAO are seized. Further details are contained in Section A14.18.4 of this guidance.

A.14.11: Liaison / Referrals

Whenever inland Councils come across problems with imported food, where the point of entry for the goods can be ascertained and similar problems are likely to be found in other imported consignments, it is important to ensure that the District Council at the point of entry is informed to help target their future surveillance activities.

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for District Councils covering points of entry to refer imported food matters to inland Councils (e.g. at ship suppliers or Channelled Goods). This would include situations where inland supervision of consignments is required and also where checks at the point of entry reveal food safety or food standards concerns and it is appropriate to refer the matter to an inland Council.

Examples include:

- Where a consignment of food of non-animal origin, which is subject to emergency controls or other restrictions, has been illegally imported e.g. without being presented to the District Council at the point of entry for the required checks to be carried out.
- Where the District Council at the point of entry is aware that illegal imports of products of animal origin may have been distributed.
- Where checks on imported food reveal labelling issues which cannot be enforced at time of import.
- Where examination under The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 has been deferred.
- Where unsatisfactory test results are received for samples taken for routine surveillance and as such the consignment has been released from the port.
- Where analysis indicates that nuts are not suitable for human consumption but are referred for feed use.

Wherever practicable, inland Councils should agree to assist with these referrals and respond as appropriate without undue delay and provide feedback to the District Council at the point of entry on the outcome. To assist this process a suggested pro-forma for this purpose is available on the Agency's website⁹. Records of such referrals and details of any action taken should be maintained by councils.

It may also be necessary for FSANI to refer matters concerning illegally imported POAO to inland Councils. This information will normally be received from DARD where they have intercepted illegal imports destined for commercial premises. District Councils should respond to these referrals without undue delay and where requested provide feedback directly to DARD. Councils should maintain records of action taken.

A.14.12: Inland Inspection of Imported Food

District Council procedures should ensure food (including imported food) examination forms part of food premises inspections.

During routine inspections and other visits to food business premises (e.g. complaint visits, sampling visits) officers are requested to consider the food in possession or offered for sale, and if imported, ensure it complies with relevant imported food requirements.

The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 also cover semi-finished products, materials and articles in contact with food, pesticides, and labelling issues.

When considering specific imported food inspection programmes local District Councils should not simply focus on food businesses that specialise in the supply of food to specific minority groups. They should consider food businesses within their area that routinely import food from third countries, in particular those premises that are the first destination after import. Such premises are likely to include local food manufacturers and warehouses. Any inspection programme should also be informed by food alerts and the premises compliance history.

In addition to assessing fitness for consumption, reasonable steps should be taken to check the legality of the importation of any POAO and FNAO from a third country. The FSANI's Resource Pack on Imported Food Control provides detailed advice on points to consider when investigating the legitimacy of imports. The Food Standards Agency's website¹⁰ provides the types of food imports and countries of origin where there are prohibitions and restrictions¹¹, as well as links to other relevant sites.

A.14.12.1: Deferred examination of FNAO – inland controls

The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 allow for import controls for the examination of consignments of FNAO to be deferred and undertaken by the inland District Council covering the ERTS or at any other place of destination in the UK. Further guidance on this is given in Section A14.14.4.

The decision to defer rests with the District Council covering the point of entry and they need to liaise with the receiving council to ensure that appropriate checks will be carried out and as such the procedure relies on co-operation between Councils. Receiving Councils should wherever possible agree to any

reasonable request for a deferred examination. Under The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006, the enforcement authority at the place of destination would become responsible for enforcement of the import controls once the point of entry authority had deferred examination to the place of destination.

Inland Councils should ensure that any available information on imported food, which is sampled, detained, seized or destroyed, wherever practicable is recorded in relevant in-house records or databases.

A.14.13: Sampling of Imported Food

A.14.13.1: Considerations for sampling

Routine imported food sampling considerations, for District Council surveillance and enforcement purposes, should take account of:

- any statutory requirements for sampling laid down in European Commission Decisions or Emergency Control Regulations (usually this will occur at a point of entry),
- any agreed LACORS/Food Standards Agency sampling programmes,
- any sampling required following a Food Alert or RASFF notification,
- information from any EU, LACORS, regional liaison group, local or other sampling survey, and
- any imported food where there is no history or information on the product.

Commodities sampled under Emergency Control Decisions or Emergency Control Regulations should be detained until the enforcement authority receives the results unless otherwise stated in the implementing rules.

District Councils should also take into account local priorities, including consumer complaints relating to imported food, and their local business profile when considering sampling, and include these in their sampling programmes. Sampling policies and programmes should be reviewed from time to time to assess the need to include national or regional imported food priorities/surveys and the UK's National Control Plan.

District Councils should take into account any specific central guidance on sampling or other matters set out by FSANI, LACORS or DARD

A.14.13.2 Qualifications / experience / training of officers carrying out sampling

Samples for microbiological examination or chemical analysis should be taken by authorised officers, having been properly trained in the appropriate techniques including relevant EU protocols and Food Standards Agency guidance, and being competent to carry out the duties assigned to them. Sampling should only be undertaken by officers meeting the relevant

qualification and experience requirements described in the Food Law Code of Practice.

A.14.14: Food of Non-Animal Origin (FNAO)

This section applies to District Councils with a point of entry, checks undertaken at ERTS, and deferred examinations under The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006.

The advice in this section also applies to composite products which contain a small amount of product of animal origin and which are outside the Veterinary Checks regime covered by Directive 97/78/EC.

A.14.14.1: Identification

It is important that District Councils with a point of entry are aware of the volume and nature of foods entering the port. District Councils overseeing seaports where enquiries with the port operator indicate that food is imported should check 100% of ships' manifests for imported food. 100% checks should continue until enquiries with the port operator reveal no food imports for a continuous period of three months, and further food imports are not reasonably foreseeable. Thereafter contact should be made with the port operator at least once every three months to check the status of food imports.

District Councils overseeing airports or ERTS should set up, implement and maintain documented procedures on the arrangements in place to identify imported food.

This might include:

- Liaison with HMRC regarding food imported directly from third countries or via other Member States or ports under T1 arrangements (see glossary);
- Liaison with transit shed operators to obtain copies of cargo manifests;
- Random checks of transit sheds/ERTS handling imported food with a view to verifying the information arrangements in place;
- Informal notification systems in co-operation with importers or their agents.

A.14.14.2: Prohibition

It is an offence under Regulation 27 of The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 for any person to import a product that does not comply with the food safety requirements set out in the EU Food Law Regulation (178/2002) or with the requirements of Articles 3 to 6 of EU Hygiene of Foodstuffs Regulation (852/2004). This prohibition applies to products being imported either direct from a third country or from a third country through another EU Member State.

A.14.14.3: Examination

Imported food should be subjected to risk based checks. EU Regulation 882/2004 requires systematic documentary checks, random identity checks and where appropriate physical checks. A systematic documentary check does not imply 100% checking of commercial documents but there should be risk based planned arrangements in place. However, documents required to accompany any consignment by food law, such as under Emergency Control Decisions, are likely to require 100% checking. Physical checks might include: checks on the food itself, checks on the means of transport, checks on the packaging, checks on the temperature controls, organoleptic testing, and chemical or microbiological examination, or any other check necessary to verify compliance with EU food safety requirements. Such checks may also take into account any guarantees that the Competent Authority of the third country has given and which have been assessed by the Commission. The arrangements and follow up actions should be set out in relevant service policies and procedures.

Physical checks should be carried out under appropriate conditions inclusive of standards of hygiene and at a place with access to appropriate control facilities allowing investigations to be conducted properly. Samples should be handled in such a way as to guarantee both their legal and analytical validity.

Where an authorised officer reasonably requires facilities and assistance to carry out checks on a product, the importer may be asked to provide these. The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 also allow an authorised officer to require that physical checks and identity checks take place at a specified place, where necessary for proper examination.

Checks should be informed by:

- Statutory requirements for documentary checks and associated sampling laid down in relevant Emergency Control Decisions and Emergency Control Regulations,
- The risk associated with different types of food safety issues,
- Knowledge of the product e.g. new or unusual,
- Any requirements following a Food Alert or RASFF notification,
- The history of compliance for the product, country of origin and exporter/importer,
- The controls that the food business importing the food has carried out,
- Any guarantees that the Competent Authority of the third country of origin has given under the third country pre-export checks provisions in EU Regulation 882/2004 (details under Section A14.15 below),
- Any existing co-ordinated programmes e.g. at the request of or under the direction of other food control/advisory bodies,
- Adequacy or sufficiency of documentation e.g. discrepancies which need further investigation, and
- Suspicion of non-compliance.

Checks may also be influenced by information received from inland Councils regarding non-compliant food or from other control authorities or the port operator who may have concerns about a consignment.

Checks on imported food should also take into account any guidance issued by the Food Standards Agency. Such guidance may cover foods for which specific documentary checking regimes have been laid down or foods with restricted points of entry and/or testing regimes laid down in Commission Decisions or Regulations. District Councils with points of entry which are not designated to handle certain FNAO products subject to Emergency Control Decisions may wish to ensure relevant port operators, local HMRC, or agents/importers are aware of any restrictions. Arrangements should also be in place to deal with any such consignments which may arrive at the point of entry.

Officers should give the owner, importer or importer's agent a receipt for, or a record of, all samples taken and a copy of the results in the case of non-compliance.

District Councils with points of entry or ERTS should aim to establish effective holding arrangements in liaison with local stakeholders such as transit shed operators or dock companies, to ensure that consignments for which they are seeking additional information cannot be removed from the port or ERTS.

A.14.14.4: Deferred examinations of FNAO

The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 allow for the examination of consignments of FNAO to be deferred and undertaken by the District Council covering the ERTS or at any other place of destination in the UK. Deferred examinations may be considered where the District Council at the point of entry has a valid reason why an examination needs to be deferred, but it is anticipated this is likely to be in exceptional circumstances only.

Either the District Council covering the point of entry or the importer can request deferred examination. However, the final decision on whether to defer examination rests with the District Council covering the point of entry. In coming to any decision liaison with the receiving council should be carried out to ensure that appropriate checks will take place and deferral should therefore be based on full co-operation and agreement between councils.

Where products are subject to Emergency Control Decisions or Emergency Control Regulation measures which require designated points of entry, deferred examination is unlikely to be appropriate but there may be circumstances where there are overriding health and safety considerations. In such cases FSANI should be informed. In all cases high risk food should be subject to relevant document and identity checks before being deferred for physical checks.

When any examination is deferred, the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 require that the importer should provide a written undertaking that the consignment has been sealed and will not be opened until it reaches its specified destination and opening has been authorised by the receiving Council. The District Council at the point of entry should notify the receiving Council by the most expeditious means available that the food has not been examined and forward to the authority a copy of any written undertaking given by the importer.

Deferred examinations under The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 should be carried out in accordance with Regulation 26 of the Regulations - only an outline has been provided in paragraphs 14.15 to 14.18.

A.14.15: Third Country Pre-Export Checks

EU Regulation 882/2004 includes provisions for the Commission to grant third countries reduced import checks on imported FNAO. Such arrangements will be restricted to those countries where the Commission is satisfied that effective official controls are in place to carry out the appropriate pre-export checks immediately prior to export to the EU. Details of relevant products and third countries will be notified to District Councils, as appropriate.

This status can be repealed by the Commission in the light of information or experience. Where such arrangements are in place District Councils at points of entry should check relevant certification and consignments to validate such assurances. Particular consideration should be given to consignments accompanied by certification from non-accredited laboratories. Where councils have concerns relating to any such arrangements based on checks carried out they should notify FSANI.

A.14.16: Charges

EU Regulation 882/2004 provides that mandatory fees may be introduced for 'high risk' FNAO imports by means of implementing rules when these products are identified at Community level. This is dependent on the Commission putting forward proposals.

Commission Emergency Control Decisions may in some cases provide for charges. Commission Decision 2005/85/EC, on the import of pistachios from Iran, allows for charging for certain provisions relating to Iranian pistachio nuts. Commission Decision 2005/402/EC, on measures regarding chilli, chilli products, curcuma and palm oil, allows for recovery of costs for certain provisions relating to these products.

A.14.17: Enforcement

Where, for the purpose of examination at points of entry, or deferred examination at ERTS, or other place of destination, an authorised officer considers that a consignment needs to be inspected to confirm compliance,

Article 18 of EU Regulation 882/2004 and Regulation 29 of the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 allow the product to be detained pending the results of any examination associated with the official controls.

Where an authorised officer has detained a food consignment pending any results of examination, they should notify in writing the person importing the food or any person in possession of the food who is entitled to be in possession of it. The notification should specify that the food should not be removed from the place stated, until the officer's examination of the food has been completed. The person on whom any notification is given should be informed in writing by the authorised officer.

Article 18 of EU Regulation 882/2004 and Regulation 29 of the Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006 do not specify a time limit for examination and investigation of consignments. They give an option of whether to detain or not, if non-compliance is suspected. However, such examinations, and/or detention periods, should be expedited as quickly as practicable such as to avoid unreasonable disruption to the trade.

Where samples are submitted for analysis or examination, and the consignment is detained pending the results, District Councils should inform the analyst or examiner of that fact and also ensure that the consignment is stored appropriately and securely. The importer or the importer's agent should be informed of the analysis/examination results as soon as possible.

If it appears to an authorised officer upon inspection or examination of food, that a batch, lot or consignment of food fails to comply with food safety requirements (Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 Article 6 as amended), Regulation 30 of The Official Feed and Food Controls (NI) Regulations 2006 allows, after having heard from the importer, for the officer to serve a Notice requiring:

- Destruction of the relevant batch, lot or consignment
- The food be subjected to special treatment
- Re-dispatch of the food outside the European Community
- Another use of the food for purposes other than those for which they were originally intended

In practice, the options specified in the Notice should be drawn up after appropriate consultation with the person importing the food. The person on whom any Notice is served should be informed in writing by the authorised officer of any relevant appeal provisions at the time that the Notice is served. The Notice served should allow 60 days for a decision by the responsible person. Where the official control allows for re-dispatch, if after a 60 day period re-dispatch does not take place, the consignment should be destroyed, unless delay is justified.

Regulation 34 of The Official Feed and Food Controls (NI) Regulations 2006 allows for costs associated with such action to be recovered from the person responsible for the consignment.

Special treatment may include such treatment or processing to ensure the food complies with EU requirements, or the requirements of the third country to where it is to be re-dispatched. Special treatment may also include processing for purposes other than human or animal consumption. Where special treatment is permitted liaison should take place with any other relevant enforcement authority or organisation to ensure the necessary processing has been carried out. This process may also be used where a non-conforming product is being imported specifically for the purpose of undergoing treatment to comply with EU law.

A consignment should only be re-dispatched outside the EU where the importer has agreed to the proposed destination and has informed the Competent Authority for the third country why it has been rejected for import into the EU. Where the consignment is being re-dispatched to a country other than that of origin, the Competent Authority for the country of destination should provide notification to the Competent Authority controlling the product that it is willing to accept the consignment. The consignment should be officially detained pending re-dispatch.

Any decision on the approval of alternative usage of rejected goods should be informed by any relevant guidance issued by the EU or the Food Standards Agency on the appropriateness of alternative use or re-exportation.

Where official controls indicate that a consignment is injurious to health or unsafe, the consignment should be detained until it is either destroyed or undergoes appropriate measures to protect health.

Where there is no evidence to suggest that a deliberate attempt has been made to import non compliant goods, and adequate control arrangements are in place, ports may consider Voluntary Surrender as an option for dealing with such consignments. In accordance with Food Law Code of Practice, where food is voluntarily surrendered for destruction, a receipt should be issued and the description of the food should include the phrase "voluntarily surrendered for destruction" with the person surrendering the food or their representative signing the receipt.

Imported food failing food safety requirements may also be subjected to Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 provisions to ensure appropriate action is taken. Such provisions include detention and seizure powers, applied in accordance with the Code of Practice.

Officers should have regard to The Official Feed and Food Controls Regulations (NI) 2006, The Contaminants in Food Regulations (NI) 2004 (as amended) and any relevant Emergency Control Regulations, which may provide for specific detention powers and notice provisions in relation to certain foods. Any designated port should have adequate facilities to ensure products can be sampled effectively, hygienically and under appropriate conditions.

Arrangements should be in place to ensure that detained or seized FNAO is stored appropriately, particularly to avoid cross contamination of other goods. Food which is to be destroyed or disposed of should be dealt with so as to ensure that there is no possibility of it re-entering the food chain e.g. deep burial at an approved waste disposal site. Copies of waste disposal notes should be kept on file.

A.14.18: Products of Animal Origin - Enforcement

A.14.18.1: Illegally introduced POAO

POAO should be imported in accordance with the Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) Regulations (NI) 2004 as amended. These require that POAO are imported through a designated Border Inspection Post (BIP) and are subject to veterinary checks. A Common Veterinary Entry Document (CVED)¹² is issued for consignments which pass the veterinary checks and this should accompany the consignment to the first premises after import, where it should be retained for a period of one year. POAO are considered to be illegally introduced (smuggled) where they have not been presented at the BIP of entry, for clearance.

HMRC became responsible in Great Britain in April 2003 for detecting smuggled POAO in Customs controlled areas including ERTS. However, in NI responsibility has not transferred and remains with DARD. District Councils still have responsibilities relating to POAO e.g. fish presented at Border Inspection Posts and also inland where officers come across illegal POAO in the course of their routine enforcement activities. DARD is responsible for illegal POAO found at premises under their control. The Food Standards Agency has also produced Enforcement Guidance on Illegal Meat for Enforcement Officers¹³.

All District Councils should set up, implement and maintain arrangements to effectively deal with illegally introduced POAO. Due to the nature of the enforcement activity which might require prompt action, officers should be properly authorised, template notices should be available, and effective mechanisms for any likely sampling or examination should be in place. Consideration should be given to necessary arrangements for the transport, storage, facilities and the necessary control arrangement for the destruction of POAO by high temperature incineration.

Where illegal imports of POAO are found inland in an area/premises outside customs control, the District Council has responsibility for the enforcement action. Where an authorised officer is satisfied that a POAO has been illegally introduced, they should serve a notice under Regulation 24 of the POAO (Third Country Imports) Regulations (NI) 2004 on the person having charge of any consignment or product. An authorised officer should by such notice, take charge of the consignment or product and either:

- Have it re-dispatched, by the mode of transport by which it was first introduced into the EU, to a destination in a third country within sixty days; or
- Have it re-dispatched for rendering or incineration in accordance with relevant animal by-products legislation.

Although the final decision rests with the enforcing authority, in most circumstances it is unlikely to be appropriate or practical to re-dispatch the products. If re-dispatch was appropriate this would need to be carried out through the relevant importer and subject to appropriate control.

A.14.18.2: POAO presenting a risk to public or animal health

Where an authorised officer, either at a port of entry or inland, considers that a consignment or product from a third country presents a risk to animal or public health, they should serve a notice under Regulation 25 of the POAO (Third Country Imports) Regulations (NI) 2004 (as amended) on the person having charge of the consignment or product. The product should then be destroyed without undue delay in accordance with relevant animal by-products legislation.

A.14.18.3: Detention of POAO inland

Where an officer wishes to detain any POAO inland in order to investigate further to establish its safety or compliance, voluntary co-operation could be sought in the first instance. In situations where this is not possible or is inappropriate due to risk, there is a provision under Regulation 8 of the POAO (Third Country Imports) Regulations (NI) 2004 (as amended) for an authorised officer to serve a notice on the person having charge of the consignment to detain the product until such a time any further notice allows the product to be removed. In order to use this provision a sample should be taken, however the sample does not have to be submitted to a Public Analyst/Food Examiner.

Where Third Country POAO has been imported correctly through a BIP in another Member State, but is found to be non-conforming, for example, it is not marked with the approval number of the establishment of origin, as opposed to being deliberately smuggled, provisions under the Products of Animal Origin (Import and Export) Regulations (NI) 1998 (as amended) may be used. Part III of these Regulations applies to intra-community trade and includes goods, which originate in a third country but have received full clearance in a Member State i.e. they are in free circulation. Regulation 15 covers consignments posing a risk to health or illegal consignments. Under 15(2), where an authorised officer has reasonable grounds for believing that any POAO does not comply with animal or public health conditions relating to import into Northern Ireland or the European Community, a Notice may be served to prohibit the movement of the consignment. Regulation 15(2) provides that a notice should then be served ordering the destruction of the goods, or public and animal health considerations permitting, use of the goods

for other purposes as may be specified in the notice, including returning them (with the authorisation of the Competent Authority of the country of origin) to their country of origin. If the consignment fails to comply with legislation due to an irregularity in documentation only, the notice shall grant the consignor a period of seven days to produce the correct documentation before action is taken (Regulation 15 (3)).

A.14.18.4: Reporting

District Councils should make a notification to DEFRA's Illegal Imports via DARD when illegally imported POAO is seized. In particular, this will include any instances where a Notice is served under Regulation 24 of the Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) Regulations (NI) 2004 as amended.

A.14.19: References

imported.food@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 020 7276 8018

This guidance can be found on the Agency's website www.food.gov.uk

¹ For information and guidance on international trade in animal products see DEFRA's website www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/int-trde

² FSANI Imported Food Control Resource Pack (available on the Agency's website at:
http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/imports/enforce_authorities/resourcepack

³ Benchmarking the Port Health Function, The Syniad Benchmarking Centre (martin.goodman@wlga.gov.uk)
http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/imports/enforce_authorities/benchmarking

⁴ www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/frameagree

⁵ Local Authority Delegated Powers, Authorisation of Officers and Use of Credentials, LACORS.

⁶ Imported Food Unit – Tel. 028 9041 7705, email

andrea.mccloskey@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

⁷ General Food Hygiene and Incidents Unit – Tel. 028 9041 7713, fax 028 9041 7728email

trevor.williamson@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk or
kathryn.baker@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

⁸ www.forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/sanco/Home/main

⁹ www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/worddocs/referralsproforma.doc

¹⁰ www.food.gov.uk/imports

¹¹ www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/foodstuff_controls.pdf

¹² This document was introduced on 1 March 2004 and is standardised throughout EU Member States. The predecessor of the CVED was the Certificate of Veterinary Checks (CVC).

¹³ Food Standards Agency Illegal Meat. Enforcement Guidance for Local Authority officers in England July 2004. This can be found at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/meatregsguid/illegalmeatguidance>

¹⁴ The BIP Manual. Published by DEFRA. Available at:
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/int-trde/prod-im/bipmanual.pdf>

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

BIP	EU Border Inspection Post situated at a seaport or airport– designated point of entry for products of animal origin from third countries.
CITES	Convention on International trade in Endangered Species, enforced by DARD.
Consignment	Consignments can consist of one type of product, or a number of different types of products, which is covered by the same health certificate and/or airway bill or bill of lading. See also legal definition in POAO Regs.
ERTS	Enhanced Remote Transit Shed. Customs approved warehouse facilities where imported goods are held in temporary storage under Customs control. They are intended to facilitate entry of goods for Customs purposes and may be some distance from the seaport or airport, so may therefore fall under the jurisdiction of another District Council. May be referred to as “temporary storage facilities”.
High risk FNAO	Products subject to special import conditions / emergency controls. These are laid down in specific Community and domestic legislation concerning individual products/groups of products and/or countries of origin.
Manifest	Document/computer file describing all cargo carried on a ship, cargo train or aircraft.
PHA	Port Health Authority. These are specially constituted Local Authorities with a remit of administering a range of environmental health functions in docks/seaports.
T1 arrangements	A transit declaration made to HM Revenue & Customs. T1 signifies that the goods are not in Free Circulation i.e. they are still subject to Customs control.