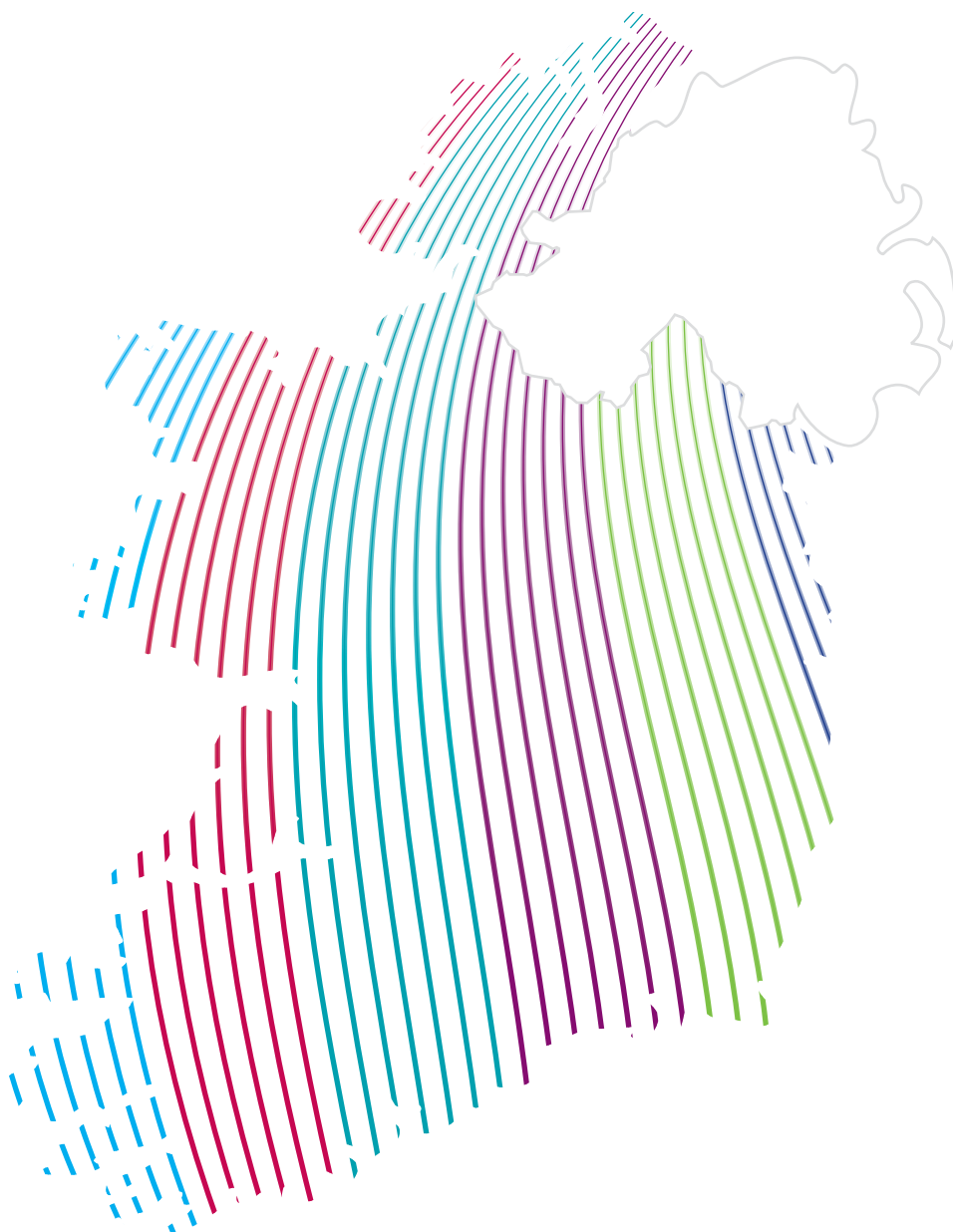
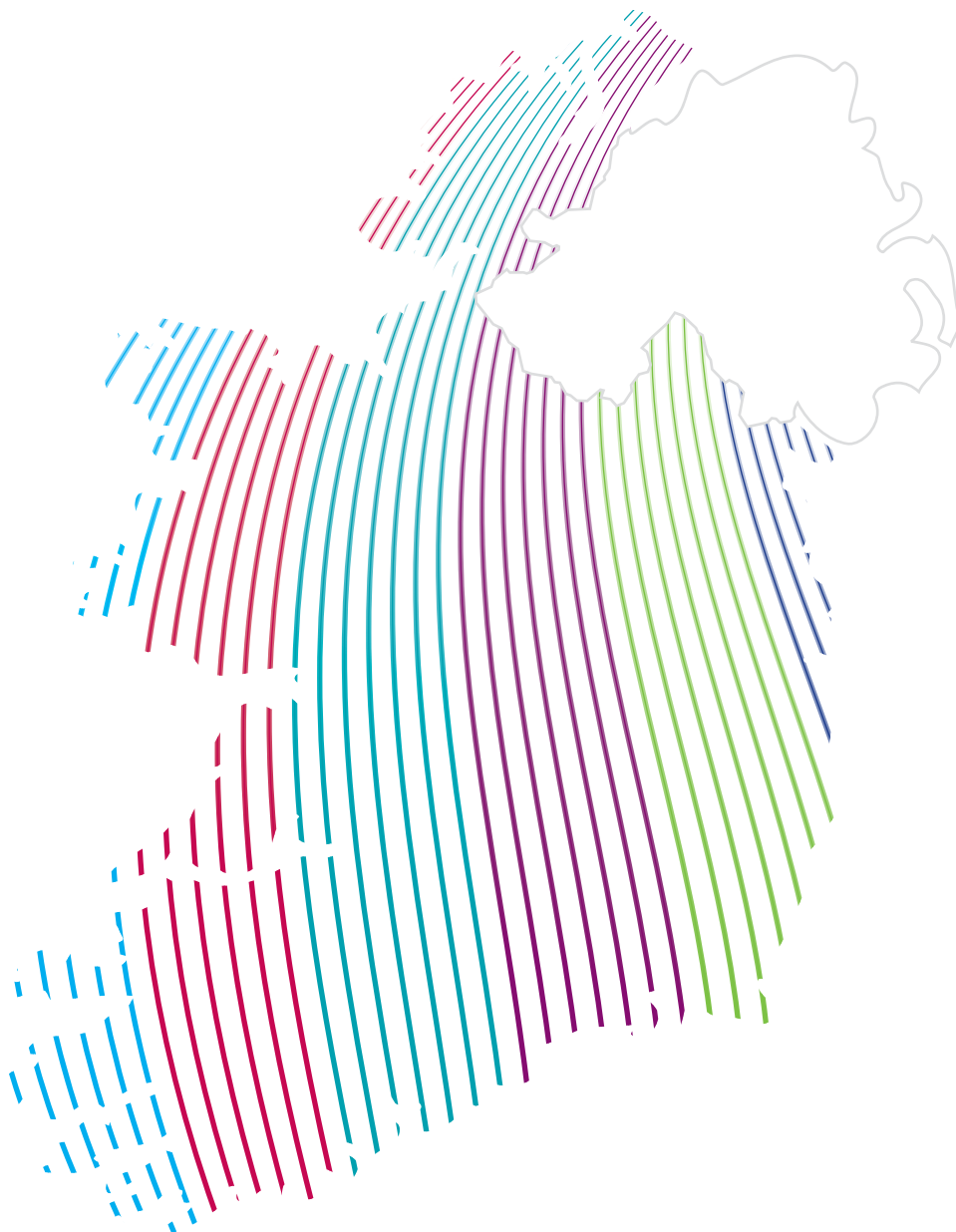

THE NATIONAL CONTROL PLAN FOR IRELAND

for the period from 1st January 2012 to 31st December 2016





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GLOSSARY

AFCG	Animal Feedingstuffs Control Group	LAVS	Local Authority Veterinary Service
AFIT	Agriculture Field Inspection & Test	MANCP	Multi-Annual National Control Plan
AlAU	Agriculture Internal Audit Unit	MEFS	Marine Environment & Food Safety Services
ASG	Assistant Secretary General	MI	Marine Institute
AI	Agricultural Inspector	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
BIM	An Bord Iascaigh Mhara	NCP	National Control Plan
BIP	Border Inspection Post	NEPNA	National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy	NRCP	National Residue Control Programme
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	NRL	National Reference Laboratory
COP	Code of Practice	NSAI	National Standards Authority of Ireland
CPPSD	Crop Policy, Production & Safety Division	OAPI	Official Agency Premises Inspections
CSSO	Chief State Solicitors Office	OC	Official Control
CVO	Chief Veterinary Officer	OFML	Official Food Microbiology Laboratory
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	PAL	Public Analysts' Laboratory
DoH	Department of Health	PEHO	Principal Environmental Health Officer
DCVO	Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer	PHL	Plant Health Laboratory
DPI	Dairy Produce Inspectorate	PHMS	Public Health Medical Service
EC	European Communities	PMDS	Performance Management Development System
EHO	Environmental Health Officer	PO	Principal Officer
EHS	Environmental Health Service	POAO	Products of Animal Origin
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	PONAO	Products of Non-Animal Origin
EU	European Union	QMS	Quality Management System
EURL	European Reference Laboratory	RPII	Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland
FD	Forestry Division	RVL	Regional Veterinary Laboratory
FOI	Freedom of Information	SAO	Supervisory Agricultural Officers
FSAI	Food Safety Authority of Ireland	SEHO	Senior Environmental Health Officer
FSLS	Food Safety Laboratory Service	SFPO	Sea-Fisheries Protection Officer
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office	SFPA	Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority
GMOs	Genetically modified organisms	SI	Statutory Instrument
HPHD	Horticulture and Plant Health Division	SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
HSE	Health Service Executive	SRM	Specified Risk Material
HVL	Head of Veterinary Laboratories	SSRO	Senior Superintending Research Officer
IAU	Internal Audit Unit	SSVI	Senior Superintending Veterinary Inspector
ICD	Integrated Controls Division	STL	Seed Testing Laboratory
INAB	Irish National Accreditation Board	SVI	Superintending Veterinary Inspector
ISO	International Standards Organisation	TSE	Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy
IT	Information Technology	VPHI	Veterinary Public Health Inspectorate
LAVO	Local Authority Veterinary Officer	VPN	Veterinary Practice Note

SECTION 1:

THE NATIONAL CONTROL PLAN FOR IRELAND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The single integrated multi-annual national control plan, hereafter referred to as the National Control Plan (NCP), presented by Ireland for the period from 1st January 2012 to 31st December 2016.

The NCP for Ireland has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. The NCP contains general information on the structure and organisation of the systems of controls for food, feed, plant health, animal health and animal welfare in Ireland.

The NCP has been prepared jointly by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).

During the lifetime of the plan, delivery of the objectives will be monitored and the plan kept under review and updated as appropriate (see Section 6.1). Annual progress reports on implementation, as is required by Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, will be provided to the European Commission.

1.2 CONTACT POINT FOR COMMUNICATION REGARDING IRELAND'S NATIONAL CONTROL PLAN

All enquiries regarding the NCP for Ireland should be directed to:

Contact point: Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Address: Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1.
Email address: fvo@fsai.ie
Telephone: +353-1-8171300
Fax: +353-1-8171301

Enquires will then be forwarded to the appropriate Government departments and competent authorities.

1.3 NATIONAL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the National Control Plan for Ireland are in line with those established in Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. The primary objectives are to ensure feed and food are safe and wholesome and to protect consumers' interests, this is achieved through:

1. Ensuring that food and feed business operators fulfil their primary legal responsibility to ensure food and feed safety
2. The enforcement of food and feed law, animal health and animal welfare rules and plant health rules
3. The organisation of official controls to monitor and verify that the relevant legislative requirements are fulfilled by food and feed business operators at all stages of production, processing and distribution.
4. The co-ordination of official controls, to ensure effective and efficient implementation at national, regional and local level official controls are carried out regularly, on a risk basis and with appropriate frequency, impartiality, quality and consistency of official controls activities are carried out to a high level of transparency

The approach taken in Ireland is to foster a culture of compliance through the use of risk-based controls which protect: public, animal and plant health, and consumer interests without imposing unnecessary burdens on the authorities that are responsible for undertaking official controls or on the food and feed business operators that are subject to these controls.

1.4 COMPETENT AUTHORITIES INVOLVED IN THE NATIONAL CONTROL PLAN FOR IRELAND

There are two Government departments responsible for developing policy and legislation in relation to the NCP. They are the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and the Department of Health (DOH).

The organisation and execution of official controls are undertaken by a number of competent authorities (see Table 1).

TABLE 1: COMPETENT AUTHORITIES INVOLVED IN THE NATIONAL CONTROL PLAN

Sector	Government Department(s) Responsible for Policy and Legislation	Competent Authorities Responsible for Official Controls
Food	Department of Health Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Food Safety Authority of Ireland Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Health Service Executive Local authorities Sea Fisheries Protection Authority Marine Institute National Standards Authority of Ireland
Feed	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Plant Health	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Animal Health and Welfare	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Marine Institute Local authorities

SECTION 2:

THE NATIONAL CONTROL SYSTEM FOR FOOD

2.1 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR FOOD

The specific objectives for Ireland in relation to food are to:

1. Achieve compliance with food legislation and standards
2. Ensure the co-ordinated and consistent enforcement of food legislation
3. Ensure delivery of an effective and efficient food safety control system
4. Contribute to EU harmonisation of food safety rules

2.2 COMPETENT AUTHORITIES FOR FOOD

2.2.1 GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR FOOD POLICY AND LEGISLATION DEVELOPMENT

Two Government departments are responsible for developing food policy and food legislation in Ireland as outlined in Table 1:

1. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
2. Department of Health

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine is responsible for the development of policy, the negotiation of rules at European Community level and implementation in national law of those rules, for:

Primary production of food:

1. Slaughter, cutting, preparation and processing of foods of animal origin, including fish, up to but not including, retail level
2. Import of food of animal origin and certain foods of non-animal origin control and pesticide residues controls on imported foods of plant origin
3. Controls on foods certified as having protected geographical indication (PGI), protected designation of origin (PDO) and/or traditional specialities guaranteed (TSG)
4. Pesticide residues
5. Organics
6. Food contact materials

The Minister for Health is responsible for the development of policy, the negotiation of rules at European Community level and implementation in national law of those rules for any stage of production, processing or distribution of:

1. Food of non-animal origin
2. Food of animal origin sold directly to the final consumer
3. Food of animal origin exempt from Regulation 853/2004
4. Composite products
5. The import or export of foods of non-animal origin or composite products

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) provides support to the Government departments in its role of formulation of food policy and legislation.

DAFM and DOH designate competent authorities in national legislation or through administrative procedures.

2.2.2 FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND



The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) is the competent authority with overall responsibility for the enforcement of food legislation in Ireland.

The FSAI was established through the [FSAI Act 1998](#) and acts as an independent food regulatory authority. The mission statement of the FSAI is developed from the FSAI Act, 1998 and is as follows:

‘to protect peoples’ health and peoples’ interests by ensuring that food consumed and produced in the State meets the highest standards of food safety reasonably achievable and that people have accurate and worthwhile information about the nature of the foods they eat’.

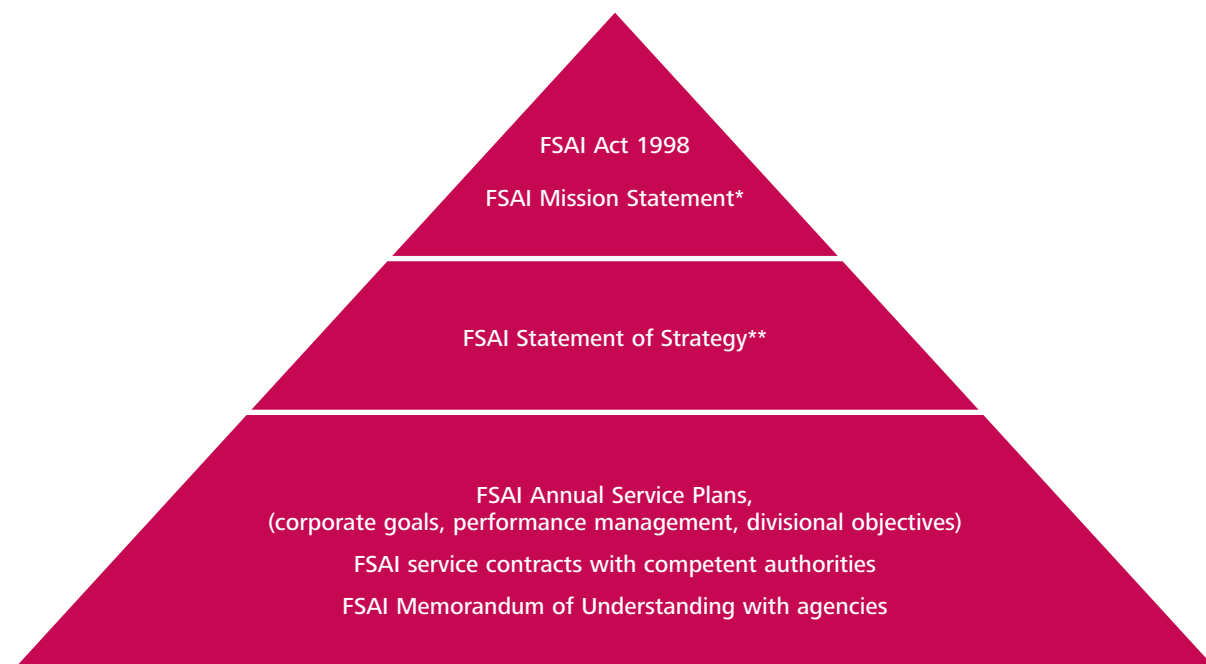
The Department of Health is the parent department of the FSAI.

The specific objectives for Ireland in relation to food (as listed in Section 2.1) are developed from the FSAI’s mission statement. These objectives are in line with the [FSAI Statement of Strategy 2012-2015](#) and the FSAI corporate goals. These objectives are implemented through an annual service plan developed by the FSAI (Figure 1). This plan establishes key corporate goals for the forthcoming year together with allocated performance indicators and measurable outputs for the FSAI.

The responsibility for enforcement of food legislation is managed through contractual arrangements (service contracts) between the FSAI and a number of competent authorities involved in the enforcement of food legislation (Figure 2).

Each competent authority provides the FSAI with an annual service plan which outlines how these objectives will be delivered in a given year.

FIGURE 1. MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR FOOD SAFETY



* To protect peoples’ health and peoples’ interests by ensuring that food consumed and produced in the State meets the highest standards of food safety reasonably achievable and that people have accurate and worthwhile information about the nature of the foods they eat.

** [Link to: Statement of Strategy 2012-2015](#)

The list of competent authorities involved in food law enforcement is provided in the Second Schedule of the FSAI Act 1998 (competent authorities are referred to as official agencies in the FSAI Act 1998). The FSAI has service contracts with the following competent authorities:

1. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
2. Health Service Executive
3. Local authorities
4. Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority
5. Marine Institute
6. National Standards Authority of Ireland

Each service contract is available on the FSAI website. Where appropriate, the official agencies have been confirmed as competent authorities in Clause 2 of their service contracts.

The aim of the service contracts is to ensure the:

- Effective and consistent enforcement of food law through a risk-based approach and
- Accountability of each competent authority in enforcing food legislation through a combination of:
 - Setting targets in agreed service contracts
 - Providing guidance on technical aspects of implementing official food controls
 - Monitoring the delivery of the service contracts
 - Analysing and reporting on data provided by competent authorities
 - Conducting audits of service delivery and ensuring that where necessary, corrective action is taken

Service contracts are drawn up in line with Section 48 of the FSAI Act, 1998. This ensures that the service contracts contain the objectives and targets for food control, the timeframe for delivery and other relevant matters and the resources committed by a competent authority to deliver the contract. Contracts also provide for the development of specific detailed control programmes. Each service contract has a number of schedules as follows:

- Schedule 1. A list of the legislation pertaining to food safety which the FSAI is responsible for enforcing is in the First Schedule of the FSAI Act 1998 (most recent amending Order). Enforcement is assigned to each of the competent authorities by the FSAI through Schedule 1 of the service contracts. Appendix 1 shows the categories of legislation in each of the Service Contracts. Schedule 1 is updated, as required, to take account of legislative changes
- Schedule 2 outlines the duties of the competent authority, with general requirements for the competent authority (inspectorates and laboratory services) and monitoring arrangements
- Schedule 3 details the resources the competent authority agree to commit to the service contract, generally specified in terms of staffing levels in the inspectorates and laboratories
- Schedule 4 outlines the reporting requirements for the competent authorities
- Schedule 5 outlines the arrangements for the auditing of the contract by the FSAI

In addition, there are a number of bodies which have a role in food safety controls but are not specifically involved in the enforcement of food legislation.

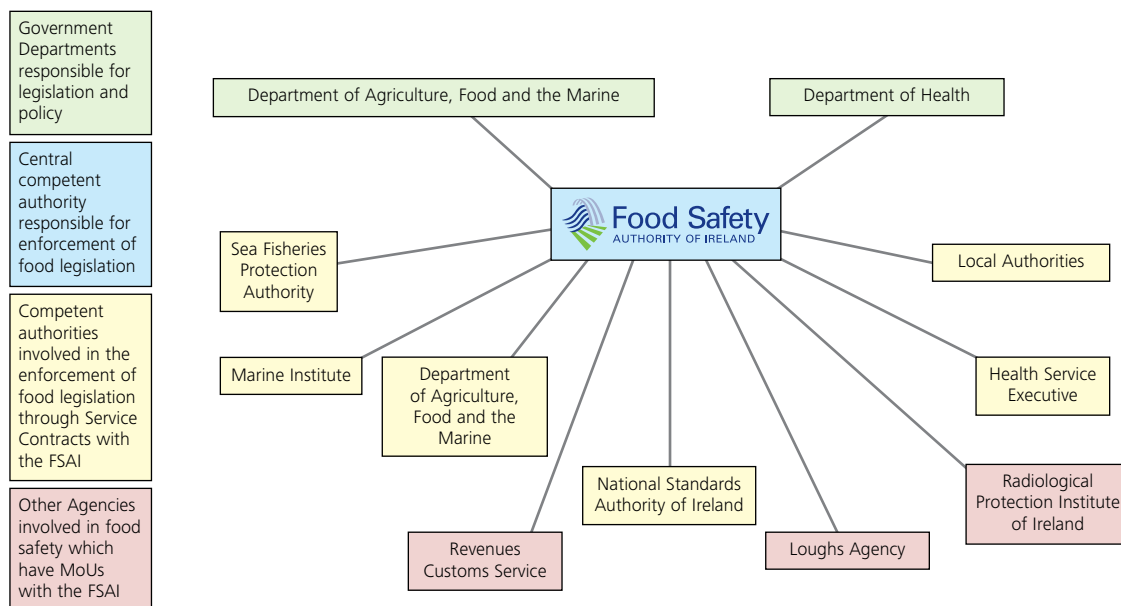
The FSAI has a Memorandum of Understanding with each of these bodies, i.e.

1. [Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland](#)
2. [Revenue's Customs Service](#)
3. [Loughs Agency](#)

THE NATIONAL CONTROL PLAN FOR IRELAND
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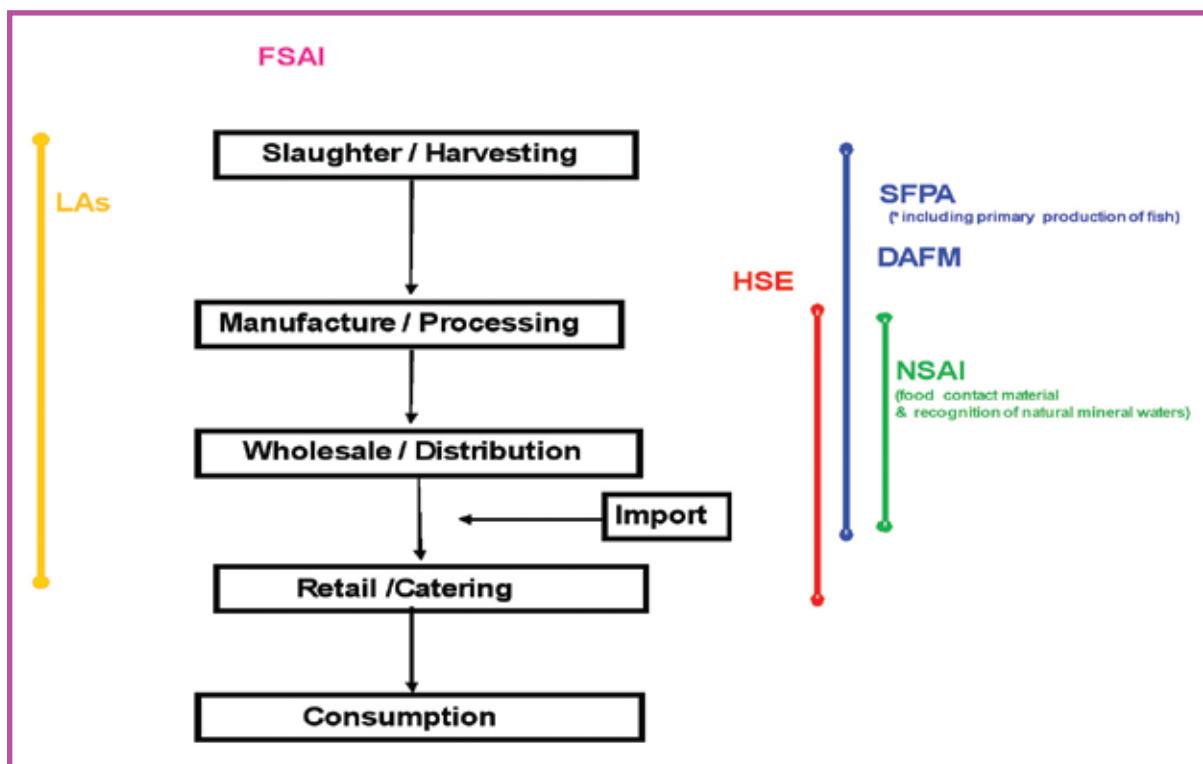
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FIGURE 2. GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, COMPETENT AUTHORITIES AND OTHER AGENCIES INVOLVED IN OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOOD



Each of these agencies is responsible for certain stages in the food chain, specific categories of establishments and for particular types of food. Figure 3 broadly represents the stages in the food chain that the competent authorities have responsibility for.

FIGURE 3. STAGES IN THE FOOD CHAIN AND THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES INVOLVED IN OFFICIAL CONTROLS



* The remit of the FSAI excludes primary production, except in the case of fish.

The FSAI and competent authorities involved in food law enforcement aim to have, where possible, a single inspectorate involved in official controls in each food business. The FSAI hosts a cross-agency working group which deals with supervisory arrangements to ensure that there are no gaps in food law enforcement and to minimise overlaps in enforcement. The core principle of the supervisory group is that dual supervision of food businesses is avoided where possible. In general, national legislation defines the competent authority responsible for the supervision of the business. However, for business categories not defined, the cross-agency working group develops guidance for determining the appropriate competent authority. For the most part, the following supervisory arrangements apply:

1. Products of Animal Origin

DAFM is responsible for official controls on certain products of animal origin, e.g. meat, milk, eggs, from primary production, through slaughter, processing, wholesale and distribution. DAFM is also responsible for official controls on imports from third countries of products of animal origin at border inspection posts (BIPs).

Official controls in slaughterhouses, meat processing, wholesale and distribution establishments is dependent on throughput as defined in legislation implementing Regulation (EC) No 853/2004. In general, DAFM is responsible for controls in establishments with a high throughput and the local authorities are responsible for controls in establishments with a low throughput.

The Sea Fisheries Protection Agency (SFPA) is responsible for official controls on fish and shellfish from primary production, through harvesting, processing, wholesale and distribution. The SFPA provides assistance to DAFM for official controls on imports from third countries of fish and shellfish.

The Health Service Executive (HSE) is responsible for official controls on products of animal origin at retail level and some establishments processing composite products containing products of animal origin.

2. Products of Non-animal Origin

DAFM is responsible for official controls during primary production and harvesting of foods of plant origin.

The HSE is responsible for official controls on food products of non-animal origin at import, manufacturing, processing, wholesale, distribution and retail level. However, control of pesticide residues on imported foods of plant origin is a function of DAFM.

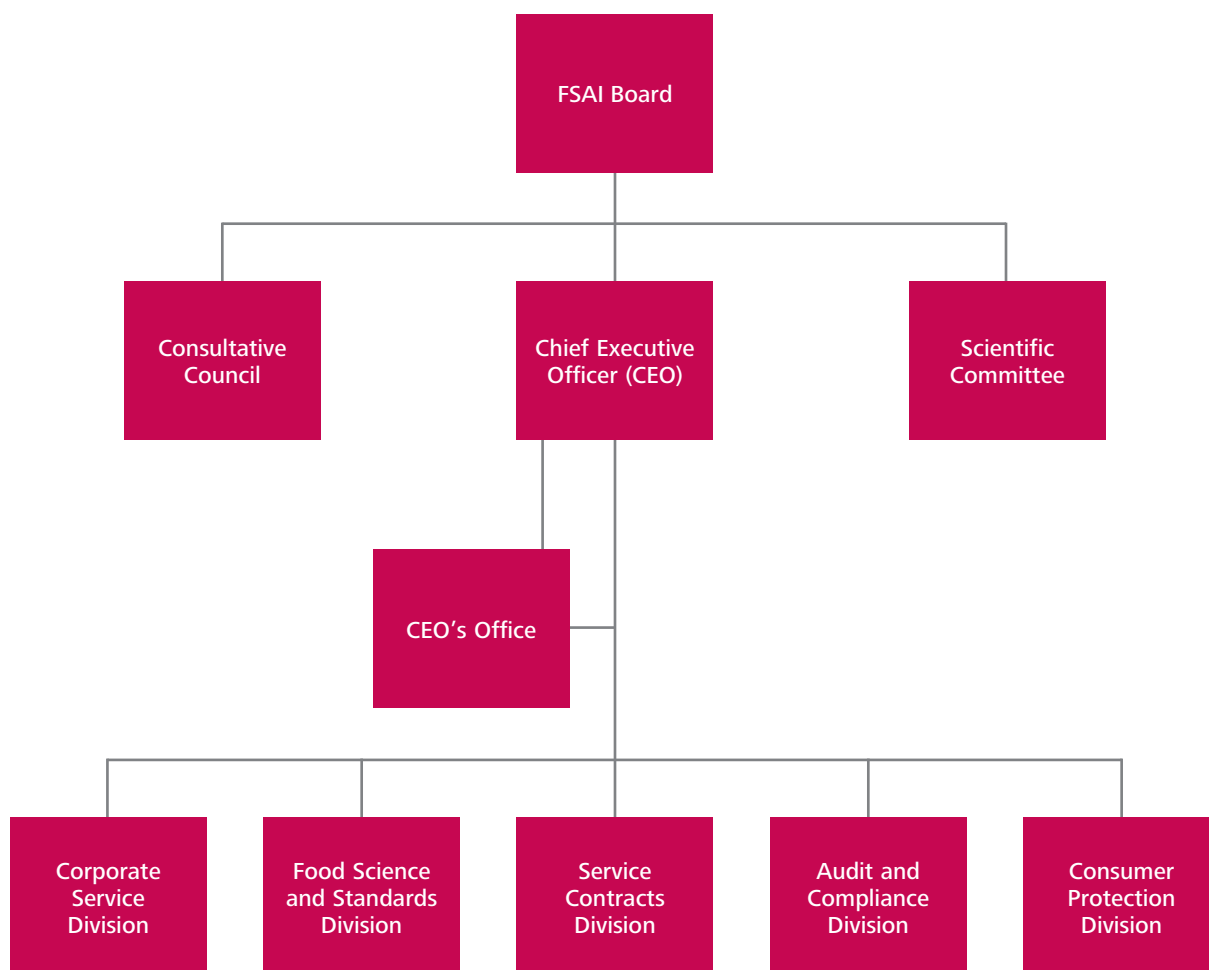
3. Composite Products

Establishments manufacturing composite products containing products of animal origin are currently supervised by one of a number of competent authorities, i.e. DAFM, the HSE, local authorities or the SFPA depending on the exact nature and volume of product. Supervision is based on activities in establishments and determined in accordance with an agreed supervisory criteria document and/or legislation implementing Regulation 853/2004.

2.2.2.1 Organisational structure of the FSAI

The FSAI is organised as follows: under the Board are the Scientific Committee, the Consultative Council and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Under the CEO are five divisions, these are the Food Science and Standards Division, Service Contracts Division, Consumer Protection Division, Audit and Compliance Division and the Corporate Services Division.

FIGURE 4. FSAI ORGANISATIONAL CHART



The Scientific Committee of the FSAI is composed of scientists from a range of disciplines working in a voluntary capacity. Their role is to assist and advise the FSAI Board on scientific matters. There are three Scientific Sub-committees; Biological Safety, Chemical Safety and Public Health Nutrition. These sub-committees are composed of experts who are charged with addressing specific scientific tasks.

The Food Safety Consultative Council is a constructive vehicle for consumers and industry to debate on food safety issues and provide input to the agenda of the FSAI. The Consultative Council advises the FSAI Board on specific issues, enabling the FSAI to discharge its function to consult widely for the purposes of promoting higher food safety standards and progressing the food safety agenda.

The Food Science and Standards Division provide a scientific base to support enforcement and compliance activities. The Service Contracts Division manages the relationship between the FSAI and the competent authorities involved in food controls. The Audit and Compliance Division provides an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the official control system and makes recommendations for continual improvement in all aspects of the food chain relevant to the remit of the FSAI. The division carries out audits to verify compliance with the requirements of Service Contracts, the relevant sections of MANCP and food legislation. Food business operators are audited to verify compliance with food law. The Consumer Protection Division provides technical support in the areas of Environmental Health, Public Health Nutrition, Veterinary Public Health and Agriculture and Training and Compliance. The FSAI Data Collection and Analysis team is part of the Consumer Protection Division. The Corporate Services Division provides corporate services (finance, human resources, information technology) to the FSAI. The CEO's office includes the Public Relations section of the FSAI.

2.2.2.2 FSAI scope of responsibility/FSAI activities

As outlined, the [FSAI Statement of Strategy \(2012-2015\)](#) the FSAI has four corporate goals, as follows:

Corporate Goal 1	Ensure the effective and consistent enforcement of food legislation
Corporate Goal 2	Provide the best independent scientific advice to underpin food safety policy and risk management decisions
Corporate Goal 3	Work in partnership with all stakeholders in the food chain to facilitate compliance with food law
Corporate Goal 4	Ensure that the FSAI is responsive, efficient and effective and delivers value for money

In achieving Corporate Goal 1, the key objectives for the FSAI are as follows:

Objective 1	To maintain effective service contracts with the official agencies for food law enforcement, with relevant performance measures and comprehensive and robust official control programmes.
Objective 2	To evaluate the performance of official agencies and to confirm that they comply with their contracts and official control legislation thereby providing a high level of protection of consumer's health and interests.
Objective 3	To improve the performance of official controls by offering technical and scientific support and training to official agencies.
Objective 4	To assess the co-ordination, effectiveness and consistency of the enforcement of food legislation with a view to identifying the scope for better delivery.
Objective 5	To verify compliance at food business operator level with legislation.

In addition to the objectives outlined above, the FSAI also has responsibility to:

1. Resolve supervisory arrangements
2. Organises monitoring and surveillance programmes
3. Compile and analyse data relating to establishments, inspections and samples
4. Issue permits for irradiation facilities to irradiate foodstuffs
5. Promote and contribute to the development of food quality assurance schemes
6. Carry out the initial assessment of novel foods
7. Undertake the initial assessment of genetically modified food applications
8. Process the notifications of new food supplements
9. Process the notification of foods for particular nutritional uses
10. Process the notification of foods for special medical purposes
11. Process the applications for evaluations of substances and processes for food contact materials

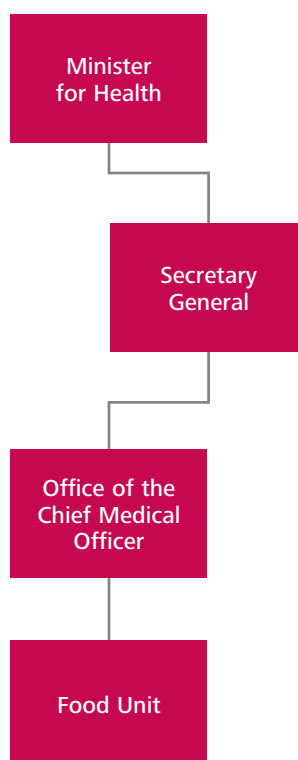
2.2.2.3 FSAI reporting and communication channels

The FSAI internal reporting arrangements are generally in line with the organisational structure outlined in Figure 4.

The FSAI reports to the Minister for Health*. The FSAI liaises with DOH with respect to legislation and policy matters through the Food Unit.

* Figure 5 outlines the organisation structure of DOH.

FIGURE 5. DOH ORGANISATIONAL CHART



The FSAI communicates with the competent authorities involved in food controls through regular liaison meetings. The FSAI has also established an extranet service called Safety Net, which allows for the sharing of information between competent authorities involved in food controls.

2.2.3 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND THE MARINE (DAFM)



In Ireland, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine is responsible for the development of policy, the negotiation of rules at European Community level and the implementation in national law of those rules for a number of food control areas as outlined in Section 2.2.1.

In addition, DAFM is the competent authority for the implementation of official controls in the following food control areas:

1. Primary production of food, excluding fish¹
2. Slaughter, cutting, preparation and processing of foods of animal origin², including fish, up to, but not including, retail level
3. Import of food of animal origin and certain foods of non-animal origin control and pesticide residues controls on imported foods of plant origin
4. Controls on foods certified as having protected geographical indication (PGI), protected designation of origin (PDO) and/or traditional specialities guaranteed (TSG)
5. Pesticide residues
6. Organics

¹ The SFPA is the competent authority for official controls of fish, shellfish and fishery products.

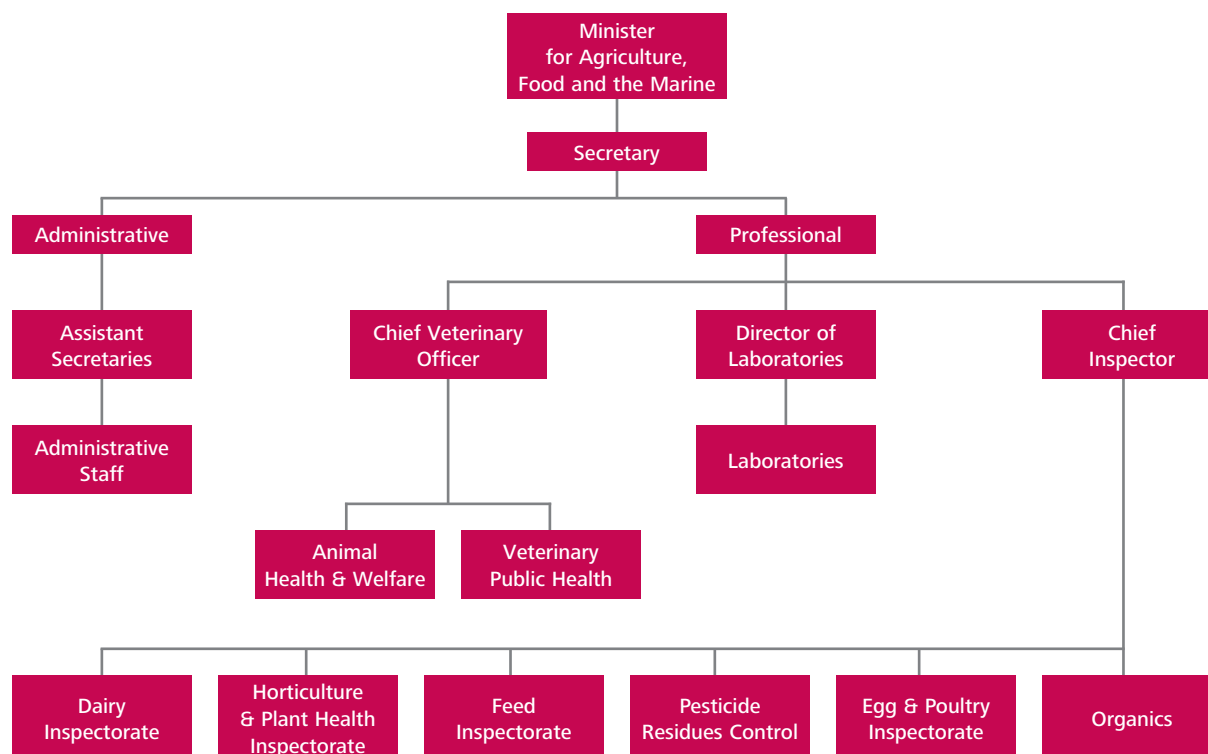
² Slaughter, cutting, preparation and processing of foods of animal origin in the smaller premises are under the official control of the local authorities (see Section 2.2.5).

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine is also the competent authority for:

1. Feed safety (see Section 3)
2. Animal health and welfare (see Section 4)
3. Plant health (see Section 5)

2.2.3.1 Organisational structure of DAFM

FIGURE 6. DAFM ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE IN RELATION TO OFFICIAL CONTROL



DAFM, under the Secretary General comprises seven Assistant Secretaries, the Chief Veterinary Officer the Chief Agricultural Inspector and the Director of Laboratories.

The following services are involved in food controls

1. Agricultural inspectorate
 - Dairy Controls and Certification Division
 - Egg and poultry inspectorate
 - Horticultural inspectorate
 - Organics Unit
 - Pesticide residues controls
2. State veterinary service
 - Veterinary public health inspectorate
 - Border inspection posts
3. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine laboratory service
4. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine administration

The strategic objectives of DAFM are outlined in [DAFM's Statement of Strategy 2011-2014](#). DAFM's corporate goals, strategies and performance indicators in relation to food and feed safety, animal health and welfare and plant health are outlined in this document.

DAFM uses a business model known as the Performance Management Development System (PMDS). This model has three key elements as follows:

Statement of Strategy, defining the goals and objectives of DAFM in relation to broader government policy and EU obligations

Business Plan - each division within DAFM must complete a business plan based on the objectives in the Statement of Strategy that are relevant to the work of that division. The business plan details the objectives of the division, the actions necessary to achieve these objectives, the performance indicators for each action, the prioritisation of the actions and the staff resources which are to be allocated to it. The business plan is drawn up annually by the management committee.

Role Profile - individual staff members must complete a role profile which identifies the work areas where they have responsibilities and sets targets relevant to these. The role profile also identifies the skills and qualifications which are necessary for their job and identifies training requirements, in the form of a training plan, which will help them to perform their duties better. These individual role profiles are agreed in consultation with line management.

2.2.3.1.1 DAFM inspectorate services

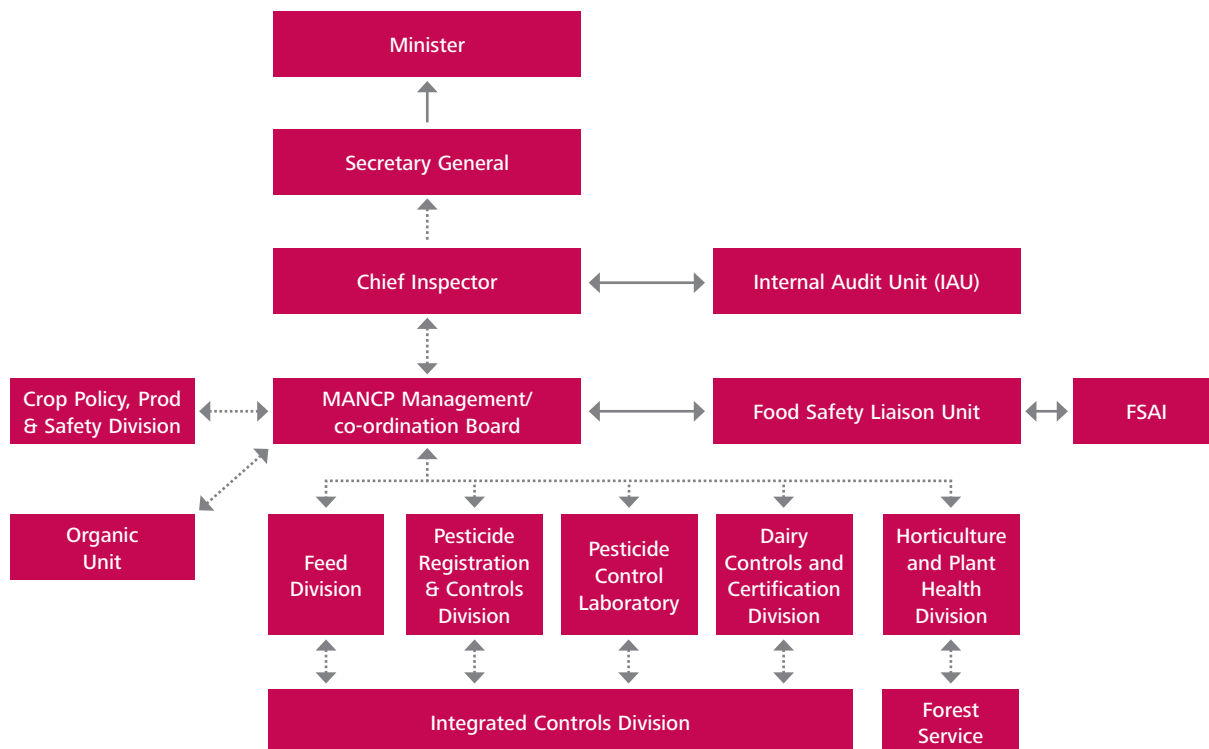
DAFM Chief Agricultural Inspector

The Chief Inspector of DAFM is responsible for the enforcement of food legislation in the following food sectors:

- Egg and poultry (egg and poultry marketing inspection staff (part of the Animal Feedingstuffs Division) and Meat Policy Division)
- Milk and milk products (Dairy Controls and Certification Division)
- Horticulture (Horticulture and Plant Health Division)
- Beekeeping products (Horticulture and Plant Health Division)
- Pesticide residue control (Pesticide Control Laboratory and Pesticide Registration and Controls Division)
- Organics

DAFM agricultural inspectorate

FIGURE 7. ORGANISATIONAL AND REPORTING STRUCTURE OF THE DAFM AGRICULTURAL INSPECTORATE



DAFM state veterinary service-inspectorate

The State Veterinary Service of DAFM advises the Minister on matters of:

- Animal health and disease
- Zoonoses
- Public health in so far as it relates to food and products of animal origin

The State Veterinary Service assists in the preparation, implementation and enforcement of EU and national legislation, implements control measures to protect the health of the animal and human populations, and provides certification for animals and animal products intended for export. The Chief Veterinary Officer and a management team are based in department headquarters in Agriculture House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.

FIGURE 8. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE STATE VETERINARY SERVICE – MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

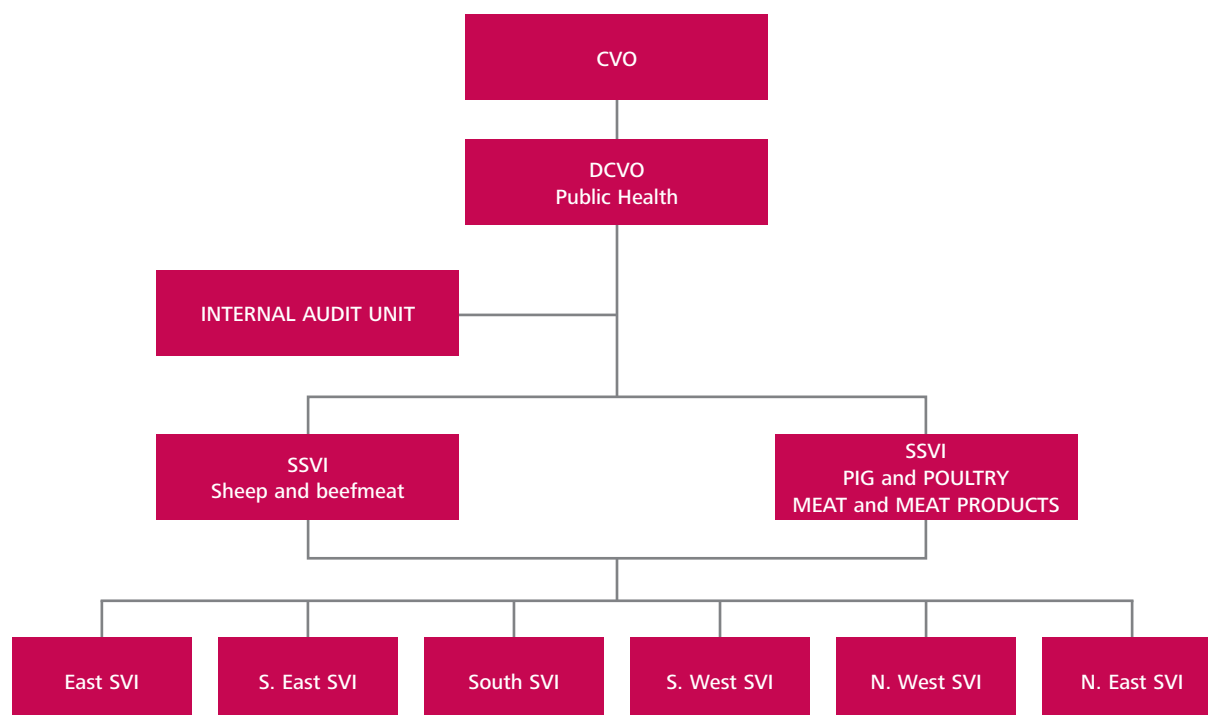


The organisational structure of the State Veterinary Service as it relates to animal health and welfare is described in Section 4.

Veterinary public health

There are six regional veterinary public health inspectorate regions (East, South East, South, South West, North West and North East) each under the supervision of a Superintending Veterinary Inspector.

FIGURE 9. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE STATE VETERINARY SERVICE – STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR VETERINARY PUBLIC HEALTH



2.2.3.1.2 DAFM laboratory services

DAFM primary laboratories are located in Backweston Campus, Young's Cross, Celbridge, Co. Kildare.

TABLE 2. THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND THE MARINE LABORATORY SERVICE: FOOD LABORATORIES

Veterinary Laboratories	
Central Veterinary Research Laboratory (CVRL)	Backweston Campus, Co. Kildare
Veterinary Public Health Regulatory Laboratory (VPHRL)	Backweston Campus, Co. Kildare
Agricultural Laboratories	
Pesticide Control Laboratory (PCL)	Backweston Campus, Co. Kildare
Dairy Science Laboratories (DSLs)	Backweston Campus, Co. Kildare, Cork, Limerick

DAFM veterinary laboratory services

DAFM veterinary laboratories include the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory (CVRL) and the Veterinary Public Health Regulatory Laboratory (VPHRL).

The Head of Veterinary Laboratories (HVL) is responsible for the management and operation of all the DAFM veterinary laboratory facilities. The HVL reports directly to the Director of Laboratories and is accountable to the Director for the performance of the veterinary laboratories. Working relationships exist with the Chief Veterinary Officer in relation to veterinary policy, particularly those associated with the activities and functions of the veterinary laboratories. The Head of Veterinary Laboratories is supported by heads of veterinary laboratory divisions – Senior Superintending Research Officers (SSROs).

Central Veterinary Research Laboratory (CVRL)

The laboratory is organised by a scientific discipline, namely bacteriology/parasitology, pathology and virology. Each division is managed by an SSRO who is responsible for the unit on a day-to-day basis. The SSROs liaise closely with the HVL and the heads of the other laboratory divisions and the farm manager at Longtown. The SSROs report directly to the HVL.

Each division of the CVRL is sub-divided into further levels of specialised units. The Bacteriology Division is supported by a number of Superintending Research Officers (SROs) who manage laboratory staff in the areas of parasitology and bacteriology (tuberculosis, brucellosis, salmonellosis and other zoonoses etc). The Pathology Division is supported by three SROs who focus on biochemistry, gross post-mortem examinations, histopathology and immunohistochemistry. The Virology Division has a complement of two SROs. The division uses a wide range of complex techniques associated with virus isolation and identification as well as molecular diagnostic and research methods.

The units are further supported by research officers, laboratory analysts and other laboratory staff who support the SRO with the workload of the unit.

Veterinary Public Health Regulatory Laboratory (VPHRL)

Overall responsibility for the operations of the VPHRL resides with laboratory management.

The laboratory is managed by a SSRO who reports to the HVL. The SSRO is supported in the management of the laboratory by research officers, laboratory analysts and other laboratory staff. It liaises with other internal and external stakeholders, most notably the FSAI with which DAFM has a service contract.

DAFM agriculture laboratory service

The agriculture laboratories include the Pesticide Control Laboratory (PCL), Central Plant Laboratory (comprising the Seed Testing Laboratory and the Plant Health Laboratory) and the Dairy Science Laboratories (DSL). The DSLs are located in Backweston, Cork and Limerick.

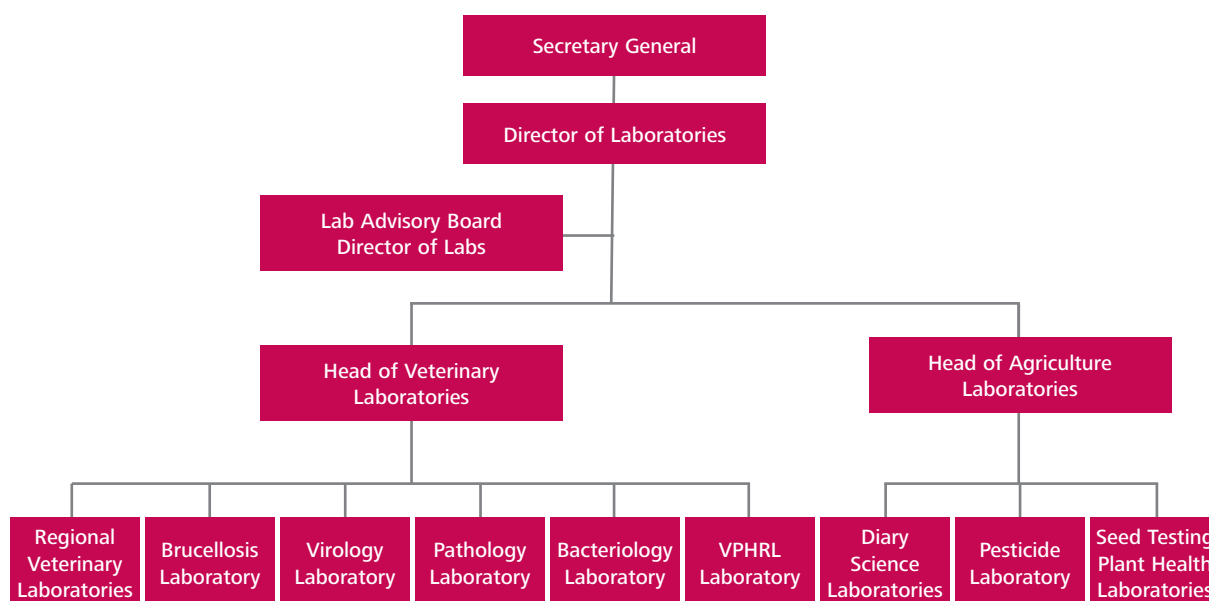
Pesticide Control Laboratory (PCL)

The PCL is currently part of the Pesticide, Plant Health and Seed Testing Laboratory Division. The Pesticide, Plant Health and Seed Testing Laboratory Division is managed by a Senior Inspector. The laboratory itself is accredited to the ISO17025 standard and has a cohort of staff which includes agriculture inspectors, an assistant agriculture inspector, senior laboratory analysts, laboratory analysts and laboratory attendants. Samples of food of plant origin as required by the pesticide residues control programme are sampled by field officers in accordance with the provisions of the sampling Directive 2002/63/EC. Samples of food of animal origin are taken by either the dairy or veterinary inspectorate and submitted to the laboratory for analysis.

Dairy Science Laboratories (DSLs)

The DSLs are based in Backweston, Cork and Limerick. The senior inspector (who reports to the Head of Agricultural Laboratories (HAL)) has overall responsibility for the DSLs. The DSLs are individually managed by agricultural inspectors who report to the senior inspector.

FIGURE 10. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF THE DAFM LABORATORY SERVICE



Management Advisory Committee (MAC)

The DAFM MAC oversees the work of DAFM, including the veterinary and agriculture laboratories. The laboratory service is headed by the Director of Laboratories who is a member of MAC. The Director reports to DAFM's Secretary General in relation to the organisation and management of the laboratories. The Director has overall accountability for the totality of services provided by the laboratories. A Laboratory Advisory Board supports and advises the Director on the continued development and improvement of the laboratory service. The Board meets regularly to agree the role, activities, resources and performance of the laboratories. Membership of the Board is decided by the MAC and currently includes the Director of Laboratories, the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), the Chief Inspector (CI), and four assistant secretaries whose areas of responsibility involve interaction with the laboratories. The CVO and CI have broad ranging responsibilities in their respective areas of which the laboratory network is a component. The CVO is supported by two deputies (DCVOs). The CI is supported by one Deputy (DCI). The Director of Laboratories is currently supported by the head of the veterinary laboratories and the head of agricultural laboratories, the managers of each of the laboratory divisions and by a Head of Support Services.

The mission of the laboratory service is outlined in the [DAFM Statement of Strategy 2011-2014](#). Each head of laboratory undertakes an annual business planning exercise which links to the laboratory's mission, objectives and key performance indicators to DAFM's Statement of Strategy. In the majority of cases, these business plans also highlight current organisational structures and/ or resourcing within the laboratory. MAC must approve the annual business plan. Interdependencies and communication channels exist across the laboratory structure. Other stakeholders interact with laboratory management frequently. These stakeholders include Assistant Secretaries of the Department who may seek advice as appropriate on policy matters or information to respond to ministerial questions etc. Equally, veterinary laboratory management communicate regularly with the District Veterinary Offices (DVOs) while agricultural laboratories depend on other internal divisions, such as the Dairy Regions Division and external customers and stakeholders, such as the FSAI. Other cross functional communications happen with the Livestock Policy, ERAD and Animal Health and Welfare Divisions.

See Section 2.4 for further information on DAFM NRLs and official laboratories.

DAFM administrative divisions

Administrative divisions are established in DAFM which provide support to a number of divisions responsible for food safety, namely Meat Hygiene & Animal By-products Division, Meat and Milk Hygiene Division, Crop Policy, Production and Safety Division, and Veterinary Medicines Division. The administrative division is mainly responsible for formal communications with the food business operators in the areas of registration, licensing, the appointment of authorised officers; the setting and collection of fees, dissemination of relevant trade information, issuing of sampling results and notification of breaches; as well as the transposition of EU legislation into national legislation and the creation of new national legislation. Other responsibilities of the administrative divisions include addressing all political, Ombudsman and FOI requests; and purchasing and supplying all equipment as required by the field officers. Staffs at certain levels in these divisions (PO, APO, HEO and EO) are generally authorised officers under the relevant legislation and are empowered, inter alia, to direct the Chief State Solicitors Office (CSSO) to initiate legal proceedings against a non compliant food or feed business operator, following receipt of a recommendation from the inspectorate or veterinary divisions. Other functions of these authorised officers would be to issue licences, collect fees etc.

2.2.3.2 DAFM scope of responsibility/DAFM activities

As outlined above, DAFM is responsible for official controls in relation to products of animal origin (excluding fish and shellfish) during primary production, slaughtering, manufacturing, processing, import, distribution and wholesale. DAFM is responsible for official controls during primary production and harvesting of plant products. Certain inspectors carry out checks at retail level for compliance with marketing standards. DAFM is also responsible for the certification of meat, meat products and dairy products from approved establishments for export to third countries.

Sector	Summary of Activities
Meat and meat products	The Veterinary Public Health Inspectorate (VPHI) is responsible for official controls in slaughterhouses, meat processing plants, drinking milk pasteurisation establishments and egg products facilities. The VPHI is permanently located in the larger meat and poultry slaughtering and processing plants; other plants are visited and inspected on a regular basis. In these establishments, the VPHI is responsible for checks in relation to animal welfare, identity checks, the provision of the ante and post-mortem inspection service, inspections of structural and operational hygiene standards, controls on residues, monitoring of own checks, examination of food business operator's documentation, audits of HACCP programmes, auditing of compliance with requirements in relation to SRM (as appropriate) and taking of samples for sampling programmes.
Milk and milk products	Dairy Produce Inspectorate (DPI) through its Dairy Controls and Certification Division/Dairy Laboratories Division is responsible for carrying out official controls in milk processing establishments, processing establishments with limited production capacity collection centres and storage premises. It is responsible for the monitoring, audit, inspection and the surveillance in the establishments. As outlined above, the VPHI supervises drinking milk pasteurisation establishments. A risk-based enforcement programme is prepared annually.

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for the period from 1st January 2012 to 31st December 2016

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Sector	Summary of Activities
Horticulture and beekeeping products	Agricultural inspectorates through the horticulture section of HPHD are responsible for ensuring the compliance of primary producers of fruit, vegetables, mushrooms and honey with legislative requirements. A register of primary producers of horticultural products is maintained as required by Regulation (EC) No 852/2004. Risk-based hygiene inspection control programmes are implemented (as required by Regulation (EC) No 882/2004) to verify compliance with Regulations (EC) Nos 852/2004 and 178/2002. At least 1% of food business operators involved in primary production, across all horticultural sectors are selected for inspection annually. The Division co-operates with Crop Policy, Production and Safety Division, Pesticides Residue Control Division (PRCD) and Integrated Controls Division (ICD) in the implementation of these control programmes. The Division is also responsible for the sampling of horticultural products as part of the monitoring programme required by Commission Regulation (EC) Nos 1881/2006 and 2073/2005. This programme includes sampling for residues of nitrates in lettuce and spinach, residues of nitrates in other horticultural products, e.g. cabbage, broccoli, potatoes etc. and other chemical contaminants, e.g. heavy metals in fruit and vegetables, patulin in apple juice and microbiological contaminants in sprouted seed and pre-cut fruit and vegetables (where cutting is done by the primary producer). HPHD is also responsible for sampling of honey under the national residue control plan as well as conducting checks relating to the use of animal remedies at apiary level. This work is conducted in co-operation with DAFM ERAD Division's Veterinary Medicines Section.
Eggs and egg products	The Egg and Poultry Inspectorate is responsible for hygiene and marketing standards controls in laying hen production units and at egg packing centres. The inspectorate is responsible for marketing standards controls in free range poultrymeat production units, poultrymeat processing and for eggs and poultrymeat at wholesale and retail levels. As outlined above, the VPHI supervises egg products facilities.
Certification of products with: protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI) and traditional specialties guaranteed (TSG)	DAFM is the competent authority for PDO/PGI/TSG schemes. The Food Industry Development Division is currently responsible for official controls of such products. Controls of products are undertaken to ensure that registered designations are not being used inappropriately.

Sector	Summary of Activities
Border inspection posts	<p>Veterinary inspectors at border inspection posts (BIPs) are responsible for the control of the importation of live animals (including live fish), products of animal origin (POAO) and certain products of non animal origin from third countries into the European Community at BIPs. Controls include identity, documentary and physical checks for food products where Ireland is the first point of entry to the EU. Once a consignment has been cleared at any EU designated Border Inspection Post, it enters into free circulation within the EU. There are three designated BIPs for imports from third countries into the Republic of Ireland; Dublin airport, Dublin port and Shannon airport. Dublin port and Shannon airport are the designated as BIPs for the import of food of animal origin and Dublin airport and Shannon airport are designated as BIPs for the imports of live animals.</p> <p>Controls on personal imports/passengers luggage</p> <p>Controls on personal imports/passengers luggage are carried out by DAFM staff and by customs at entry points.</p> <p>Direct flights from third countries and interlined passengers from hub airports are targeted for checks. At parcel postal sorting offices, customs carry out checks and any seizures of products of animal origin are passed to DAFM for disposal.</p> <p>Information on conditions applicable to personal consignments introduced into the EU is provided on DAFM and customs websites and by posters at airports.</p> <p>See Section 4, Table 9 for details on controls on pets.</p>
Organic foods	<p>The Organic Unit is responsible for the inspection and certification of organic food. These activities are carried out in conjunction with a number of control bodies (see Section 2.3).</p>
Pesticide residues	<p>The multi-annual pesticide residue control programme in food is a risk based programme and is agreed and delivered annually by way of a service contract with the FSAI. A programme is in place for the period 2012-2014 and will, following annual review and appropriate modifications, be implemented over the lifetime of the plan. There is a protocol agreed with the FSAI for dealing with maximum residue level exceedances. The programme is prepared and forwarded to the Commission by the 30th September of the previous year as required by Regulation (EC) No 396 of 2005. Regulation (EC) No 396 of 2005 and Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 are in place to support the control methods applied. See Section 2.8.2.</p>
Residues of veterinary medicines	<p>The annual National Residues Control Programme (NRCP) for Ireland is developed by DAFM in consultation with the FSAI, the SFPA, MI and local authorities. See Section 2.8.1 for more details.</p>
Zoonoses	<p>Veterinary and agricultural inspectorates from a number of divisions take samples under the zoonoses legislation.</p>

The legislation enforced by this competent authority includes general food law, official controls, food hygiene, import controls, labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, additives and flavourings, contaminants, residues of veterinary medicines, pesticide residues, microbiological criteria, specified risk material, zoonoses, food contact materials, infant formula, genetically modified foods, organic foods and foods with protected designation of origin, protected geographical indication and traditional specialities guaranteed (see Appendix 1).

DAFM uses the following controls to ensure compliance with legislative requirements; verification, inspection, audit, sampling and analysis, monitoring and surveillance. Further information on the DAFM food control activities can be found in the DAFM Service Contract with the FSAI. The contract covers controls in relation to the sectors outlined above.

DAFM is responsible for approving certain establishments under national legislation implementing Regulation (EC) No 853/2004.

DAFM maintains records of the official controls carried out and provides the business operator concerned with a copy of the report at least in the case of non-compliance.

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Laboratory Service: Food Laboratories

Details of each DAFM laboratory described below and its scope of accreditation is available on the FSAI website (http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/laboratories/labs.html).

Veterinary Laboratories

Central Veterinary Research Laboratory (CVRL)

The CVRL supports the implementation of national and EU legislation. It provides clinical diagnosis and research services to the livestock and poultry industries in key defined clinical areas, which are grouped into pathology, bacteriology and virology units. The laboratory also provides a support service to the RVLs in areas such as specialised testing. In this regard, it has both central and supporting roles in relation to national disease surveillance and control schemes.

Veterinary Public Health Regulatory Laboratory (VPHRL)

The VPHRL carries out sampling analyses including national residue monitoring plan testing, suspect sample testing and a range of inspections to ensure that the requisite standards are maintained in establishments, such as abattoirs. The VPHRL is focused on ensuring compliance with food safety standards with regard to meat products. All laboratory procedures (analytical methods, sample control, documentation and result reporting) are being reviewed with a view to meeting the requirements of the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB). A key objective of the VPHRL includes supporting veterinary certification of meat and meat products ensuring they meet EU standards. The VPHRL plays a role in organising the sampling programmes with the veterinary inspectors and carries out almost 90% of the necessary tests. Laboratory tests conducted at VPHRL include assays for heavy metals, chemistry, GC screening, LC screening, immunoassays, 6 Plate Test, microbiology. The VPHRL undertakes analysis of samples as part of the national residue monitoring plan including the collection and transport to the laboratory of samples. The VPHRL also undertakes analysis of suspect samples sent in by a veterinary inspector.

In addition, the VPHRL carry out the following functions:

- Microbiological analyses on open pack products
 - Nitrite/nitrate analysis of bacon
 - Organises specific surveys as required
 - Audits private laboratories wishing to gain DAFM approval to carry out microbiological testing. This activity is jointly supervised by the Bacteriology Division of the CVRL and the VPHRL
 - Assesses meat product recipes for compliance with food additives legislation
 - Trichinella analysis (horse and pork meat).
 - Heavy metal analysis (lead, mercury, arsenic and cadmium)
-

Agricultural Laboratories

Pesticide Control Laboratory (PCL)

The PCL has two functions:

- Responsibility for analysis of pesticide residues in food
- Laboratory support to the Pesticide Registration and Control Division to ensure that plant protection products comply with their authorised specifications

Plant protection products are authorised for use on both food and non food crops. There is a necessity to control pesticide levels in/on treated crops to ensure that the products are used in accordance with their authorisation and to ensure that the presence of pesticide residues does not pose a danger to consumers. Pesticide residues in food are controlled by EU Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 that establishes maximum residue levels for pesticides in food. Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 controls the authorisation marketing and use of plant protection products while Directive 98/8/EC controls the authorisation, marketing and use of pesticides which are used for biocidal purposes. The PCL acts as the NRL for the four European Reference Laboratories (EURLs) working in the pesticide area.

Dairy Science Laboratories (DSLs)

The three DSLs, based in Backweston, Cork and Limerick, are responsible for the examination and analysis of dairy products and act in a monitoring capacity to ensure that food manufacturers/factories located across the country carry out their own testing to the requisite standard. The activities of the laboratories are governed by national and EU regulation and broadly include two areas of responsibility namely food safety and market support.

With regard to food safety, the laboratories are responsible for ensuring the maintenance of the highest standards of food safety and consumer protection, thereby fulfilling the requirements of the FSAI. The laboratories also undertake the testing and analysis of milk and milk products for various EU Market Support and Trade Schemes.

The DSL acts as the NRL for the following parameters *Listeria monocytogenes*, coagulase positive staphylococci and TBC, SCC in raw milk and phosphatase. Also, the Laboratory carries out typing and subtyping on *Listeria monocytogenes* and coagulase positive staphylococci. All the DSLs are accredited for ISO 175025 for microbiological parameters.

The laboratories work closely with other divisions of the Department. In particular, they depend on the Dairy Controls and Certification Division to conduct the sampling activity and deliver them to the laboratories to be tested.

2.2.3.3 DAFM reporting and communication channels

DAFM internal reporting and communication channels

DAFM internal reporting arrangements are generally in line with the organisational structure in Figure 6 above.

DAFM reporting and communication channels with the FSAI

The reporting and communication channels between the FSAI and DAFM are set out in the DAFM Service Contract.

These requirements include a schedule of liaison meetings between the FSAI and DAFM, data transmission in the form of Schedule 4 and annual reports.

The FSAI meets with DAFM at a number of levels:

1. Steering group meetings address high level agreements and policy issues
2. Food Safety Liaison Unit meetings deal with central issues and provide a forum to resolve any issues not addressed through the divisional liaison meetings
3. Liaison meetings with the different service divisions within DAFM involved in food controls. These meetings focus on issues specific to the division
4. Cross agency meetings with DAFM and other competent authorities

DAFM communication channels with other authorities:

1. Liaising with the SFPA in relation to third country fish imports, fish feed and residue controls on aquaculture farms
2. Working with customs regarding the import control of live animals and products of animal origin and certain foods of non-animal origin
3. Participating in regional zoonoses committees with representatives from the local authorities and HSE
4. Liaising on a local level with other competent authorities (HSE, local authorities) with respect to specific food issues
5. Participating in radioactivity monitoring programmes organised by the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland (RPII) (see Section 2.2.10)

2.2.4 HEALTH SERVICE EXECUTIVE (HSE)



2.2.4.1 Organisational structure of the HSE

The HSE was established under the Health Act, 2004. The Department of Health is the parent department of the HSE. The objective of the HSE is to improve, promote and protect the health and welfare of the public in an effective and efficient manner.

National structure

The Integrated Services Directorate manages all hospital and community health services in Ireland.

The National Director, Performance and Financial Management, has responsibility for the delivery of all health and personal social services across the country including hospital, primary, community and continuing care services.

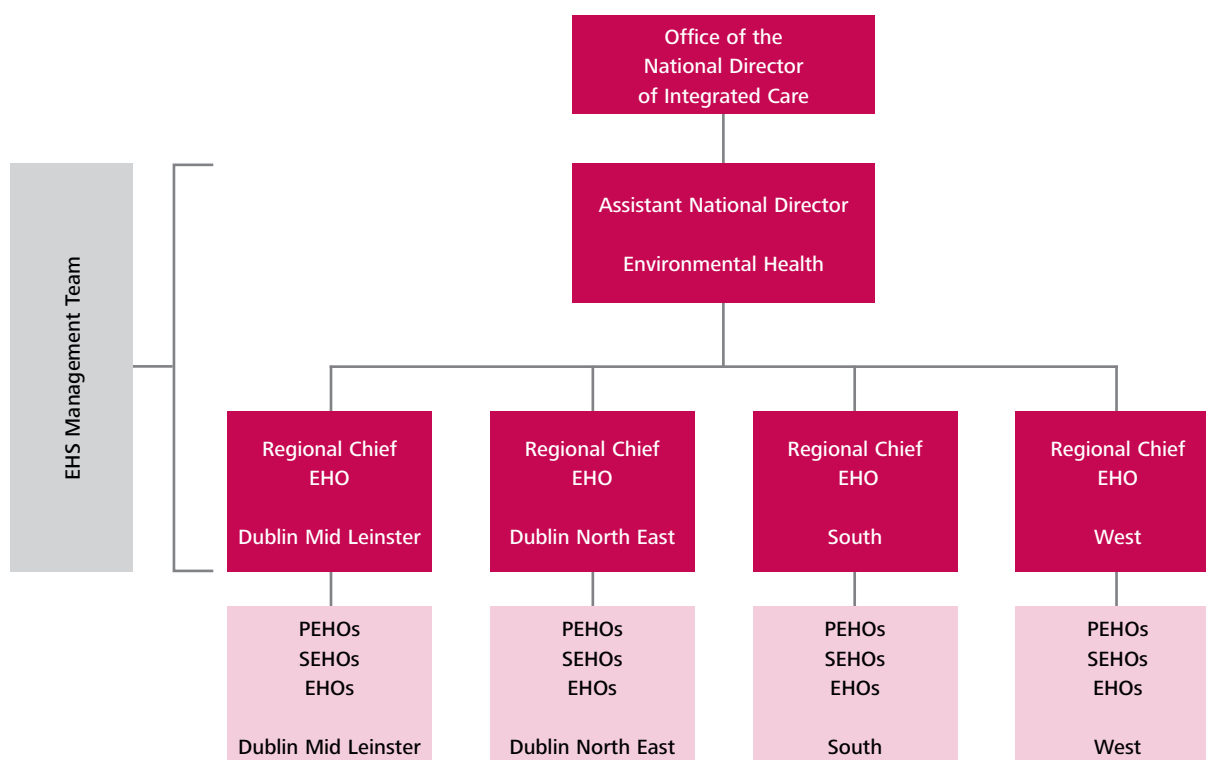
The range of health and personal social services provided by the HSE and its funded agencies are managed within four regions:

- Dublin Mid Leinster
- Dublin North East
- South
- West

The FSAI has a service contract with the HSE to provide the following food control services:

1. Environmental health services
2. Food safety laboratory services
3. Public health medical services

FIGURE 11. HSE SERVICES INVOLVED IN THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOOD



Note: As a result of Government policy, the HSE will be moving to a new structural model consisting of 7 directorates.

Environmental Health Service (EHS)

The EHS operates as a national service in the HSE. It is managed nationally by an Assistant National Director, regionally by four Regional Chief Environmental Health Officers and locally by principal environmental health officers (PEHOs). The Assistant National Director Environmental Health reports to National Director Performance and Financial Management Integrated Services Directorate. The EHS provides a range of food safety/food control services in accordance with its service contract with the FSAI. These services include inspection of relevant food businesses together with food sampling to ensure compliance with food law, the management of food alerts and outbreaks, and a range of compliance building / education measures. The HSE is responsible for import controls on products of non-animal origin.

Food Safety Laboratory Service (FSLs)

The HSE's four regions are divided into HSE Areas. Each HSE Area has an Area Manager who is responsible for managing all of the public health services in their area of operation. HSE Areas include all hospital services and local health office services and the FSLs.

The FSLs consists of a network of laboratories comprising of three regional Public Analyst Laboratories (PALs) responsible for physical/chemical analysis of food and food related samples and six Official Food Microbiology Laboratories (OFMLs) responsible for the microbiological testing of foodstuffs (note: the Dublin PAL is considered to be a seventh OFML, as it does microbiological testing). All of these laboratories are accredited to ISO 17025. Each of the nine laboratories has local management structures in place.

These laboratories analyse samples taken during official controls by environmental health officers (EHOs). These samples are taken to support inspection, as part of monitoring and surveillance programmes or as part of the investigation of an outbreak, incident, food alert or consumer complaint. The EHS and the FSLs maintain close linkages, meeting frequently to discuss food monitoring and surveillance programmes.

The PALs generally operate on a regional basis, i.e. Dublin PAL serves HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster and Dublin North East, Galway PAL serves the HSE West and Cork PAL serves the HSE South. Each of the PALs has developed specialised areas of chemical analysis and expertise and for these specialised parameters the PALs provide analytical services on a national basis. The PALs are NRLs for certain parameters (see Section 2.4.1).

The OFMLs generally operate on a local basis, receiving samples from a number of neighbouring environmental health offices. For certain specialist microbiological parameters, individual OFMLs have developed analytical expertise and provide analytical and typing services on a national basis.

Further information on the role of the FSLs is available in Section 2.4 and on the FSAI website (http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/laboratories/labs.html).

Public Health Medical Service (PHMS)

The PHMS of the HSE participates in multi-disciplinary teams investigating, managing and controlling outbreaks of foodborne illnesses. The PHMS links closely with the EHS and FSLs during these investigations.

The Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC)

The Health Protection Surveillance Centre is part of the HSE, and has responsibility for the surveillance of communicable diseases in Ireland. The aim of the HPSC is to improve the health of the Irish population by collating, interpreting and disseminating data in order to provide the best possible information on infectious disease. This is achieved through surveillance and independent advice, epidemiological investigation, research and training. The HPSC collates and analyses statutory weekly notifications of infectious diseases that have been provided by medical practitioners and clinical directors of diagnostic laboratories. Data are collected nationally using Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting which is an information system developed to manage the surveillance and control of infectious diseases in Ireland. The HPSC provides data on notifiable infectious diseases on a weekly basis, including data on foodborne illness, to the relevant authorities.

2.2.4.2 HSE scope of responsibility/HSE activities

The HSE is responsible for official controls in certain manufacturing/processing establishments, certain wholesale/distribution operations, imports of foods of non-animal origin and all retail sector (retail and catering) establishments.

The legislation enforced by this competent authority includes general food law, official controls, food hygiene, import controls, labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, additives and flavourings, contaminants, microbiological criteria, specified risk material, zoonoses, food contact materials, foods for particular nutritional uses (including infant formula), food supplements, bottled water, nutrition and health claims, genetically modified foods, novel foods and foodstuffs treated with ionising radiation (See Appendix 1).

The HSE uses the following controls to ensure compliance with legislative requirements; inspection, audit, verification and validation, sampling and analysis, monitoring and surveillance. Further information on the HSE food control activities can be found in the HSE Service Contract.

The HSE is responsible for approving certain establishments under national legislation implementing Regulation (EC) No 853/2004.

The HSE maintains records of the official controls carried out and provides the business operator concerned with a copy of the report at least in the case of non-compliance.

2.2.4.3 HSE reporting and communication channels

HSE internal reporting and communication channels

HSE internal reporting arrangements are generally in line with the organisational structure outlined above.

HSE reporting and communication channels with the FSAI

The reporting and communication channels between the FSAI and the HSE are set out in the HSE Service Contract. These requirements include a schedule of liaison meetings between the FSAI and the HSE food control services, data transmission in the form of agreed datasets and annual reports. Additionally, enforcement activities under the FSAI Act, 1998 and national legislation are notified to the FSAI. There is also a requirement for the HSE to notify the FSAI of foodborne outbreaks and the outcome of investigations without undue delay.

The FSAI meets with the HSE at a number of levels:

1. Meetings with HSE management
2. Regional liaison meeting with representatives of the EHS and the FSLs
3. National meetings with professional groups, i.e. PEHOs, OFMLs, PALs
4. Working groups which address specific issues/topics
5. Cross agency meetings with the HSE and other competent authorities

HSE communication channels with other authorities:

1. Interacts with customs officials at points of entry for food. Customs formally notify the HSE of any declarations of imports of foods which are subject to official controls under EU legislation. For further details, see Section 2.2.9
2. Participation in radioactivity monitoring programmes organised by the RPII, see Section 2.2.10
3. Participation in regional zoonoses committees with representatives from the local authorities, the SFPA and DAFM
4. Liaising on a local level with other competent authorities (local authorities, DAFM, the SFPA, the NSAI) with respect to specific food issues

2.2.5 LOCAL AUTHORITIES

2.2.5.1 Organisational structure of the local authorities

Local authorities are multi-purpose bodies which are responsible for an extensive range of services, including veterinary services. The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government is the parent department of the local authorities.

The FSAI currently has service contracts with 28 individual local authorities:



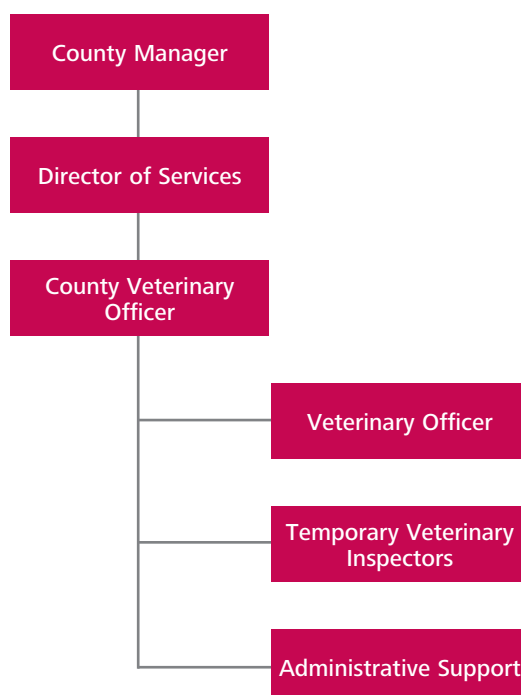
National/Regional structures

The local authorities are autonomous bodies with no formal national or regional structure. Local authority veterinary officers (LAVOs) are employed directly by local authorities. The local authority veterinary service (LAVS) provides a mechanism for LAVOs for sharing information, provision of training and discussion of matters of national and local importance. Meetings are held under the auspices of the LAVS National Committee. The FSAI also organises national and regional meetings for local authorities which are attended in the main by LAVOs.

Local structures

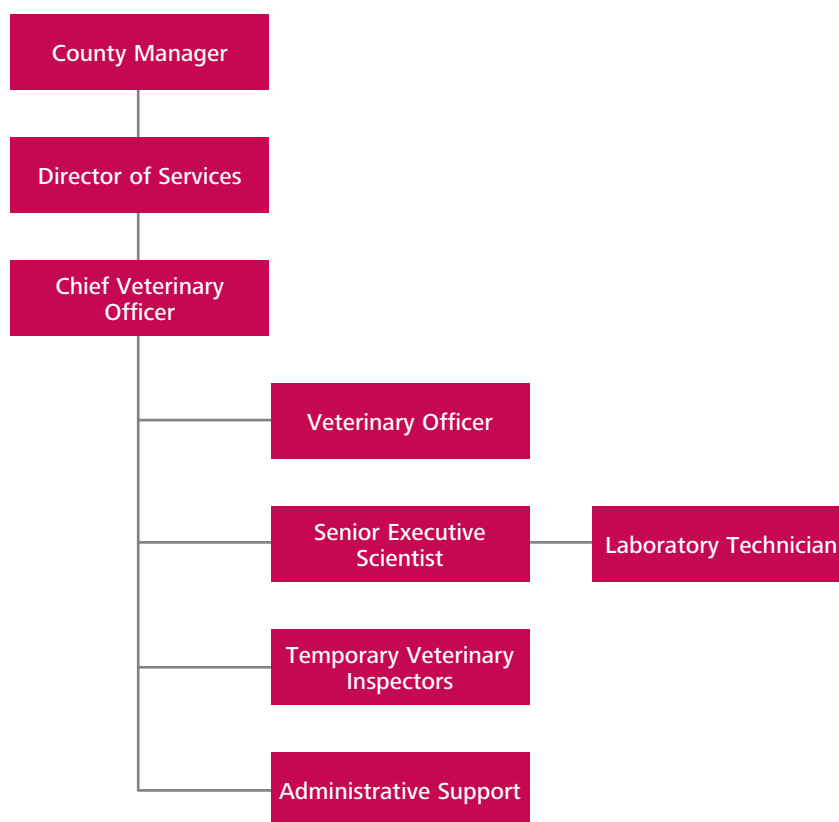
The majority of local authorities have a local structure involving a County Manager, a Director of Services, the County Veterinary Officer, temporary veterinary inspectors and administrative support, see Figure 12.

FIGURE 12. GENERAL LOCAL AUTHORITY ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



The exception is Cork County Council which is made up of four local areas each supervised by a whole-time veterinary officer. The service is managed and co-ordinated by a Chief Veterinary Officer (Figure 12). In accordance with the service contract between the FSAI and Cork County Council, this local authority operates a designated INAB accredited Veterinary Food Safety Laboratory ([FSAI Cork County Council Service Contract](#)).

FIGURE 13. CORK COUNTY COUNCIL ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



Local authority veterinary service

The local authority veterinary service (LAVS) is a representative body of local authority veterinary officers. National meetings of the LAVS are usually held 2-3 times per year. The LAVS has a national committee; the function of this committee is to liaise with the FSAI and other relevant organisations in matters relating to the LAVOs.

The LAVS has sub-committee/s which focus on specific areas as required from time to time, e.g. there currently exists a standardisation sub-committee which produces standard operating procedures for the use of the LAVOS. The LAVS has also coordinated a number of training initiatives for local authority veterinary officers.

2.2.5.2 Local authorities scope of responsibility

The local authorities are responsible for official controls in low throughput slaughterhouses; food businesses engaged in the slaughter of low volumes of poultry, establishments producing small quantities of fresh meat, minced meat, meat preparations or meat products; cold stores/distribution centres and meat transport vehicles at, or associated with inspected establishments. The local authorities are also responsible for the official controls in wholesaling butcher shops subject to Regulation 853/2004. As outlined in Section 2.2.2, demarcation of supervision of establishments between the local authorities and other competent authorities is either defined in legislation or outlined in a guidance document for determining the supervising authority for food businesses.

The legislation enforced by the local authorities includes general food law, official controls, food hygiene, labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, additives and flavourings, contaminants, residues of veterinary medicines, microbiological criteria, specified risk material, zoonoses, food contact materials, slaughter of animals and animal remedies (See Appendix 1).

Local authorities use the following controls to ensure compliance with legislative requirements; inspection, audit, verification and validation, sampling and analysis, monitoring and surveillance systems to ensure compliance with legislative requirements. Further information on the local authority food control activities can be found in the local authority service contracts.

Local authorities are responsible for approving certain establishments under national legislation which implements Regulation (EC) No 853/2004.

Local authorities are required to maintain records of the official controls carried out and to provide the business operator concerned with a copy of the inspection report.

Further information on the role of the Cork County Council Laboratory and its scope of accreditation is available in Section 2.4 and on the FSAI website (http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/laboratories/labs.html).

2.2.5.3 Local authority reporting and communication channels

Local authority internal reporting and communication channels

Local authority internal reporting arrangements are generally in line with the organisational structures in Figures 12 and 13.

Local authority reporting and communication channels with the FSAI

The reporting and communication channels between the FSAI and the local authorities are set out in the local authority service contracts. These requirements include a schedule of liaison meetings between the FSAI and each local authority, data transmission in the form of agreed datasets and monthly and annual reports.

Local authorities use the FSAI centralised official agency premises inspections (OAPI) database to record information regarding their official control responsibilities. This is a web-based application and can be accessed by designated users only. Local authorities enter information on establishments approved and registered, inspections, ante-mortems, slaughters and post-mortems, samples, funding claims, and enforcement action. The database collates local and regional data for all local authorities. The FSAI maintains a national register of approved establishments where local authorities carry out official controls. This national register is maintained using details of establishments on OAPI.

Additionally, enforcement activities under the FSAI Act are notified to the FSAI in accordance with Guidance Note 13.

The FSAI meets with local authorities at a number of levels:

1. Liaison meetings with each local authority
2. Regional/National liaison meeting
3. Meetings with representatives of LAVS National Committee
4. Cross agency meetings with local authorities and other competent authorities

LA communication channels with other authorities

Local authorities liaise with DAFM in relation to animal health and welfare issues, animal by-products, residue sampling, and other relevant official control areas.

Local authorities participate in regional zoonoses committees with representatives from the HSE and DAFM.

Local authorities liaise on a local level with other competent authorities (HSE, DAFM and SFPA) with respect to specific food safety issues.

2.2.6 SEA-FISHERIES PROTECTION AUTHORITY (SFPA)



2.2.6.1 Organisational structure of the SFPA

The SFPA was established under the provisions of the Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act (SFMJ Act) 2006 with the independent statutory remit to enforce national and EU Regulations on sea-fisheries conservation and seafood safety. Section 44(4) of the SFMJ Act, 2006 gives the SFPA power to enforce food safety law in lieu of the Minister for the purposes of the FSAI. The SFPA has a service contract agreement with the FSAI which outlines the agreed level and standard of seafood safety activity that the SFPA performs as a competent authority. The SFPA has responsibility for the implementation and enforcement of national and EU legislation, which deal with health conditions for the production and placing on the market of fish, shellfish and fisheries products. The SFPA carries out official controls of seafood at all stages of production, processing and distribution with the exclusion of retail establishments. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) is the SFPA's parent department.

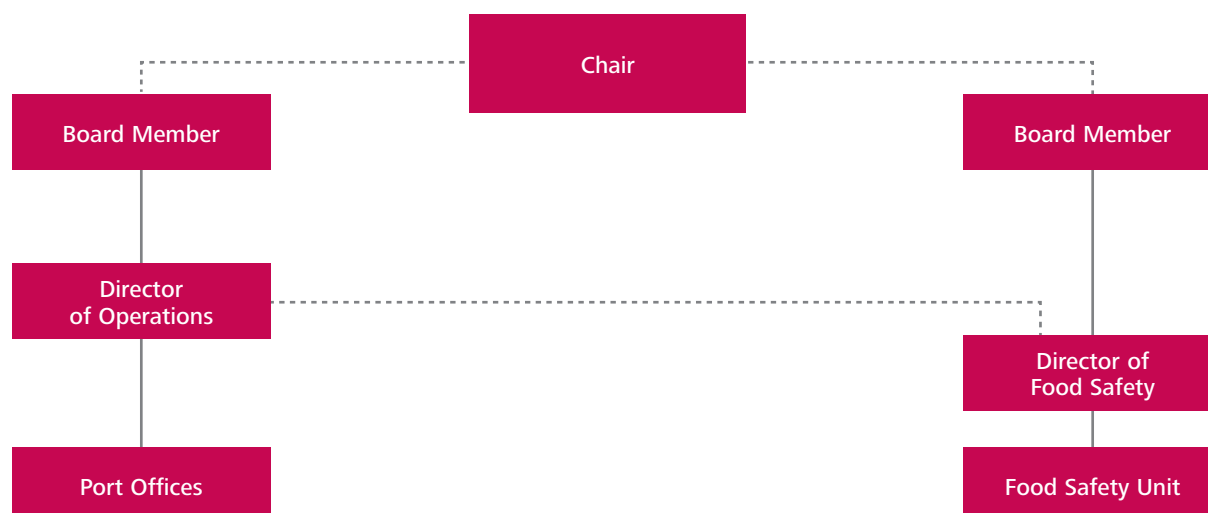
The SFPA headquarters is in Clonakilty, Co. Cork. The SFPA has a Food Safety Unit which is a specialised unit headed by the Director of Food Safety and based at the headquarters. The Food Safety Unit's primary function is to support and co-ordinate the food safety regulation activities of the SFPA.

The SFPA has port offices around the coast including in the main fishing ports of:

- Killybegs
- Ros a' Mhíl
- An Daingean
- Castletownbere
- Dunmore East and
- Howth

Senior port officers have responsibility for the running of the port offices.

FIGURE 14. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SFPA



2.2.6.2 Scope of responsibility of the SFPA in relation to food safety

The SFPA is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of national and EU legislation which deal with the health conditions for the production and placing on the market of fish, shellfish and fisheries products.

The SFPA carries out official controls at classified production areas, harvesting, movement, processing, wholesale and distribution. Further information on the role of the SFPA is available in Section 2.5.5.

The legislation enforced by the SFPA includes general food law, official controls, food hygiene, import control, labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, additives and flavourings, contaminants, residues of veterinary medicines, animal remedies, microbiological criteria, marine biotoxins, zoonoses and food contact materials (see Appendix 1).

The SFPA is responsible for approving establishments that handle fish and shellfish under national legislation implementing Regulation (EC) No 853/2004.

The SFPA maintain a national register of approved establishments where they carry out official controls. This national register will be maintained using the OAPI database, where SFPA officers will enter details of all establishments approved and registered in their functional area. All SFPA officers will have access to this database which also records inspection and sampling details. Work to make the OAPI system available to the SFPA is expected to be completed shortly.

The SFPA maintain records of the official controls carried out and provide the food business operator concerned with a copy of the report at least in the case of non-compliance.

The SFPA holds a register of importers of fish and fishery products from third countries.

The SFPA responds to queries from importers and provides advice in relation to what legislative requirements need to be met when importing fish and fishery products. On request, the SFPA provides technical advice to DAFM BIP officers in relation to imports of fish and fishery products. DAFM is responsible for official controls of live fish imports (see Section 2.2.3.2).

The SFPA in conjunction with the DAFM Import Control Division, the Marine Institute (MI) and the relevant laboratories agree an annual plan for sampling fishery products and other seafood at the BIPs in Dublin Port and Shannon Airport. The sampling plan covers microbiological and chemical sampling and analysis.

2.2.6.3 SFPA reporting and communication channels

SFPA internal reporting and communication channels

SFPA internal reporting arrangements are in line with the organisational structures described in Figure 14.

SFPA reporting and communication channels with the FSAI

The reporting and communication channels between the FSAI and the SFPA are in line with the mechanisms set out in the FSAI/SFPA Service Contract. These requirements include a schedule of liaison meetings between the FSAI and the SFPA, data transmission in the form of agreed datasets and quarterly and annual reports. Additionally, enforcement activities under the FSAI Act are notified to the FSAI in accordance with [Guidance Note No.13](#).

The FSAI meets with the SFPA at a number of levels:

1. Liaison meetings with SFPA Management and the Food Safety Unit
2. Regional Workshops with Sea Port Officers and Sea Fishery Protection Officers
3. Trilateral meetings with the SFPA and the MI
4. Cross-agency meetings with other competent authorities
5. Participation in the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee

SFPA communication channels with other authorities

1. The SFPA reports to its parent Government department, DAFM.
2. The SFPA meets regularly with the MI which provides analytical and technical support to the SFPA.
3. The SFPA works with DAFM and customs regarding import controls.
4. The SFPA liaises on a local level with officers of other competent authorities (HSE, DAFM, local authorities) with respect to specific food issues.
5. The SFPA is involved in radioactivity monitoring programmes organised by the RPII, see Section 2.2.10
6. The SFPA liaises with the Environmental Protection Agency in relation to the quality of shellfish waters.

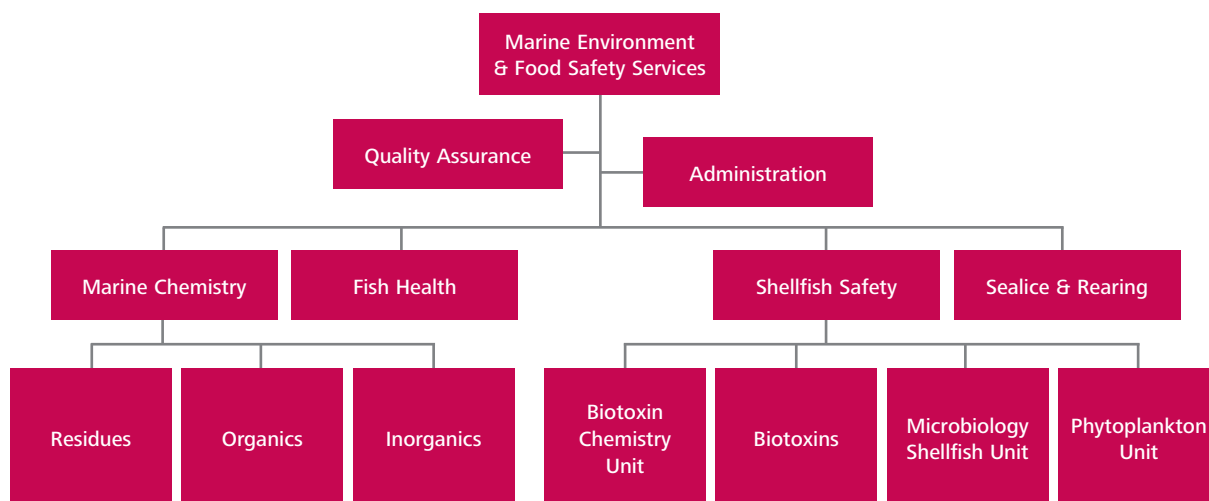
2.2.7 MARINE INSTITUTE (MI)



2.2.7.1 Organisational Structure of the MI

The MI was established under the Marine Institute Act 1991 and is the national agency responsible for marine research, technology development and innovation. DAFM is the parent department of MI and the institute provides analytical and technical services to the SFPA and DAFM.

FIGURE 15. MARINE INSTITUTE SERVICES INVOLVED IN FOOD SAFETY



The Marine Environment & Food Safety Services (MEFS) Division of the MI provides scientific advice and a range of marine environmental monitoring services to help ensure Irish seafood products meet approved quality standards.

2.2.7.2 Scope of responsibility of the MI

The MI provides services to the SFPA and the FSAI, i.e. scientific advice, carries out risk assessments, carries out analyses and monitors analyses from other laboratories.

The MI carries out analyses to ensure compliance with legislative requirements with respect to general food law, official controls, food hygiene, contaminants, residues of veterinary medicines, microbiological criteria and marine biotoxins (see Appendix 1). The MI acts as an NRL for certain parameters (further information on the analytical role of the MI is available in Section 2.4 and on the FSAI website (http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/laboratories/labs.html)).

Further information on the MI food control activities can be found in the [FSAI MI Service Contract](#).

2.2.7.3 MI reporting and communication channels

MI internal reporting and communication channels

MI internal reporting arrangements are generally in line with the organisational structure in Figure 15.

DAFM is the parent department of the MI and have a performance contract which includes reporting requirements. MI report on the services provided through reports and meetings.

MI reporting and communication channels with the FSAI

The reporting and communication channels between the FSAI and the MI are set out in the Marine Institute Service Contract. These requirements include a schedule of liaison meetings between the FSAI and the MI, data transmission in the form of agreed datasets and the annual report.

The FSAI meets with the MI at a number of levels:

1. Liaison meetings with MEFS Division
2. Trilateral meetings with the MI and the SFPA
3. Cross-agency meetings with other competent authorities
4. Participation in the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee

MI communication channels with other authorities:

1. Reporting to its parent Government department, DAFM
2. Providing analytical and technical support to the SFPA, MI reports on analysis to the SFPA and these bodies meet regularly
3. Involvement in radioactivity monitoring programmes organised by the RPII, see Section 2.2.10
4. Liaising with the Environmental Protection Agency in relation to the quality of shellfish waters

2.2.8 THE NATIONAL STANDARDS AUTHORITY OF IRELAND (NSAI)



The NSAI is Ireland's standards body. The NSAI facilitates the development and publication of voluntary standards. The NSAI is also responsible for the provision of an independent certification service in respect of certification to nationally/internationally recognised standards for processes and services. The NSAI is the competent authority for:

- The recognition and exploitation of natural mineral waters bottled in Ireland
- Official controls on the production, distribution and import of food contact materials

2.2.8.1 Organisational structure of the NSAI

The NSAI has limited involvement in official control of food, the staff involved in food control activities are illustrated in Figure 16.

FIGURE 16. NSAI STAFF INVOLVED IN FOOD CONTROLS



2.2.8.2 Scope of responsibility of the NSAI

The NSAI is responsible for the determination of compliance with legislative requirements in relation to the recognition and exploitation of natural mineral waters, which involves:

1. Formal recognition of waters extracted from the ground as 'natural mineral water'
2. Permitting companies to exploit (bottle and place on the market) the natural mineral water from named bore hole exits/extraction point
3. Continual recognition of the natural mineral water by means of surveillance inspections confirming the water continues to satisfy legal requirements
4. Ongoing renewal of permission to exploit by means of surveillance inspections
5. Permitting companies to exploit from additional bore hole exits/extraction points and confirmation of originating source

The NSAI also has responsibility for official controls on the production, distribution and import of food contact materials.

The NSAI maintain records of the official controls carried out and provides the business operator concerned with a copy of the report at least in the case of non-compliance.

Further information on the NSAI food control activities will be found in the NSAI Service Contract.

2.2.8.3 NSAI reporting and communication channels

NSAI internal reporting and communication channels

The NSAI internal reporting arrangements are generally in line with the organisational structure in Figure 17.

NSAI reporting and communication channels with the FSAI

The reporting and communication channels between the FSAI and the NSAI are set out in the [NSAI Service Contract](#). These requirements include a schedule of liaison meetings between the FSAI and the NSAI, data transmission in the form of agreed datasets and an annual report.

The FSAI meets with the NSAI through liaison meetings and in cross-agency meetings with competent authorities.

NSAI communication channels with other authorities

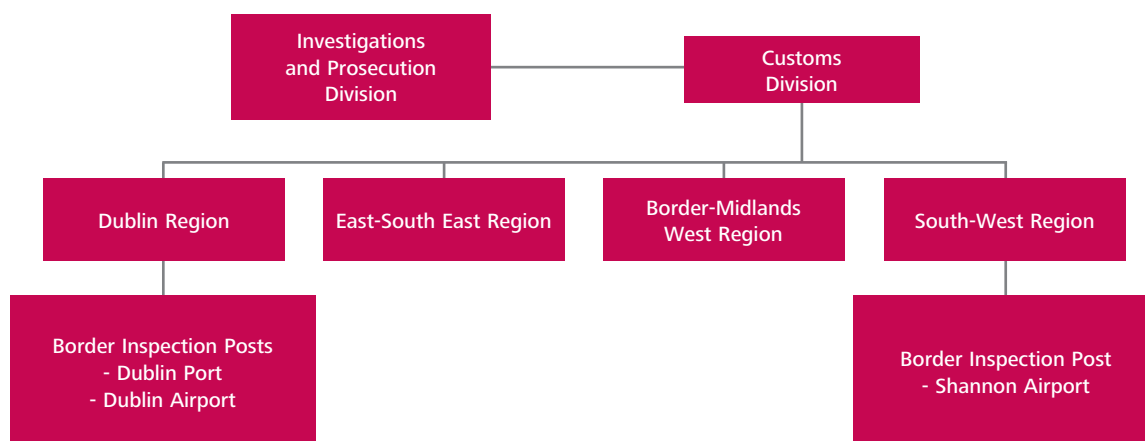
The NSAI liaises on a local level with other competent authorities with respect to specific issues regarding the recognition and exploitation of natural mineral waters and compliance with food contact material legislation.

2.2.9 REVENUE'S CUSTOMS SERVICE (CUSTOMS)

Customs is responsible for collecting revenue and implementing import and export controls. Customs and the FSAI have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in relation to imports of products of non-animal origin and food contact materials. Customs work with DAFM in relation to the import of products of animal origin and certain foods of non-animal origin. There is also collaboration between Customs and DAFM on the import of plants and plant products.

2.2.9.1 Organisational structure of Revenue's Customs Service

FIGURE 17. REVENUE'S CUSTOMS SERVICE HAS THE FOLLOWING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL STRUCTURE



2.2.9.2 Scope of responsibility of the Revenue's Customs Service

Products of non-animal origin and food contact materials

Customs are involved with the FSAI, DAFM and the HSE in relation to the import controls, as agreed by the FSAI:

- Of products of non-animal origin and food contact materials subject to emergency measures and increased official controls and
- Certain products of non-animal origin subject to increased controls (pesticide monitoring)

The FSAI advises the Customs Division of products subject to emergency measures and increased levels of official controls. The Customs Division then arranges, where possible and as agreed with the FSAI, to electronically profile the products in question on its Automated Entry Processing (AEP) system. When the profile is activated, the consignments in question are referred to the HSE EHS. All such products require official controls by the HSE prior to release for free circulation by Customs.

If Customs, in the course of their routine duties find products of non-animal origin or food contact materials which are deemed suspect, they arrange to suspend release of the product concerned from Customs control for up to a maximum of three working days and immediately notify the FSAI.

For further information on the Customs activities refer to the [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\) between FSAI and Revenues Customs Service](#).

In relation to imports of certain products on non-animal origin subject to increased controls (pesticide monitoring), DAFM alerts Customs of commodities to be subjected to increased controls. Dublin Port and Dublin Airport are designated as points of entry for such commodities. Where Ireland is the first point of entry to the EU, consignments of concerned commodities are subjected to appropriate documentary, identity and physical checks by DAFM. Customs release the consignments for free circulation following receipt of a completed Common Entry Document from DAFM.

Products of Animal Origin

Customs are involved with DAFM in relation to import control of the following:

- Live animals from third countries at BIPs
- Products of animal origin (POAO) from third countries at BIPs

DAFM advises Customs of products subject to official controls. Customs then arrange where possible and as agreed with DAFM, to electronically profile the products in question in its AEP system. All products require inspection by DAFM before being released by Customs for free circulation.

2.2.9.3 Customs Division reporting and communication channels

Customs reporting and communication channels with the FSAI

The reporting and communication channels between the FSAI and Customs are set out in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the FSAI and Revenues Customs Service, which includes a schedule of bilateral meetings between the FSAI and Customs and the provision of quarterly reports of statistical data relating to imports of products subject to increased level of official controls.

Customs communication channels with other authorities

Customs liaise on a central and local level with competent authorities (HSE, DAFM, SFPA) with respect to specific issues regarding food imports. Representatives from Customs participate in a cross-agency working group on the import of products of non-animal origin.

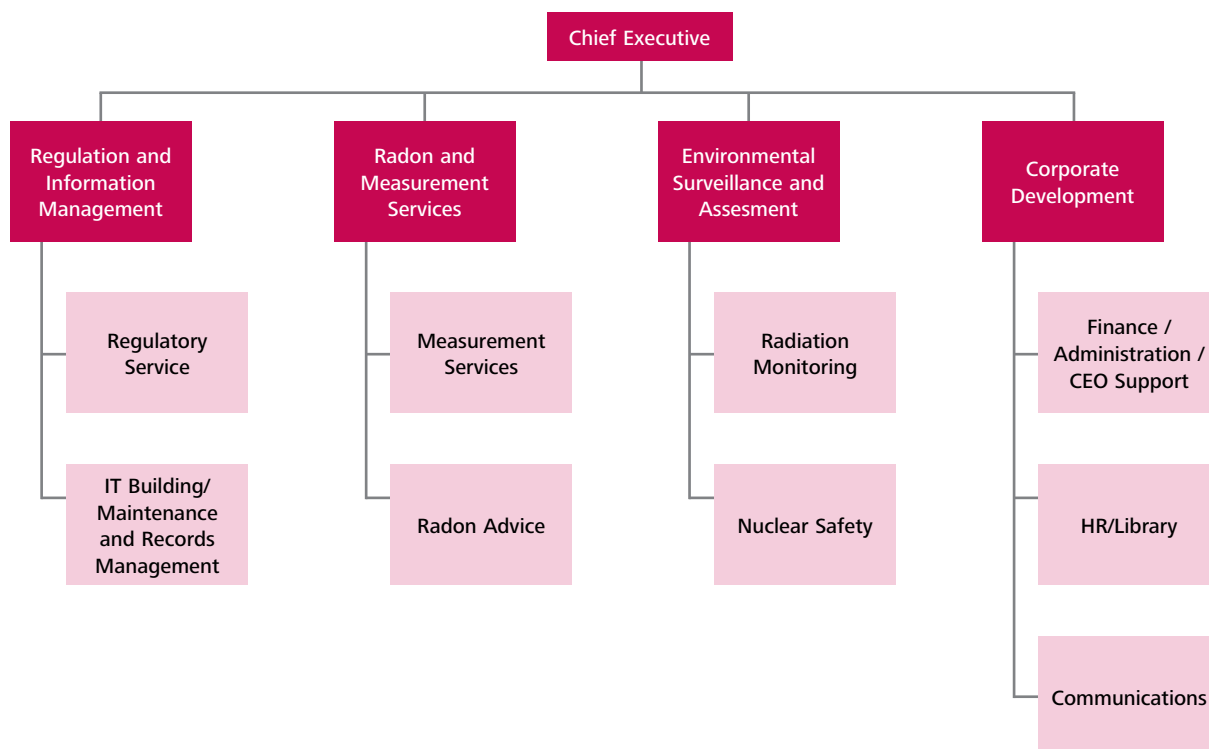
2.2.10 RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION INSTITUTE OF IRELAND (RPII)



The RPII is the national organisation with regulatory, monitoring and advisory responsibilities in matters pertaining to ionising radiation.

2.2.10.1 Organisational structure of the RPII

FIGURE 18. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE RPII



2.2.10.2 Scope of responsibility of the RPII

The RPII carries out extensive monitoring of radioactivity in the food chain and the environment in fulfilment of its statutory obligation under the Radiological Protection Act, 1991 to monitor activity or ionising radiation levels in anything in the State or in waters surrounding the State. These monitoring programmes are discussed at bilateral meetings between the FSAI and RPII.

The RPII is the responsible authority in relation to the granting of food irradiation licences to irradiation facilities. The granting of such licences is subject to there being in force a permit granted by the FSAI and a licence in respect of the irradiation facility granted under the Radiological Protection Act, 1991. These activities are carried out in accordance with the requirements of S.I. No. 297 of 2000 which gives effect to Directive 1999/2/EC.

The National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents (NEPNA) provides a framework for the national response to large-scale radiological incidents. Lead responsibility for NEPNA lies with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. The RPII has been assigned a number of key functions under NEPNA including early warning, technical assessment of the incident, provision of technical advice on protective actions and monitoring of the environment and the food chain. The roles assigned to the RPII under NEPNA include maintaining a national laboratory for the measurement levels of radioactivity in the environment, liaising with other organisations to establish arrangements for the collection of samples in an emergency and providing for the certification of radioactivity levels in foodstuffs and other products in the event of an emergency.

Further details of the activities related to food control are outlined in the [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\) between the FSAI and the RPII](#).

2.2.10.3 RPII reporting and communication channels

RPII internal reporting and communication channels

The RPII reports to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government.

The RPII internal reporting arrangements are generally in line with the organisational structure in Figure 18.

RPII reporting and communication channels with the FSAI

The reporting and communication channels between the FSAI and the RPII are set out in the MoU, which includes a schedule of bilateral meetings between the FSAI and the RPII and the provision of reports and data and other documentation to the FSAI.

RPII communication channels with other authorities

The RPII liaises on a local level with competent authorities (HSE, DAFM, SFPA) with respect to radioactivity monitoring programmes.

2.2.11 THE LOUGHS AGENCY

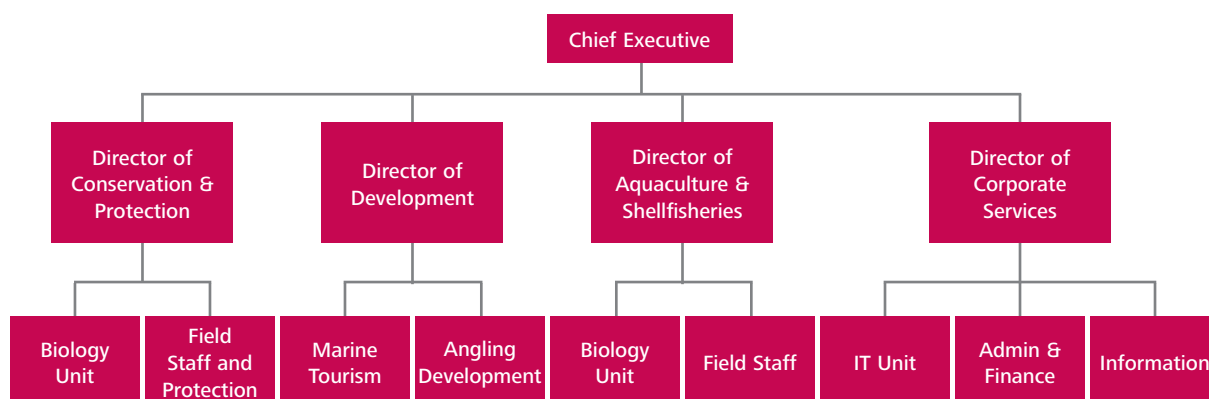


The functions of the Loughs Agency are set out in North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (NI) Order 1999, the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999, the Foyle Fisheries Act (NI) 1952 (as amended) and the Foyle Fisheries Act 1952 (as amended). These functions are as follows:

- Promotion of development of Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough for commercial and recreational purposes in respect of marine, fishery and aquaculture matters
- Management, conservation, protection, improvement and development of inland fisheries of the Foyle and Carlingford areas
- Development and licensing of aquaculture
- Development of marine tourism

2.2.11.1 Organisational structure of the Loughs Agency

FIGURE 19. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE LOUGHS AGENCY



2.2.11.2 Scope of responsibility of the Loughs Agency

The [Loughs Agency](#), under an MoU with the FSAI, is responsible for sampling commercially caught, grown and/or harvested shellfish in the Foyle and Carlingford areas.

2.2.11.3 Loughs Agency reporting and communication channels

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Loughs Agency is appointed by the North South Ministerial Council, and is the accountable person for the organisation with responsibility for all matters of financial propriety. The Loughs Agency has its headquarters at Prehen, with regional offices in Carlingford Co Louth and Greencastle Co Donegal.

The Loughs Agency participates in the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee (along with the Marine Institute and the SFPA) and meets annually on a bi-lateral basis with the FSAI. Other meetings are arranged as needed.

2.3 DELEGATION OF TASKS TO CONTROL BODIES

For the most part, official controls in Ireland are carried out by the competent authorities. DAFM has delegated the certification of organic food, feed and farming to a number of control bodies, as outlined in Table 3. DAFM has service agreements in place with each of these control bodies.

The service contract between the FSAI and DAFM recognises that DAFM may delegate a task or function to a third party. DAFM provides regular updates on the activities of these certification bodies at liaison meetings between the FSAI and DAFM's Organics Unit.

Regarding the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 Article 5, the Organic Unit of DAFM is charged with the approval and supervision of these certification bodies. These certification bodies operated according to the 'Standards for Organic Food and Farming in Ireland' which incorporate the requirements of EU legislation governing organic food, feed and farming.

TABLE 3. CONTROL BODIES AND THE SPECIFIC CONTROL TASK THEY HAVE BEEN DELEGATED FOR BY COMPETENT AUTHORITIES IN IRELAND

Competent Authority Delegating Control Task	Control Bodies	Task(s) Delegated
DAFM - Organic Unit	Organic certification bodies	Inspection and certification of organic food, feed and farming as required by Council Regulation 2092/91 (as amended) and by S.I. No. 112 of 2004
	Institute for Marketecology	
	Irish Organic Farmers and Growers Association	
	Organic Trust Ltd	
	Global Trust Certification Limited	
	Biodynamic Agricultural Association – Demeter UK	

2.4 LABORATORIES INVOLVED IN OFFICIAL CONTROLS

There are a number of laboratories involved in official controls in Ireland. These laboratories fit into the categories listed in Table 4. Some laboratories perform the functions within a number of these categories.

TABLE 4. LABORATORIES INVOLVED IN THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOOD

Type of Lab	Definition
National Reference Laboratory	National expert for specific parameter(s), the role of an NRL is defined in Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 (Article 33)
Official Laboratories	Laboratories which operate under the aegis of a government department or competent authority that carry out the analysis of samples taken during official controls
Other Laboratories	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Laboratories appointed by a competent authority for specialist surveys2. Reference laboratories used by a competent authority for specialist testing3. Private laboratories used by a competent authority for official controls

2.4.1 NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORIES

National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) are expert for specific parameter(s). The role of an NRL is defined in Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 (Article 33).

Designation of NRLs is decided between the appropriate Government departments, with input from the relevant agencies and the FSAI. The designating Government department advises the Commission of the designated NRLs for Ireland.

The NRLs for Ireland corresponding to the EURLs listed in Commission Regulation (EC) No 776/2006 amending Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 are provided on the FSAI website (http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/laboratories/labs.html)

Accreditation status

Regulation 882/2004 Article 33(3) requires NRLs to operate and be assessed and accredited in accordance with the European standards, EN ISO/IEC 17025, EN 45002, EN 45003.

The laboratories designated as Irish NRLs are accredited to ISO 17025. The links to the scope of accreditation for each of these laboratories is included on the FSAI website (http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/laboratories/labs.html).

The requirement for food laboratories to maintain/expand accreditation is included in the service contracts with the competent authorities responsible for these laboratories.

NRL activities

The NRLs from Ireland work with the EURLs, competent authorities and official laboratories to fulfil the requirements of Regulation 882/2004 Article 33(2).

NRL Activity	Status
Collaborate with the Community Reference Laboratory	Contact details for the NRLs in Ireland have been provided to the Commission. The EURLs and NRLs have established linkages for collaboration.
Co-ordinate, for their area of competence, the activities of official laboratories	There is good co-ordination between NRLs and official laboratories from the same competent authority. Co-ordination between NRLs and official laboratories from other competent authorities is well established especially for specific monitoring programmes, e.g. the National Residues Monitoring Programmes. The FSAI is co-ordinating interagency laboratory meetings with the chemical and microbiological NRLs and official laboratories to improve laboratory coordination and provide a networking forum.

NRL Activity	Status
Where appropriate, organise comparative tests between the official national laboratories	All official laboratories participate in recognised proficiency schemes as part of their accreditation to ISO 17025. In addition, some NRLs organise comparative testing for official laboratories, this mainly relates to specific monitoring programmes, e.g. Biotoxins Monitoring Programme, Trichinella testing.
Ensure the dissemination to the competent authority and official national laboratories of information that the EURL supplies	There are communication channels in-place for the sharing of information between the NRLs and the official laboratories from their competent authority and the competent authority they are associated with. The microbiological NRLs issue a quarterly newsletter on NRL and EURL activities (Link to DAFM NRL newsletter)
Provide scientific and technical assistance to the competent authority for the implementation of coordinated control plans	Currently, there are no co-ordinated control plans in place with respect to Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. Mechanisms are in place for NRLs to provide scientific and technical assistance to their associated competent authority and to the FSAI in relation to the implementation of co-ordinated control plans.

These functions have been identified as areas for continued development over the lifetime of this plan. The requirements in relation to the functions of food NRLs are incorporated in the service contracts with the competent authorities responsible for these laboratories. The FSAI, in consultation with competent authorities, is in the process of finalising guidance for NRLs and official laboratories on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.

2.4.2 OFFICIAL LABORATORIES

Official laboratories are laboratories which operate under the aegis of a Government department or a competent authority to carry out the analysis of samples taken during official controls.

Official laboratories are designated by a Government department in national legislation or through an administrative procedure by a Government department or the FSAI. All of the official laboratories are listed on the FSAI website: (http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/laboratories/labs.html).

Accreditation status

Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 Article 12(2) requires official laboratories to operate and be assessed and accredited in accordance with the European standards, EN ISO/IEC 17025, EN 45002, EN 45003.

All of the Irish official laboratories are accredited to ISO 17025. The links to the scope of accreditation for each of these laboratories is hyperlinked on the FSAI website.

The requirement for food laboratories to maintain/extend accreditation is included in the service contracts with the competent authorities responsible for these laboratories.

2.4.3 OTHER LABORATORIES

2.4.3.1 Laboratories appointed by a competent authority for specialist surveys

These laboratories are selected for specialist surveys when the analysis required is not available in an official laboratory. These laboratories are appointed on the basis of a tendering process. The tender document specifies the analysis required, the commodities to be analysed, the EU legislation containing the relevant criteria, analytical requirements and the reporting arrangements.

The tender information required from the applicant laboratory includes information on laboratory accreditation related to the analysis required, proof of participation in relevant external proficiency tests and inter-laboratory comparison schemes, details of the methodologies to be used, e.g. limit of detection, limit of quantification, internal standards, certified reference materials and method performance, quality assurance measures in place, information on experience in relation to the commodity and parameters.

Laboratories are selected based on their expertise and are subject to contractual arrangement with the relevant competent authority. These contractual arrangements include details of the tasks being delegated, the reporting arrangements (in particular, any instances where immediate notification is required) and arrangements for audits or inspections, if deemed necessary.

2.4.3.2 Reference laboratories used for specialist testing

Reference laboratories are used by competent authorities/official laboratories on an ad-hoc basis for confirmatory analysis or for further microbial identification, serotyping, phage typing and toxin detection.

2.4.3.3 Private laboratories used by a competent authority for official controls

These laboratories are employed by competent authorities on a needs basis. The use of private laboratories for analysis of official control samples is done under the control of the competent authority or official laboratory and where possible only private laboratories that comply with Article 12 of Regulation 882/2004 are used.

2.5 ORGANISATION OF OFFICIAL CONTROL BY COMPETENT AUTHORITIES

2.5.1 THE ROLE OF THE FSAI IN THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOOD

2.5.1.1 FSAI activities to ensure co-ordination and consistency

The FSAI is responsible for co-ordination of food control activities within and between competent authorities, determining inter-agency supervisory arrangements and ensuring consistency of enforcement. This is achieved through:

1. Management of the official control activities through the service contract arrangements
2. Carrying out risk assessment to underpin risk management decisions/actions
3. The provision of scientific and technical support to competent authorities through publications and training programmes

The FSAI is directly responsible for the enforcement of some food legislation (see Section 2.2.2). The majority of food legislation is enforced by the competent authorities who carry out controls under service contract to the FSAI, i.e.

1. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
2. Health Service Executive
3. Local authorities
4. Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority
5. Marine Institute
6. National Standards Authority of Ireland

2.5.1.1.1 Inter-agency supervisory arrangements

Schedule 1 of the service contracts specifies the legislation to be enforced by each competent authority. Together, these agencies make up a seamless food inspection service. The FSAI is responsible for establishing interagency supervisory arrangements to ensure that there are no gaps and to minimise overlaps.

2.5.1.1.2 Publications

The FSAI provides scientific and technical support to competent authorities and industry. This is achieved through various publications: reports, guidance notes, codes of practice and information leaflets. These publications are publicly available on the publications section of the FSAI website. They have improved transparency by clearly setting out the specific legal requirements and recommendations for best practice. They also improve consistency by ensuring a standardised approach.

2.5.1.1.3 Food alerts

The FSAI is the co-ordinating body for food alerts and the contact point for the EU Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food (RASFF) in Ireland. Food incidents are investigated by the competent authorities in accordance with Code of Practice No. 5 – Food Incidents and Food Alerts. Local incidents will normally be investigated by one competent authority, but for those with a wider impact, the FSAI acts as a central contact point for gathering and issuing information from and to the competent authorities involved. The FSAI also provides support to the investigating competent authorities by providing information and scientific advice during the investigation and by contributing to the risk analysis process. The FSAI is responsible for the issue of national food alert and notifications from RASFF (see Section 2.7 for details on mutual assistance).

2.5.1.1.4 Training

The FSAI delivers needs-based professional development training programmes for officials in the competent authorities to ensure consistent interpretation and application of legislation. For further information on training, see Section 2.9.

In addition, *FSAI Guidance Note 12 – The Inspection of Food Safety Training and Competence* allows for a consistent approach by competent authorities to the inspection of the training and competence of staff dealing with food and the provision of advice to food businesses in relation to staff training.

2.5.1.1.5 Working groups

The FSAI chairs working groups with each of the competent authorities to progress issues in relation to official control of food specific to the competent authority. In addition, the FSAI also chairs inter-agency working groups to discuss areas where a number of competent authorities are involved. Examples of some of the inter-agency working groups chaired by the FSAI are included in Table 5.

TABLE 5. INTER-AGENCY WORKING GROUPS INVOLVING THE FSAI AND THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES INVOLVED IN THE OFFICIAL CONTROLS OF FOOD

Working Group involving the FSAI and a Number of Competent Authorities	Remit
Food Safety Legislation Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSAI • DoH • HSE 	To consider the implications of new and revised food control legislation for the HSE Food Control Service, to assess the enforcement priority for legislation listed in Schedule 1 of the HSE Service Contract and to determine the training needs of the HSE's Food Control Service arising from new and/or revised legislation.
Import Controls Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSAI • DAFM • HSE • Revenue's Customs Service • DoH 	This working group provides a cross-agency forum on matters relating to controls on imported food. The group also identifies training needs of enforcement officers in relation to import controls.
Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSAI • SFPA • MI • HSE • Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) 	This committee is a forum for competent authorities and industry to discuss matters relating to the production of safe shellfish products in order to ensure consumer protection.
Supervisory Arrangements Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE • DAFM • Local authorities • SFPA 	The objective of this working group is to maximise the use of competent authority resources and provide guidance to eliminate overlaps and avoid any gaps in the supervision of food businesses. The core principle of this group is to avoid dual supervision of food businesses by competent authorities. A supervisory criteria document was developed through this working group and is reviewed regularly.
Labelling Enforcement Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE • DAFM • Local authorities • SFPA 	The objective of this working group is to review the enforcement of food labelling regulations in Ireland. This group identifies gaps/overlaps in enforcement and/or authorisation provisions and makes recommendations to government departments and competent authorities to enable the effective enforcement of labelling legislation across the entire food chain.

2.5.1.1.6 Data management

The FSAI's role includes the provision of a national data management service to collect and collate the official food control data. Each of the competent authorities maintains data on establishments, inspections, samples and analysis. The FSAI's Data Management Group works closely with the competent authorities to ensure that data sets are routinely collected and standard approaches to data management are adopted. The FSAI develops and maintains data management systems for the collection, quality assurance, analysis and interpretation of data. This national data are used to monitor and evaluate official control systems, as a basis for risk assessment and to prepare reports to the Commission and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). In carrying out this work, the FSAI Data Management Group collaborates with EFSA and Eurostat.

2.5.1.2 FSAI control activities

The FSAI is directly involved in a number of control activities, including audits, inspections, certification (food contact materials for export), permitting/ assessment/authorisations, investigation of food incidents and alerts and monitoring and surveillance. As a priority, controls are targeted at areas of non-compliance or where there are suspected non-compliances.

2.5.1.2.1 FSAI audits

2.5.1.2.1.1 Types of audits

The mission, role and objectives of the FSAI audit function are documented in its audit charter which is published on the FSAI website (http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/audit).

In accordance with its mandate, the FSAI carries out the following types of audits:

- Audits of official controls
 - These audits are conducted to ensure that competent authorities adhere to the terms and conditions set out in their service contracts. The statutory basis for these audits is contained in Section 48(9) of the FSAI Act, 1998. The procedures and processes governing the way the FSAI carry out audits of the competent authorities are set out in Schedule 5 of each of the service contracts. To comply with the requirements of Article 4(6) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, these audits cover the following three points set out in Article 2(6) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004:
 - o Verification of compliance with planned arrangements in order to provide assurances that official controls are carried out as intended and that any instructions or guidelines given to staff carrying out the controls are followed. This may largely be addressed by document review, but will also require on-site verification
 - o Verification of the effective implementation of planned arrangements. In order to assess effectiveness, that is the extent to which planned results are achieved, on-site operational implementation is included. This involves the assessment of the quality and consistency of the controls and typically involves on-site audit activities
 - o These audits endeavour to assess whether the planned arrangements are suitable to achieve the objectives of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. This includes assessing the suitability of official controls, with regard, for example, to their frequency and the methods applied, having regard to the structure of the production chain(s) and to production practices and volume

Targeted or Focused Audits – Targeted audits examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls and/or food business operators compliance with a specific piece of European or national legislation. These audits are typically carried out in food business operations and are designed to verify compliance with the legislation in question, e.g. labelling, traceability. Following the audit, the food business operator is issued with a report which details where appropriate any non-compliance identified. The competent authorities supervising the food business operator is responsible for ensuring that appropriate corrective action is put in place for each non conformance.

- FVO Closeout Audits - The FSAI has taken a proactive approach to closing out findings and recommendations contained in FVO Mission Reports. Close-out audits are carried out, where necessary, to examine and update the corrective actions taken to address findings from FVO missions and to verify their closure/current state of compliance. A report on the status of the corrective action process is completed and sent to the competent authorities concerned. This report is also made available to the Commission services as required.
- Third Country Audits – The FSAI assists third country auditors in their assessment of the food safety standards achieved by the Irish food industry. These audits frequently assess the implementation of the official control system by the competent authorities in Ireland and compliance by food business operators with food law. The FSAI provides detailed information to external auditors on the official control system in place.
- The FSAI may also conduct special investigations in conjunction with competent authorities where serious breaches of food law or food fraud have been detected. These investigations are designed to determine the nature and extent of non compliance with food law and/or related food fraud. Outcomes of such investigations may result in criminal proceedings being taken against offenders.

2.5.1.2.1.2 FSAI audit systems

FSAI audits are carried out against the requirements documented in the audit charter and procedure. The FSAI Audit Programme, which is developed annually utilising a risk-based methodology, details the audit projects to be carried out by the FSAI. This risk-based approach facilitates prioritisation of audit projects in line with the FSAI's statutory responsibility to protect people's health and interests. The audit programme may be amended or supplemented to take account of emerging risks or other factors. The ongoing development of annual audit programmes is designed to ensure that adequate coverage of all relevant areas of activity and all relevant competent authorities within the sectors covered by Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 are included at an appropriate risk-based frequency over a period not exceeding five years.

In all cases, a report is issued to the auditee detailing the outcomes of the audit. Where audit findings indicate deficiencies in the control system or non-compliance with food law, a corrective action plan will be developed by the competent authority in liaison with the FSAI.

It is the responsibility of the service contracts division to monitor implementation of action plans to ensure corrective action is adequate, appropriate and implemented in a timely manner – the FSAI may, if it is deemed appropriate, verify closeout of findings through a supplementary audit.

The FSAI publishes a report on each audit project on the FSAI website http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/audit

FSAI audits are carried out in accordance with documented procedures, which are based on the guidance provided in Commission Decision (EC) No 677/2006, the principles of ISO 19011:2011 and ISO 9001:2008 and the mandatory requirements of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. The FSAI's audit procedures include the scope, nature and extent of the audit, its legislative basis and details on the audit process and reporting arrangements. The procedures are part of the FSAI Quality Management System (QMS) and are therefore subject to internal audit as part of the FSAI Internal Audit Programme, by personnel independent of the audit activity and external audits by the NSAI and the FVO.

2.5.1.2.2 Disease surveillance

The FSAI collaborates with the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) of the HSE (see Section 2.2.4.1) in the control and prevention of foodborne illness in Ireland. The food alert system (described in Section 2.5.1.1.3) provides a rapid means of communication between the food business operator and other stakeholders regarding food products that pose a risk to the health of consumers and need to be withdrawn from the market or recalled.

2.5.1.2.3 Monitoring and surveillance

The FSAI provides scientific and technical input to surveillance and monitoring programmes organised by the competent authorities involved in food controls.

The FSAI co-ordinates a national microbiological surveillance programme in conjunction with the environmental health service (EHS) and official food microbiological laboratories (OFMLs) in the HSE. This involves selecting relevant topics on an annual basis. The FSAI prepares a sampling protocol, prepares a questionnaire to collect information at the time of sampling, compiles the sample and test data and produces a report on the findings of these surveys.

The FSAI is responsible for the organisation of the surveillance activities required by EU co-ordinated control plans. This involves participating in the EU working group meetings to decide on the topics for these plans and advising the relevant competent authorities of the sampling and analytical requirements. The FSAI is also responsible for the compilation of the sample and test data and sending reports on same to the Commission.

The FSAI also organises and carries out a number of monitoring and surveillance programmes, such as:

1. National surveys, e.g. to detect genetically modified foods/food components, irradiated foods/food components, composition of food supplements, compliance with labelling requirements of food and food contact materials
2. Specialist surveys of chemicals in food, i.e. additives or contaminants, e.g. persistent organic pollutants. Where monitoring is required and the capability/capacity for analysis is not available within the official laboratories, the FSAI organises specialist surveys using external laboratories
3. Topical surveys are arranged to obtain information on areas where the FSAI are working with industry to achieve gradual, sustained and universal improvements, e.g. salt, prevalence of non-O157 Verotoxigenic *Escherichia coli* in Irish minced beef.

2.5.1.2.5 Certification/Permitting/Authorisation

Activity	FSAI Role
Certificates for free sale	The FSAI provides, on request, certificates of free sale for exported food contact material based as appropriate on analysis of the material, a positive inspection of the producer by the relevant competent authority and where necessary an examination of the labelling.
Permits for food irradiation facilities	In order to operate a food irradiation facility, the operator requires a licence from the RPII and a permit from the FSAI. These activities are carried out in accordance with the requirements of S.I. No. 297 of 2000 which gives effect to Directive 1999/2/EC.
Assessment of novel food applications	This activity is carried out in line with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 258/1997 and in accordance with a standard operating procedure which is part of the QMS.
Assessment of genetically modified food applications	This activity is carried out in accordance with the requirements in Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 and Regulation (EC) No 1830/2003.
Assessment of food supplements	Food supplements are assessed in line with the requirements of S.I. No. 539 of 2003 which give effect to Directive 2002/46/EC. This activity is carried out in accordance with a standard operating procedure which is part of the QMS.
Assessment of foods for particular nutritional uses (PARNUTs)	This activity is carried out in accordance with the requirements of S.I. No. 579 of 2006 which gives effect to Council Directive 89/398/EEC, as amended.
Assessment of Dietary Foods for Special Medical Purposes (Medical Foods)	Dietary Foods for Special Medical Purposes are assessed in line with the requirements of S.I. No. 64 of 2001, which gives effect to Directive 89/398/EEC ⁵⁶ , Directive 1999/21/EC, and Directive 2001/15/EC. This activity is carried out in accordance with a standard operating procedure which is part of the QMS.
Authorisation of Food Additives	Provisional national authorisation is granted in line with the requirements in S.I. No. 437 of 2000 (as amended) and S.I. No. 58 of 2004 (as amended) which give effect to Article 5 of Directive 89/107/EC, as amended. This activity is carried out in accordance with a standard operating procedure which is part of the QMS.
Notification of substances and processes for approval for use of food contact materials	Notification to EFSA of substances and processes for approval for use in materials and articles intended to come into contact with foodstuffs in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No. 1935/2004.

2.5.1.3 FSAI activities to foster a culture of compliance

To foster a culture of compliance, Ireland has taken a risk-based approach to controls which protect public, animal and plant health, and consumer interests without imposing unnecessary burdens on the authorities that are responsible for undertaking official controls or on the food business operators that are subject to these controls.

2.5.1.3.1 FSAI Act enforcement provisions

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 contains enforcement provisions which are in addition to the powers to prosecute and other provisions on specific pieces of food legislation. The provisions in the FSAI Act are designed to provide an improved means of reacting to and dealing with situations posing a risk to public health. The provisions in the FSAI Act are as follows:

- Improvement Notice – an Improvement Notice is issued if the competent authority is of the opinion that a premises or practice is of such a nature that if it persists, it will or is likely to pose a risk to public health. The notice outlines the breaches found and the remedial action required, and specifies the time period by when these breaches are to be remedied
- Improvement Order - an Improvement Order is issued by the District Court if an Improvement Notice is not complied with. Improvement Orders are published on the enforcements section of the FSAI website and remain on the website for a period of three months from the date when the order is lifted by the competent authority
- Closure Order – a Closure Order is issued if it is the opinion of the competent authority, that there is or there is likely to be a grave and immediate danger to public health at/or in the food premises. Closures Orders can refer to the immediate closure of all or part of the food premises, or all or some of its activities. The Orders may be lifted when the premises has improved to the satisfaction of the competent authority. Failure to comply with an Improvement Order may also result in the issuing of a Closure Order. Closure Orders are published on the enforcements section the FSAI website and remain on the website for a period of three months from the date when the order is lifted by the competent authority
- Prohibition Order - a Prohibition Order is issued if the activities (handling, processing, disposal, manufacturing, storage, distribution or selling food) involve or are likely to involve a serious risk to public health from a particular product, class, batch or item of food. The effect is to prohibit the sale of the product, either temporarily or permanently. Prohibition Orders are published on the enforcement section of the FSAI website and remain on the website for a period of one month from the date when the order is lifted by the competent authority.

These enforcement tools provide an alternative to a strictly punitive response to non-compliance and create an environment for compliance building. Enforcement provisions are also provided under other national legislation, e.g. closure orders, prohibition orders, compliance notices.

2.5.1.3.2 FSAI working with the food industry

The FSAI aims to assist industry to achieve good hygiene standards and comply with the law. To achieve this goal, the FSAI has a number of mechanisms for consulting with industry.

The Food Safety Consultative Council (described in Section 2.2.2.1) provides a forum for stakeholders (including consumers and industry) to feed in to the food safety agenda.

In addition, the FSAI has established specific industry forums to allow competitors from a sector of the food industry to come together in a non-competitive arena to discuss food safety issues with the FSAI and advance best hygienic practice in their sector. Currently, there are three FSAI industry forums in place, the Retail Forum, the Food Service Forum and the Artisan Forum. These forums meet with the FSAI two to three times a year and discuss items such as impending food legislation and the approaches taken to food safety. The Retail Forum includes membership from the supermarkets and wholesalers managing symbol groups of independent retailers operating in Ireland. The Food Service Forum draws its membership from businesses and representative organisations in the catering sector. The Artisan Forum is composed of small business artisan food producers involved in food processing. The FSAI meets with manufacturers in a technical committee established and chaired by Food and Drink Industry Ireland, the main trade association for the food and drink manufacturers.

2.5.1.3.3 Guidance for industry

The FSAI provides training initiatives and guides for industry to create an environment for fostering compliance. The FSAI believes that guidance notes have a major role to play in assisting the food industry and regulators in Ireland, to achieve a high degree of compliance with legislation and with good practice generally.

Examples include the guidance for on-farm poultry slaughter, guidance for producing gluten-free products and a range of guidance documents to assist different industry sectors comply with legislation on microbiological criteria.

2.5.1.3.4 Accessibility to legislation and associated guidance

National and European legislation is available to competent authorities, food business operators and consumers through the legislation section of the FSAI website.

Similarly, guidance for industry and enforcement staff is available to all stakeholders through the FSAI's Advice Line, the FSAI website or as hardcopy documents from the FSAI publication's office.

The FSAI facilitates a public consultation process on proposals on new legislation relevant to food safety. This allows for those who may be affected by proposed changes to food safety legislation or who have an interest in the legislation, to contribute their views. Occasionally, the FSAI consults with the public on FSAI documents such as draft guidance notes or codes of practice. Details of all consultations are available on the consultations section of the FSAI website.

2.5.1.3.5 Support for industry developed quality assurance schemes

Quality assurance (QA) schemes, such as those developed by Bord Bia and Bord Iascaigh Mhara, set out best practice requirements, identify current standards, promote continuous improvement, promote food safety controls, set high standards of animal welfare and provide a marketing tool to food businesses. QA schemes are subject to independent inspection and some are accredited under EN45011. Most managers of QA schemes intend to progress accreditation for all QA schemes. Standards for QA schemes are developed by technical advisory committees made up of producers, processors, farm organisations and state agencies, such as the FSAI. The FSAI participates in the development of standards for QA schemes and in an advisory role on the overall management of QA schemes.

2.5.1.4 FSAI resources

Staffing resources

The primary responsibility for the enforcement of food law rests with the relevant competent authorities and is discharged through the service contract mechanism. In support of the competent authority personnel, the FSAI has specialist staff with expertise in the areas of veterinary public health, environmental health, marine, biotechnology, toxicology, and audit who can participate in/advise on official controls where necessary. Staffing figures are reported annually in the MANCP report.

In addition, a number of FSAI staff are authorised under the FSAI Act, 1998 to enforce food legislation.

Training resources

The FSAI has a specialist training unit, which provides training to both the competent authorities and industry. The training unit uses contract trainers for certain industry programmes.

IT resources

The FSAI has a number of specialist IT resources, including:

- Safety Net, an Extranet service for sharing information with official food control staff in the competent authorities
- Databases to record establishments, inspections, sample and laboratory results data from the competent authorities
- Enforcements database to record enforcements under the FSAI Act and for their publication on the [Enforcements section of the FSAI website](#)
- E-commerce section of the FSAI website in development to facilitate purchasing of publications, online registration for seminars etc

2.5.2 THE ROLE OF THE DAFM IN THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOOD

2.5.2.1 Organisation of official controls by DAFM

DAFM carries out official controls (verification, inspection, audit, sampling and analysis, monitoring, surveillance) in accordance with legislative requirements, the requirements of the service contract between DAFM and the FSAI, DAFM business plans and DAFM sampling plans.

DAFM business plans include the control activities (inspection, sampling and analysis) to be undertaken to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with an annual inspection programme or in line with the frequencies established in documented procedures. The criteria for determining the frequency of inspection include:

1. The outcome of previous inspections
2. Compliance history
3. Nature of risk to public health in terms of type of product produced
4. Effective food safety management systems
5. Self monitoring programmes operated by the food business operator
6. Size and throughput

DAFM prepares annual sampling programmes for the monitoring of, e.g. residues, TSEs, pesticides and micro-organisms. PRCD and PCL have a multi-annual control plan (2012-2014) for pesticide residues.

Official controls are carried out in accordance with documented procedures (standard operating procedures (SOPs), veterinary procedural notices (VPNs), laboratory procedures, aide memoirs, manual of operation, procedures manual, guidance notes and codes of practice).

2.5.2.2 DAFM resources available for official controls

Staffing resources

DAFM provides the FSAI with details of the staffing resources for official control of foods on an annual basis, as required by the DAFM service contract. Staffing resources are also specified in the DAFM business plans and reported annually in the MANCP report.

Laboratory resources

Laboratory resources DAFM has agreed to provide for the official control of foodstuffs are listed in the service contract between the FSAI and DAFM. DAFM provides the FSAI with details of any external laboratories used for official controls.

IT resources

The Information Systems Division of DAFM is responsible for the maintenance and security of databases used by the services involved in food control. These databases facilitate data storage and the processing of reports in respect of the inspection and sampling programmes. Work is on-going to explore the most effective mechanism for sharing official control data created by DAFM with the FSAI. Sample analysis data from DAFM lab LIMS are shared with the FSAI currently from two of the four DAFM labs and work is ongoing with the other two.

Training resources

DAFM has a Staff Training and Development Unit which arranges or carries out staff training based on divisional requirement and Personal Development Plans.

2.5.3 THE ROLE OF THE HSE IN THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOOD

2.5.3.1 Organisation of official controls by the HSE

The HSE carries out official controls (verification, inspection, audit, sampling and analysis, monitoring and surveillance) in accordance with legislative requirements, the requirements of the service contract between the HSE and the FSAI, HSE local food control annual service plans, regional/local sampling plans and national surveillance programmes.

Official controls are carried out in accordance with business protocols which are part of HSE's QMS, and the FSAI's guidance notes and codes of practice.

FSAI [Guidance Note 1 \(Rev 2\)](#) sets out standard inspection frequencies for establishments supervised by the HSE. Frequency of inspection is related to risk categorisation of the establishment; the means of by which each establishments is risk categorised by HSE is set out in FSAI [Guidance Note 1 \(Rev 2\)](#). This document also includes guidance to take account of the provisions in Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.

Inspections by the HSE are carried out in accordance with FSAI [Guidance Note 1 \(Revision 2\)](#). This includes guidance on programmed and non-programmed inspections. Programmed inspections comprise of full and surveillance inspections.

Sampling is carried out by the HSE to support inspection, as part of monitoring and surveillance programmes or as part of the investigation of an outbreak, incident, food alert or consumer complaint.

Local sampling plans for microbiological testing are agreed on an annual basis following consultation between the OFML and the local EHS. These sampling plans include national microbiological surveys which are developed on an annual basis by an FSAI-EHO-OFML working group, see Section 2.5.1.2.3. During the year there is on-going communication between the OFML and the EHS regarding these sampling plans. Microbiological test results are interpreted using the criteria in Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 and Guidance Note 3.

Regional sampling plans for chemical analysis are agreed on an annual basis, following consultation between PALs, the FSAI, and EHOs. The parameters and food types are chosen on the basis of risk, legislative monitoring requirements, laboratory capacity, the need to check compliance with food legislation such as labelling and nutritional claims and also to support official inspection activity. The regional programmes include any national and local surveillance requirements. During the year there is on-going communication between the PALs, the FSAI and the EHS regarding these sampling plans.

Priorities and areas for development are identified through various working groups. These activities are fed into the local food control annual service plan for the year ahead.

2.5.3.2 HSE resources available for official controls

Staffing resources

The staffing resources the HSE has agreed to provide for the official control of foodstuffs are included in the service contract between the FSAI and the HSE. Staffing resources are also specified in the HSE local food control service plans and reported annually in the MANCP report.

Laboratory resources

Laboratory resources the HSE has agreed to provide for the official control of foodstuffs are advised to the FSAI as required by the service contract between the FSAI and the HSE. Laboratory resources are also specified in the HSE local food control service plans. The HSE provides the FSAI with details of any external laboratories used during official controls.

IT resources

The HSE utilises a number of specialist IT resources for official controls, including:

1. Information management systems for storing information on establishments, inspections and sampling
2. Laboratory information management systems for storing information on samples and analysis

Electronic extracts from the HSE Lab LIMS are received at the FSAI on a weekly basis and collated into a National Food Safety Surveillance Database (NFSS2). This process is functioning for seven of the nine labs with some adjustments nearing completion for the remaining two.

The sharing of data with the FSAI which is created by the HSE EHS in the course of their official control activities, is the subject of ongoing negotiations.

2.5.4 THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOOD

2.5.4.1 Organisation of official controls by local authorities

Local authorities carry out official controls (verification, inspection, audit, sampling and analysis) in accordance with legislative requirements, the requirements of the service contracts between the local authorities and the FSAI, local authority veterinary service (LAVS) Annual Service Plans.

Official controls are carried out in accordance with standard operating SOPs, guidance notes and codes of practice.

Inspections

Hygiene inspections are carried out on a regular basis in low throughput slaughterhouses and establishments producing meat-based products by the local authority veterinary officer.

In slaughterhouses, ante-mortem and post-mortem examinations are carried out by veterinary officers or temporary veterinary inspectors. Otherwise, the frequency of inspection is based on the nature of the food business, volume of activity and prior history of the establishment. A risk assessment of establishments and inspections are carried out in accordance with standard operating procedures.

Sampling

Official control samples are taken to support inspection findings by veterinary officers. In addition, local authorities may examine the results of tests carried out by food business operators as part of inspections. A microbiological sampling guidance document and risk assessment template for small slaughterhouses and meat manufacturing establishments is used. Microbiological test results are interpreted using the criteria in Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 and Guidance Note 3.

Local authorities participate in an annual national microbiological sampling plan and samples are analysed by the Cork County Council Veterinary Food Safety Laboratory. Chemical sampling is carried out in accordance with legislative requirements, e.g. additives, residues, and in accordance with sampling plans developed by the FSAI and other official laboratories as applicable. Each local authority carries out sampling for residues in accordance with a local residue sampling plan, which forms part of the national residue control plan.

2.5.4.2 LA resources available for official controls

Staffing resources

The service contracts between the FSAI and each of the local authorities outlines the staffing resources which each local authority has agreed to provide for the official control of foodstuffs. Adequate resources are allocated to ensure that ante and post-mortem examinations are carried out on all animals at slaughterhouses. Staffing resources are also specified in each of the local authority veterinary service annual service plans and reported annually in the MANCP report.

Laboratory resources

In accordance with the service contract between the FSAI and Cork County Council, the Veterinary Food Safety Laboratory, Co. Cork acts as the official laboratory providing official control microbiological testing to all other local authorities. In addition, some local authorities use private labs for microbiological analysis. Resources for this additional VPH operation are included in the resource allocation agreed between the FSAI and Cork County Council.

Analysis of samples for chemical parameters is sent by local authorities to other official laboratories, e.g. HSE FSLS, and/or private laboratories.

IT resources

All local authorities record their official control activities in the OAPI system as described in Section 2.2.5.3. This is a national system, created by the FSAI to ensure competent authorities record data in a standardised format to facilitate comparison. This system is being extended to cater for the needs of the SFPa and other competent authorities during the period 2012-2015. Additional functionality for local authorities is also planned for the same period.

Laboratory analysis of local authority samples is performed in a variety of labs within the country. Data regarding these analyses are shared with the FSAI via extracts from laboratory information systems (LIMS). During the period 2012-2015, the FSAI anticipates completing the mechanism for regular transmission of data from the Veterinary Food Safety Laboratory, Co. Cork.

SOPs are available to all local authority veterinary officers through an extranet service 'Safety Net' provided by the FSAI.

2.5.5 THE ROLE OF THE SFPA IN THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOOD

2.5.5.1 Organisation of official controls by the SFPA

The SFPA carries out official controls (verification, inspection, audit, sampling and analysis, monitoring and surveillance) in accordance with legislative requirements, the requirements of the service contract, the SFPA annual control plan and SFPA sampling plans.

SFPA guidance notes specify frequency of inspection based on the risk category of the establishment. The categories are high, medium or low.

The SFPA, in conjunction with MI and the FSAI, is involved in the classification and monitoring of shellfish production areas.

Classification and microbiological monitoring of shellfish production areas

Shellfish areas are classified by the microbiological quality of the water in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 854/2004. Areas are assigned a classification of A, B or C by the SFPA based on microbiological monitoring. Sampling is carried out by the SFPA. The SFPA has a code of practice for microbiological monitoring of bivalve production areas.

Biotoxin monitoring programme

Ireland has a national marine biotoxin monitoring programme to monitor shellfish harvesting areas for the presence of toxins produced by some species of marine phytoplankton (in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 854/2004). The programme covers all the marine biotoxins required under Regulation 853/2004. Sampling is carried out in accordance with the COP on Marine Biotoxins.

2.5.5.2 SFPA resources available for official controls

Staffing

The staffing resources that the SFPA provides for the official control of foodstuffs are included in the service contract between the FSAI and the SFPA. Staffing figures are reported annually in the MANCP report.

Laboratory resources

The SFPA does not provide analytical services. The analytical activities of the MI are covered in Section 2.5.6.

IT resources

The national web-based OAPI system as described in 2.2.5.3 is currently being extended to cater for the needs of the SFPA. This system will allow the SFPA to ensure official control data capture is done in a standardised format to facilitate national comparison.

Data on SFPA samples are often included in existing HSE or Cork Local Authority Lab LIMS extracts which are regularly transmitted to the FSAI. Some samples are analysed in private labs and the data relating to these are collated into the national system manually at present. Work is ongoing to improve the efficiency of this small data collection task.

2.5.6 THE ROLE OF THE MI IN THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOOD

2.5.6.1 Organisation of official controls by MI

MI carries out a wide range of analyses of molluscan shellfish and farmed and wild fish, in accordance with legislative requirements, the requirements of the service contract between MI and the FSAI, the annual MI sampling plan and the National Residues Control Plan.

Food safety monitoring ensures that Irish fish, shellfish and fish products remain safe from elevated residues and contaminants. This monitoring complies with a range of EU Directives as well as with national requirements. Environmental monitoring is designed to assess levels, distribution and trends of manmade contaminants and naturally occurring biotoxins.

The MI is an accredited laboratory and sample analysis is carried out in accordance with documented procedures.

The MI, in conjunction with the SFPA and the FSAI, are involved both in the classification and monitoring of shellfish production areas.

Classification and microbiological monitoring of shellfish production areas (see Section 2.5.5.1).

MI is the NRL responsible for the analysis of microbiological samples taken by the SFPA. MI uses the *Code of Practice for Microbiological Monitoring of Bivalve Production Areas*.

Biotoxin monitoring of shellfish production areas (see Section 2.5.5.1).

MI is responsible for the analysis of samples taken by the SFPA and industry, in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Marine Biotoxins*. The latest data from these analyses are uploaded to the National Biotoxin Database (HABS) which provides competent authorities, the shellfish industry and members of the public with rapid access to information on the biotoxin status of shellfish production areas in Ireland.

2.5.6.2 MI resources available for official controls

Staffing resources

The MI has agreed to provide staff and all resources required to ensure delivery of service outputs/activity as outlined in the current service contract with the FSAI. Staffing figures are reported annually in the MANCP report.

Laboratory resources

MI is a laboratory which provides analytical services. In addition, the MI provides the FSAI with details of external laboratories used for official controls.

IT resources

MI has its own IT service. Documented procedures (SOPs) are available to all MI staff through an intranet service.

The MI maintains the [National Biotoxin Database](#) (HABS) and other databases for the holding of monitoring programme results.

The Marine Environment and Food Safety Services (MEFS) maintain records of food analysis for greater than five years.

2.5.8 THE ROLE OF THE NSAI IN THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF FOOD

2.5.8.1 Organisation of official controls by the NSAI

The NSAI carries out inspection and verification activities in accordance with legislative requirements, the requirements of the service contract between the NSAI and the FSAI and the NSAI annual business plan.

The NSAI carries out inspections for the initial recognition and permission to exploit natural mineral waters, as requested.

The NSAI carries out surveillance inspections of all natural mineral water producers three times per year to ensure legal requirements with respect to recognition and exploitation continue to be met. The NSAI takes samples of source water from each company at least once per year for microbiological and chemical analysis.

The NSAI carries out official controls on businesses which manufacture, distribute or import food contact materials.

2.5.8.2 NSAI resources available for official controls

Staffing resources

Staffing resources the NSAI has agreed to provide for the official control of foodstuffs are included in the service contract between the FSAI and the NSAI. Staffing figures are reported annually in the MANCP report.

Laboratory resources

The NSAI has an arrangement with official laboratories from the HSE to carry out the analysis of samples taken for official control of natural mineral waters.

IT resources

The NSAI has its own information technology service. Work is ongoing to explore the possibility of the NSAI using the FSAI OAPI system to record their official controls of food contact materials.

2.6 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPLICATION OF HORIZONTAL LEGISLATION ACROSS DIFFERENT SECTORS/SUB-SECTORS

The role of the FSAI is to ensure consistent enforcement of horizontal food legislation across the different competent authorities involved in the official control of food. This is achieved through inter-agency working groups, cross-agency guidance documents, cross-agency training and consistency working groups. The effectiveness of the application of horizontal legislation is examined through the FSAI audits and FVO missions.

Each of the competent authorities has agreed to work in partnership with the FSAI and its other competent authorities to enhance consumer protection and ensure an effective inspection service.

2.7 CONTINGENCY PLANS AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

2.7.1 CONTINGENCY PLANS

The FSAI has an internal crisis management plan which is available to all staff on the FSAI intranet and in the library. The FSAI plan is linked to the EU plan. The plan clearly identifies the people involved and the circumstances under which the plan is initiated. All staff have been informed of the existence and purpose of the plan. People involved in the plan have received training to familiarise them with the contents of the plan and arrangements in the plan. Further training involving simulation exercises is proposed. Activation arrangements indicate when other agencies need to be involved. The FSAI plan includes contact details for Government departments, competent authorities and other Member States. In the case of an emergency, the FSAI can be contacted by competent authorities via a 24 hour emergency phone number.

The FSAI crisis management plan will link to contingency plans in the relevant competent authorities. It is a requirement in the service contracts for the competent authorities, in conjunction with the FSAI, to ensure that there are contingency plans in place at central and regional level for dealing with crisis incidents, large scale food safety incidents and outbreaks of food related disease.

Food incidents/alerts are dealt with, by the FSAI or the competent authorities, in accordance with [Code of Practice 5 – Food Incidents and Food Alerts](#), see Section 2.5.1.1.3 on Food Alerts.

The FSAI delivers an inter-agency introductory training session on contingency planning, including simulation exercises, to all of the competent authorities involved in food controls. The next training exercise is scheduled for September 2012.

Included in the service contracts with the competent authorities is a requirement for competent authorities to respond to and manage an outbreak of foodborne disease. During 2011, the FSAI agreed a cross-agency outbreak control protocol which outlines how food and public health agencies identify and respond to an outbreak of foodborne illness. The protocol is currently being trialled.

The Veterinary Public Health Service of DAFM has put in place a contingency plan for products of animal origin setting out the procedures to be followed and the measures to be taken in the event of a serious food incident. The plan covers primary production of food of animal origin; importation of food animals and products of animal origin, slaughtering of animals, processing of products of animal origin and the transport, storage and distribution of products of animal origin.

The contingency plan describes the crisis planning measures which have been put in place to ensure that DAFM officials are ready to respond effectively and in a timely, coordinated and coherent manner to a food safety crisis, explains the crisis management procedures which are followed when DAFM is notified of or detects a serious food safety hazard involving live animals or food products of animal origin and specifies the responsibilities of DAFM officers and the legal basis with regard to the actions to be taken.

Hazards requiring consideration and possible management may be identified following the Department's routine controls on food production or may be notified by an external source, for example, through the RASFF system of the EU.

The HSE has local plans in place for dealing with outbreaks.

Contact details of local authority veterinary officers (LAVOs) are listed in each of the local authority's emergency plans.

The MI and the SFPA are to participate in the development of a contingency plan in conjunction with the FSAI. The MI will be involved in the scientific risk assessment and the SFPA in the risk management.

The Dept of the Environment, Community and Local Government has developed a National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents (NEPNA). This plan illustrates how Ireland will respond to a nuclear accident and conforms to the requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency Safety Standard on 'Preparedness and Response for a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency'. NEPNA includes an Emergency Response Co-ordination Committee which considers the technical assessment of the actual and potential consequences of the accident and advice on what countermeasures should be implemented. The FSAI is a member of the Emergency Response Co-ordination Committee, with responsibility for food contamination issues.

Each service contract requires the competent authority to provide the FSAI with a single central contact point for emergency/out of hours contact for emergency and crisis situations. Currently, out-of-hours cover in emergency situations is provided informally and on a 'goodwill' basis.

2.7.2 MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

The procedures for the FSAI and the competent authorities in relation to mutual assistance regarding food are documented in a [Code of Practice 5 – Food Incidents and Food Alerts](#). The FSAI maintains the list of contact points responsible for food in other Member States.

The details of the Irish contact point for mutual assistance are provided below:

Liaison Body	Area of Responsibility	Contact Details
FSAI	Food	Contact: Consumer Protection, Food Safety Authority of Ireland. Address: Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1 Telephone: +353 1 817 1300 Facsimile: +353 1 817 1301 E-mail: rapidalert@fsai.ie

2.8 SPECIFIC CONTROL PLANS

Sampling Control Plans

TABLE 6. COMPETENT AUTHORITIES INVOLVED IN THE SPECIFIC CONTROLS PLANS

	FSAI	DAFM	SFPA	MI	LAs	HSE	NSAI
National Residues Control Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Pesticides Control Plan	✓	✓					
Inspection Programmes	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Microbiological Sampling Programme	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chemical Sampling Programme	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Official controls for specific control plans are integrated into business plans/service plans/sampling plans of the various competent authorities involved and compliment other official controls.

2.8.1 NATIONAL RESIDUES CONTROL PLAN

Council Directive 96/23/EC on measures to monitor certain substances and residues thereof in live animals and animal products requires Member States to monitor animals and primary animal products to detect residues of unauthorised or banned substances, e.g. hormones, steroids, and residues of permitted veterinary drugs in excess of the maximum permitted limits, e.g. antibiotics, anticoccidiostats.

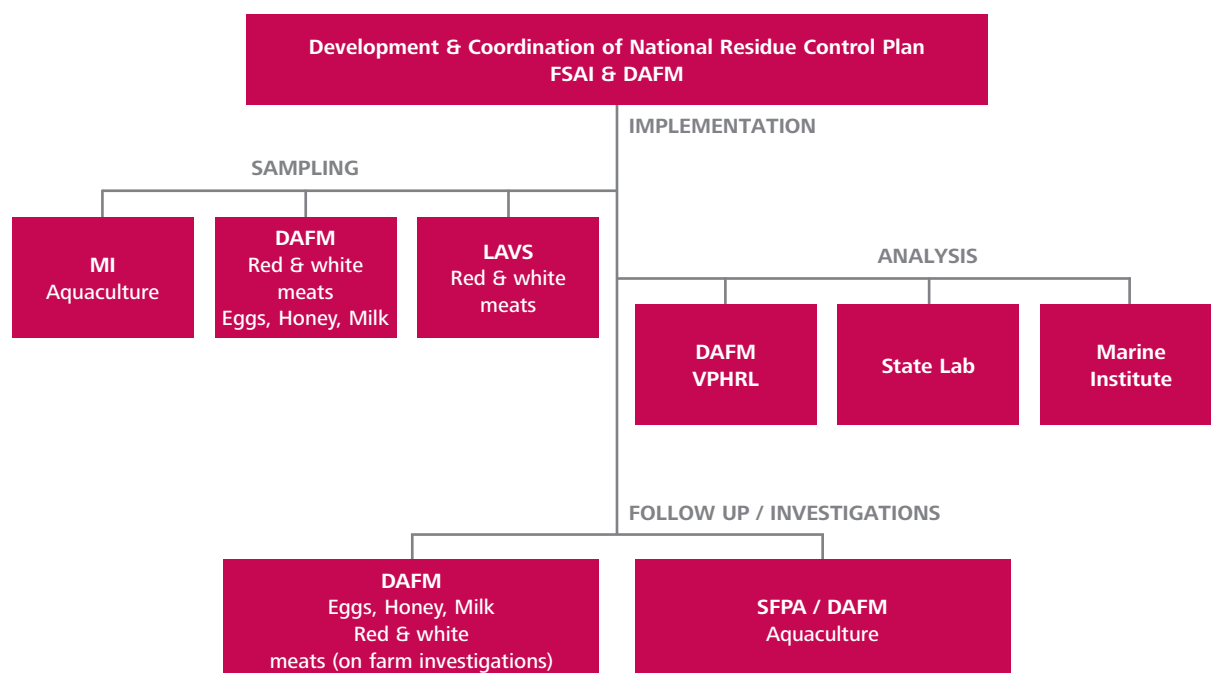
The annual National Residues Control Programme (NRCP) for Ireland is developed by DAFM in consultation with the FSAI, the SFPA, MI and local authorities. The plan is aimed at surveying and identifying the reasons for residue hazards in foods of animal origin on farms, slaughterhouses, dairies, aparies, finfish farms, and egg collecting and packing stations. Thus, the plan aims to ensure that farmers and primary processors meet their statutory obligations, in particular, to use only authorised veterinary medicinal products and to comply with specified withdrawal periods. The plan sets out specific targets designed to ensure that the requisite numbers of samples are taken and that these are analysed to a recognised standard and that appropriate follow up action takes place.

The Irish annual National Residue Control Programme (NRCP) involves sampling of live animals and fresh meat (bovine, porcine, ovine), poultry, hen eggs, honey, wild and farmed deer, horses, milk, aquaculture (farmed finfish) and imported samples (from third countries). Sampling for this programme is carried out by DAFM inspectors, local authority veterinary officers and MI sampling officers. DAFM and SFPA inspections are responsible for follow-up investigations.

The number of samples is based on throughput, sampling is spread throughout the year and sampling locations are proportionate to production. For each substance tested for and each species or food type, the plan details the number of samples to be taken, the sample matrix, the laboratory to be used for analysis and the methods of analysis (limit of detection etc).

Further details are available in the annual National Residues Control Plan which is in-place by the end of the first quarter of each year.

FIGURE 20. COMPETENT AUTHORITIES INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL RESIDUE CONTROL PLAN



2.8.2 PESTICIDES RESIDUES CONTROL PLAN

Council Directive 96/23/EC requires monitoring of food of animal origin for pesticide residues. Regulation (EC) No 396 of 2005 requires the monitoring of food of plant origin for pesticide residues.

The Pesticides Residues Control Programme is a risk-based multi-annual control programme developed by DAFM in consultation with the FSAI. The number of samples per food type is based on criteria, such as, consumption data for adults and children of the particular food, results over time for the presence of pesticides in this food, etc. The programme also implements the EU coordinated multiannual control programme and specifies the foods to be sampled, the number of samples to be taken and the pesticides they are to be tested for.

Sampling is carried out by DAFM inspectors and analysis is carried out in the DAFM Pesticides Control Laboratory.

Further details are available in the multi-annual National Pesticides Residues Control Plan which is available to the Commission from 30th September each year.

2.8.3 MICROBIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL SAMPLING PROGRAMMES

Microbiological and chemical sampling plans are agreed annually by the competent authorities. The FSAI provides technical input to the competent authorities in the development of these programmes. Each competent authority has programmes in place which assess the applicable foodstuffs at appropriate points along the food chain, taking into account legislative criteria and current and emerging risks.

2.8.4 INSPECTION PROGRAMMES

For the purposes of determining inspection frequency each competent authority categorise food businesses on a risk basis. Competent authorities use documented procedure when determining these risk categorisations and ultimately the inspection frequencies, e.g. [Guidance for the Health Service Executive on the Inspection of Food Businesses \(Rev 2\)](#)

2.9 TRAINING OF STAFF CARRYING OUT OFFICIAL CONTROLS

2.9.1 TRAINING OF STAFF IN COMPETENT AUTHORITIES

Each of the competent authorities is responsible for the training of staff involved in official controls. A recruitment procedure for each of the competent authorities includes specific requirements with respect to minimum entry requirements in relation to educational qualifications. The competent authorities operate induction training programmes for new staff and systems are in place to ensure the continuous development of staff so they are kept up-to-date with current and anticipated requirements. Training needs are established on a one-to-one basis between staff and their managers through the Performance Management Development System (PMDS) or through local, regional, national forums which identify training needs for groups of staff. Training needs identified are used by each competent authority to prepare an annual training plan. Training is rolled out through local or national initiatives. Training records are maintained for each member of staff. Training is evaluated at a local level between staff and their management. Feedback on formal training events is gathered using evaluation forms.

In order to be registered with the Veterinary Council of Ireland and receive their licence to practice, veterinary surgeons must obtain 20 or more continuing veterinary education points each year.

The FSAI and competent authority staff may also attend the Better Training for Safer Food training courses organised by the EU Commission.

2.9.2 FSAI ROLE IN TRAINING

The service contracts between the FSAI and the competent authorities involved in food control include requirements in relation to the provision of induction training and continuing professional development to ensure all staff performing official controls are kept up to date in their area of competence.

The FSAI also provides training for official control staff. The FSAI develops and implements these training programmes in consultation with the relevant competent authorities. The FSAI provides training to:

1. Educate official control staff on the requirements of new/revised legislation
2. Roll out the application of new guidance notes or codes of practices
3. Allow for standardised approaches to new activities

The aim is to ensure a consistent understanding and application of new legislation, new guidance or new procedures.

The FSAI is a national contact point for training provided by the Commission under Article 51 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. This role involves disseminating information to the competent authorities, co-ordinating nominations, ensuring a fair distribution of participant places and forwarding completed registration forms to the Commission within the guidelines and timeframes set by them. The FSAI provides feedback to the Commission on their training activities and assists in the development of future training programmes.

Training needs for official control staff are identified through liaison meetings, working groups, FSAI audits and feedback from other training events. In some circumstances, a Training Needs Assessment survey is conducted with the target group in advance of the development of the programme to ensure their most relevant needs/issues are addressed. Training priorities are decided on an annual basis when preparing FSAI business plans. These plans allow for a certain amount of flexibility to take account of training needs identified/re-prioritised during the year.

Training is rolled out either formally as a national or regional training event or informally as part of a national or regional meeting. The FSAI staff involved in official controls also attend these training events. If the training is interactive a pilot is conducted to identify any changes which might be required prior to the roll-out of the training. Any outstanding post-training issues are addressed in a follow-up questions and answers which is circulated to participants by email.

Training is evaluated by reviewing the evaluation forms circulated at the training event, requesting feedback at liaison meetings with the participating competent authorities and by collating any comments received by the FSAI staff involved in the training during / after the training events. For training programmes run on a phased basis, the FSAI incorporates a review of progress between each of the phases. At the end of the year, the training programme is reviewed to assist in determining priorities for the following year.

The FSAI maintains the following records in relation to the training programmes it provides:

1. Training material used (electronic record)
2. Attendance records (paper and electronic record)
3. Evaluation forms (paper record, retained for 6-8 months)
4. Evaluation report including post training questions and answers where circulated (electronic record)

A database is maintained to record details of all training provided by the FSAI to the competent authority. This provides information on name and date of training, the competent authority to which it was provided, the content of the programme, methods and materials used, list of attendees, details of venues used and evaluation reports.

Activities in relation to training are part of the FSAI QMS, and training procedures are subject to ISO 9001:2008 certification audits by the NSAI.

The FSAI audits to determine compliance with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 may include an assessment of training provided to authorised officers by the relevant competent authority. Where non-compliance with the training requirements of this Regulation is identified, corrective action will be required.

It should be noted that the FSAI has a dual role with respect to training; it assists competent authorities in meeting their training requirements and it is also responsible for raising and harmonising standards of food safety training in the food industry

2.10 DOCUMENTED PROCEDURES AND AUDITS

2.10.1 DOCUMENTED PROCEDURES

All official controls are carried out in accordance with documented procedures, e.g. standard operating procedures, veterinary practice notes, guidance notes, codes of practice, aide memoirs. The service contracts between the FSAI and each competent authority requires official controls to be carried out in accordance with documented procedures.

2.10.2 EXTERNAL AUDIT SYSTEMS

Competent authorities are subject to external audits of official controls by the following bodies:

- FVO in accordance with Article 45 of Regulation 882/2004
- FSAI in accordance with Schedule 5 of the service contracts (as outlined in Section 2.5.1.2.1)
- INAB (in the case of laboratories) in accordance with Article 12 of Regulation 882/2004

A summary of audits carried out in accordance with Regulation 882/2004 is provided in Appendix 3.

2.10.3 INTERNAL AUDIT SYSTEMS

Competent authorities are required under Article 4(6) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 to carry out internal audits or have external audits carried out to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Regulation.

- DAFM has implemented an internal audit function
- Local authorities have implemented a programme whereby local authorities are audited by another independent local authority.
- The SFPA performs internal reviews of the audit aspect of Regulation 882/2004
- The HSE is in the process of establishing an internal audit system; additionally, audits of official controls by the HSE are conducted by the FSAI in the form of external audits in accordance with Regulation 882/2004 and Schedule 5 of the FSAI/HSE Service Contract

DAFM, the SFPA and local authorities' internal audits are carried out according to an annual internal audit programme. Internal audit are carried out in accordance with documented procedures and in so far as possible, audits are carried out by personnel independent of the function being audited. The internal audit systems include procedures to ensure appropriate measures are taken in the light of results of internal and external audits.

The official laboratories carry out internal audits to monitor for compliance with the requirements of ISO 17025 and determine adherence to defined SOPs/process flows.

A summary of audits carried out in accordance with Regulation 882/2004 is provided in Appendix 3.

2.11 COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPERATIONAL CRITERIA OF REGULATION (EC) NO 882/2004

Within competent authorities, the management structures are responsible for ensuring compliance/conformance with the operational criteria in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.

Operational criteria are a key aspect of the negotiation process for service contracts which are reviewed and renegotiated every 3-5 years.

The liaison meetings between the FSAI and the competent authorities provide forums to address issues in relation to operational matters which affect a competent authority's ability to meet the requirements of the service contract. These operational matters are raised at management level.

The internal/external audit assess whether competent authorities meet the operational criteria set out for them in Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.

SECTION 3:

THE NATIONAL CONTROL SYSTEM FOR FEED

3.1 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR ANIMAL FEED

The specific objectives of the National Control System for animal feed is to ensure that feedingstuffs do not endanger food safety or animal health and to ensure that all operators in the feed chain comply with a suite of statutory provisions and in particular with the primary production, imports, storage, manufacture, trade and use requirements of Regulation 183/2005.

3.2 COMPETENT AUTHORITIES FOR ANIMAL FEED

DAFM is the central competent authority for animal feed. Feed Division (FD) and Crop Policy, Production & Safety Division (CPPSD) makes up the Animal Feedingstuffs Control Group (AFCG) who is responsible for the negotiation, transposition and enforcement of legislation in the feedingstuffs area. At central level, the AFCG negotiates EU policy, transposes legislation and establishes a risk-based inspection programme for animal feed as well as administering, co-ordinating and implementing that programme.

The AFCG works with other competent authorities and agencies in relation to some areas of feedingstuffs controls, such as:

- The FSAI, in relation to operational arrangements for contingency plans covering the feed and food chain where there is a risk for the food chain. In addition, the FD samples some bulk food materials that might end up in the food or feed chain, e.g. wheat, barley or oats, for mycotoxin analysis
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and DoH in relation to genetically modified organisms
- Revenue's Customs Service, in relation to import controls of feed of non-animal origin
- The SFPA in relation to fish meal manufacturing operations

3.2.1 DAFM ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

DAFM's Feed Division (FD) prepares an annual business plan outlining how resources for carrying out the various control programmes are allocated. FD liaises with other DAFM divisions involved in controls on relevant issues through the MANCP Management/Co-ordination Board.

FIGURE 21. ORGANISATIONAL AND REPORTING STRUCTURE OF THE DAFM AGRICULTURAL INSPECTORATE WITH THE AFCG HIGHLIGHTED IN GREEN (SEE ALSO FIGURE 6 FOR OVERALL DAFM STRUCTURE)

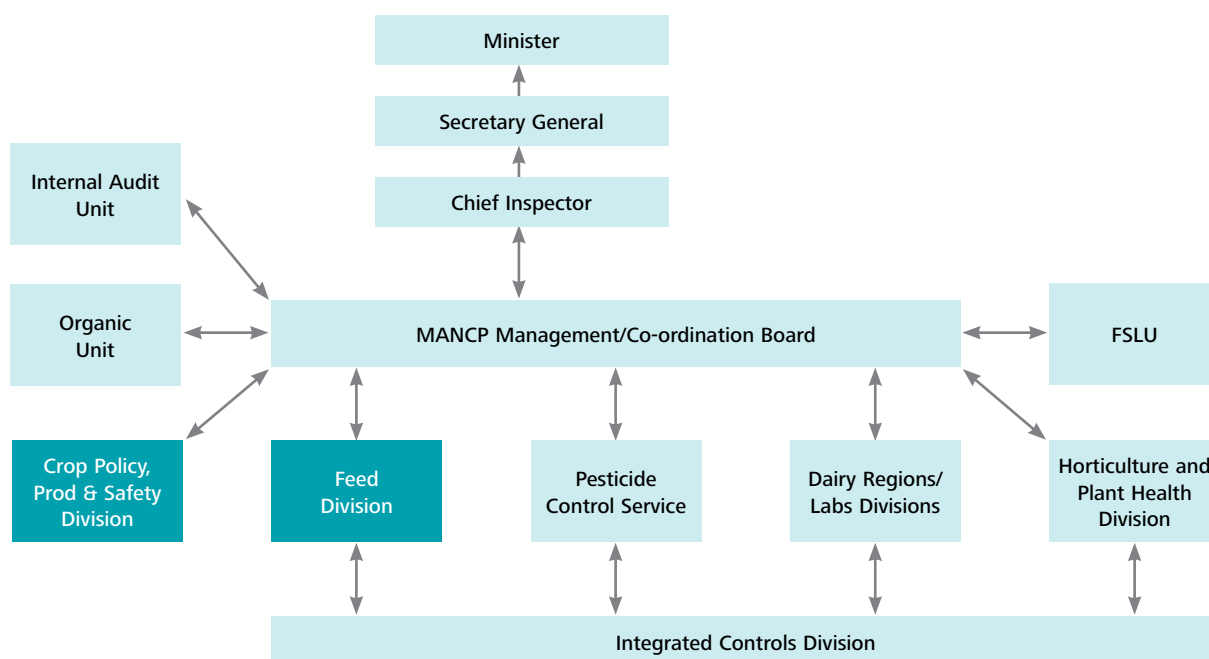
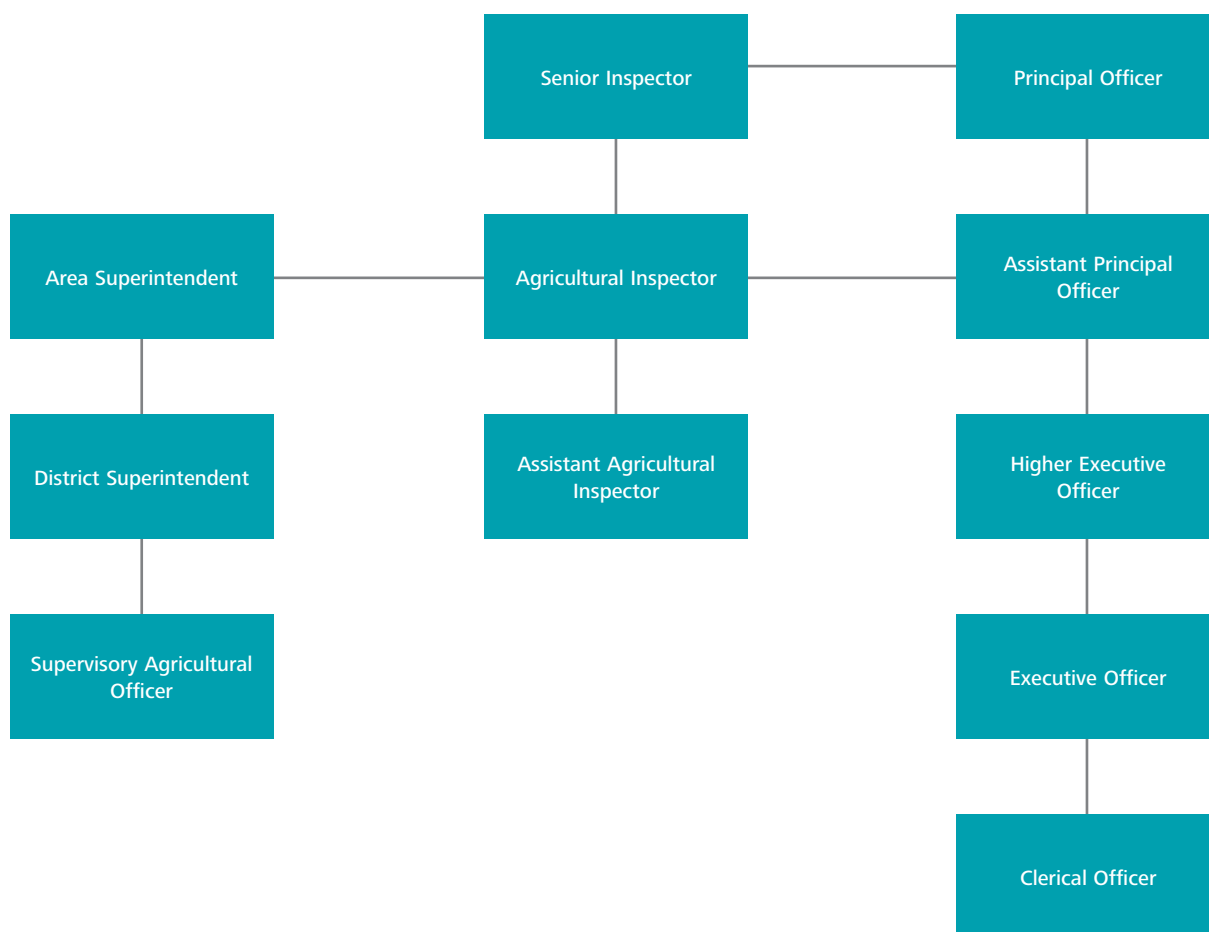


FIGURE 22. THE ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS CONTROL GROUP



3.2.2 SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES/ACTIVITIES

AFCG is responsible for inspection, sampling and analysis activities at all stages of the feed chain. In particular, it covers the following areas:

- General food law
- Feed hygiene
- The circulation and use of feed materials
- The marketing of compound feed
- Additives used in animal nutrition
- Undesirable substances in animal feed
- Feeding stuffs for particular nutritional purposes
- Certain protein products used in animal nutrition
- GMO in feed
- Medicated feeding stuffs
- Controls on TSE, APB and other surplus food of non-animal origin
- Animal health (as it relates to animal feed)

The AFCG liaises with other divisions in DAFM, where some overlap of functions arises, as follows:

- TSE and ABP Division, veterinary inspectorate: co-operation on TSE controls; controls on medicated feedingstuffs; co-operation on controls on zoonoses and in particular checks for the presence of *Salmonella* species
- Integrated Control Division: co-operation on cross-compliance feed checks at farm level
- Pesticide Control Division: co-operation on controls of pesticides in crops.
- BIPs, veterinary inspectorate: responsible for import controls of feedingstuffs of animal origin
- The SFPA, which is responsible for official controls in fishmeal manufacturing operations (fish meal produced from animal by-products). All other aspects of enforcement of the derogations for feeding protein of animal origin foreseen in the provisions laid down in Annex IV to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 are the responsibility of the DAFM AFCG

Meetings are held on an ad hoc basis between divisions to address issues as they arise. There is consultation with these divisions prior to drawing up the Feedingstuffs Annual Inspection Programme to ensure their requirements, in the areas where co-operation has been set up, are met therein.

The AFCG also liaises with the following bodies as the need arises:

- FSAI
- EPA
- DoH
- Revenue's Customs Service

The FSAI, DoH and the EPA are involved in implementing legislation relating to GM in Ireland. There is ongoing communication between the AFCG and these bodies on GM issues.

The AFCG liaise with Revenue's Customs Service to ensure identification and control of imported feed. This is part of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Revenue's Customs Service and DAFM with regard to their respective roles in the control of animals, plants, products of animal and plant origin, animal remedies and animal feedingstuffs. Importers are required to notify the AFCG in advance of importing animal feed. This pre-notification system is highly effective in ensuring that the appropriate controls are carried out on imports.

3.2.3 REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

AFCG internal reporting and communication channels

The internal reporting arrangements are generally in line with the organisational structure outlined in Figure 21 and 22.

The AFCG liaises with other divisions in DAFM where some overlap of functions arises, as follows:

- TSE and ABP Division
- Integrated Control Division
- Pesticide Control Division
- Veterinary Inspectorate of BIPs

AFCG communication channels with other authorities

As outlined above, the AFCG liaises with the following bodies as the need arises:

- FSAI
- SFPA
- EPA
- DoH
- Revenue's Customs Service

3.3 DELEGATION OF TASKS TO CONTROL BODIES

The AFCG has not delegated at tasks at present.

3.4 LABORATORIES INVOLVED IN OFFICIAL CONTROLS

A number of official laboratories are used by AFCG for analysis feed samples. Details of these laboratories are listed on the FSAI (http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/laboratories/labs.html)

3.5 ORGANISATION OF OFFICIAL CONTROLS BY DAFM

The activities of DAFM in the area of animal feed controls are set out in the following documents:

1. The Animal Feed Controls Programme 2012 – 2014. This document can be found under the following link: <http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/agri-foodindustry/feedingstuffs/whatsnew/AnimalFeedControlsProgramme20122014.pdf>
It contains further, more detailed, information on the scope of feedingstuffs controls
2. The Feedingstuffs Annual Inspection Programme (FAIP). This document contains very specific details on the type, numbers and individual feed business operators subject to controls. The information is considered sensitive and is subject to restricted access

Official controls are carried out in accordance with documented procedures and guidance as set out in the division's procedures manual. Included in this document are the risk assessment criteria used in developing the inspection programme.

3.5.1 Resources available for Official Controls

Staffing and laboratory resources

Details on staff numbers are included in the MANCP annual report. Laboratory facilities available to AFCG are outlined in above in Section 3.4.

IT resources

Regarding IT resources, the Information Systems Division of DAFM is responsible for the maintenance and security of databases used by the AFCG. These databases include the food business operator register; the inspection database; the imports database and the sampling results database.

3.6 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPLICATION OF HORIZONTAL LEGISLATION ACROSS DIFFERENT SECTORS/ SUB SECTORS

As outlined above, DAFM is the sole competent authority responsible for the enforcement of official controls for feed. Consistence in enforcement is achieved through training, documented procedures and regular liaison within DAFM divisions. The effectiveness of official controls is examined through FVO audits.

3.7 CONTINGENCY PLANS AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

3.7.1 CONTINGENCY PLANS

The AFCG has put in place, a contingency plan for animal feed setting out the procedures to be followed and the measures to be taken in the event of a serious feed safety issue being detected. This document is available from the AFCG (contact: gerry.lohan@agriculture.gov.ie).

The AFCG monitors the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) whereby information is exchanged about measures taken responding to serious risks detected in relation to feed (also see Section 2.5.1.1.3).

3.7.2 MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

The AFCG will provide the administrative assistance and cooperation in relation to animal feed controls referred to in Articles 34 – 39 of Regulation 882/2004 where appropriate (contact: gerry.lohan@agriculture.gov.ie).

3.8 SPECIFIC CONTROLS PLANS

The day to day organisation and implementation of control activities in relation to animal feed is driven by the feedingstuffs annual inspection programme (FAIP) with each officer assigned to carry out required tasks in his/her designated areas. The programme includes the control activities undertaken to ensure compliance with all relevant animal feed legislation. It includes inspection, sampling and analysis activities in relation to all levels of the feed chain.

When drawing up the inspection programme each year, the number of inspections and analysis completed for each operator within each segment of the industry is determined using risk-based criteria, which takes into account, the following:

- The outcome of previous inspections
- Nature of risk to health or the environment associated with an operation or type of feed
- Auto controls of the operator and history of compliance
- Community co-ordinated controls
- Information on controls in other member states or scientific findings

FAIP gives very specific details on the type, numbers and individual feed business operators subject to controls. The information in this document is considered sensitive and is subject to restricted access.

The outcomes of certain community coordinated controls on animal feed included in FAIP are sent to the appropriate Commission services.

3.9 TRAINING OF STAFF CARRYING OUT OFFICIAL CONTROLS

The annual training needs of staff are assessed via a performance management development system. Staff in the division attend the Better Training for Safer Food training courses organised by the EU Commission as well as training courses organised centrally by DAFM or locally by the division. Training records are maintained for each staff member and the effectiveness of training is monitored on an on-going basis.

3.10 DOCUMENTED PROCEDURES AND AUDITS

3.10.1 DOCUMENTED PROCEDURES

Official controls of feedstuffs are carried out in accordance with documented procedures. The procedures manual for the Feedingstuffs Division details all relevant procedures.

3.10.2 INTERNAL AUDIT SYSTEMS

In accordance with Article 4(6) of Regulation (EC) No 882 of 2004, DAFM's Internal Audit Unit (IAU) conducts audits on the effectiveness and suitability of official controls performed by DAFM personnel in a number of Divisions, including the AFCG. Accordingly, the IAU's objective in relation to AFCG is to ensure that implementation of the official controls is achieving the objectives of the relevant EU legislation.

3.10.3 EXTERNAL AUDIT SYSTEMS

DAFM is subject to external audits of official controls by the FVO in accordance with Article 45 of Regulation 882/2004.

A summary of audits carried out in accordance with Regulation 882/2004 is provided in Appendix 3.

3.11 COMPLIANCES WITH THE OPERATIONAL CRITERIA OF REGULATION 882/2004

Within AFCG, the management structure is responsible for ensuring compliance with the operational criteria of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. Audits carried out by the IAU will assess whether the AFCG controls meet the operational criteria as set out Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.

Bi-annually, the AFCG provides updates on its control programme to the MANCP management/co-ordination board. The board provides a forum to address issues which arise and if necessary, these may be raised with the chief inspector.

SECTION 4:

THE NATIONAL CONTROL SYSTEM FOR ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

DAFM is the competent authority for the implementation of controls in the area of animal health, animal welfare and certain components of public health and food safety.

4.1 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

The specific objectives of DAFM for controls of animal health and welfare are as follows:

- Ensure compliance with EU and national legislative requirements
- Improve the health status of farmed animals
- Ensure the welfare of animals on farm, during transport and at slaughter. Ensure welfare of laboratory animals
- Ensure food safety through controls in medicines, residues and zoonotic diseases
- Ensure feed and food safety through the control of TSEs and ABPs
- Apply controls regarding EU and international movement of animals
- Ensure contingency planning and control of former OIE list A diseases
- Develop contingency plans and mutual assistance arrangements
- Maintain a well-trained staff to perform official controls

4.2 COMPETENT AUTHORITIES FOR ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

4.2.1 DAFM ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Figures 23 and 24 outline the organisational structure in the DAFM and the Animal Health and Welfare Divisions of DAFM respectively.

FIGURE 23. THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF DAFM

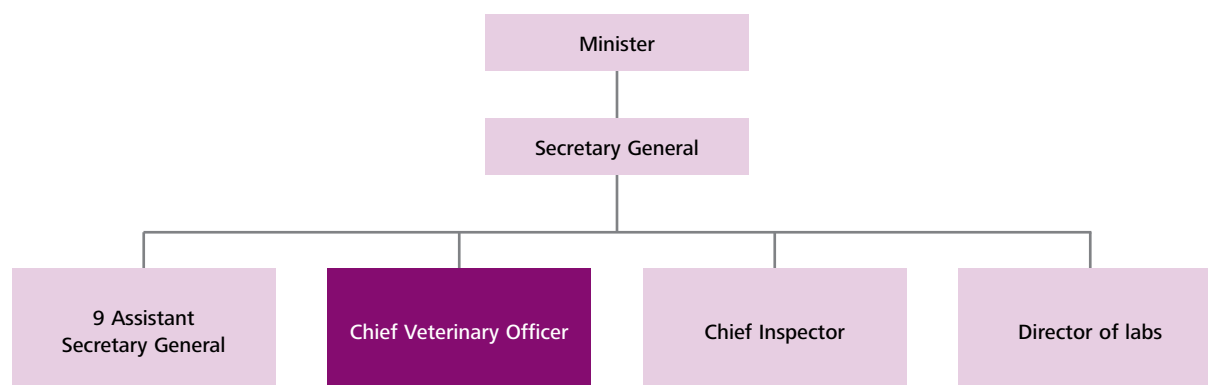
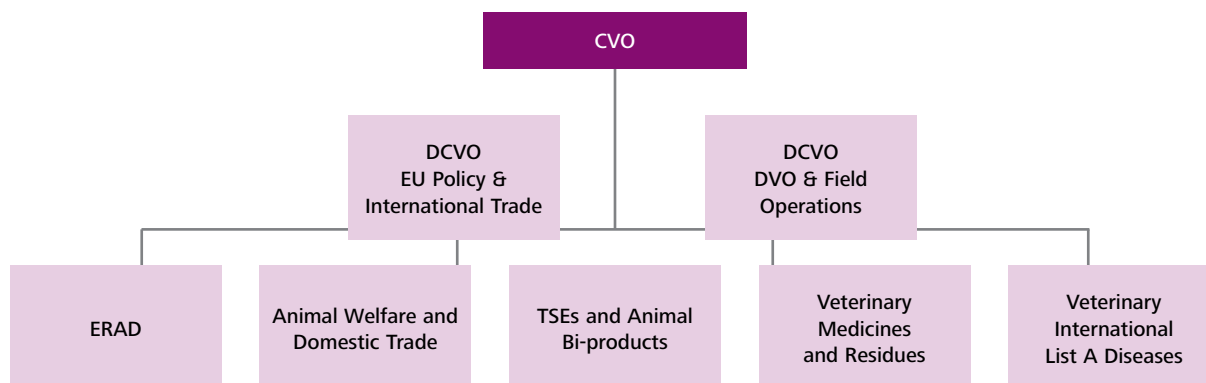


FIGURE 24. THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE DIVISIONS OF DAFM



DAFM has a statement of strategy in which it outlines its high-level goals. The veterinary controls within DAFM are divided into five divisions as outlined in Figure 24, namely:

- ERAD
- Animal Welfare and Domestic Trade
- TSEs and Animal Bi-products
- Veterinary Medicines and Residues
- Veterinary International and List A Diseases

Each division is headed by an SSVI. Parallel divisions reporting to an Assistant Secretary General (ASG) deal with policy and administrative issues. Business units at various management levels produce an annual business plan describing the methods by which the various control programmes will be implemented. The tasks to be performed by each individual are captured in a role profile which is agreed and managed between the job-holder and manager as part of a performance management and development system (PMDS).

Food safety and veterinary public health

Within DAFM, the veterinary public health inspection system (VPHIS) performs controls in relation to food safety related matters under service contract to the FSAI. The VPHIS is divided into two divisions, namely Beef and Lamb and Pigs and Poultry. Each is under the control of an SSVI. There is a parallel division dealing with administrative issues under the control of a principal officer (PO). This control system is described in detail in Section 2 (the National Controls System for Food).

Delivery of operational programmes

The various control programmes are delivered through a structure comprised of 16 regional offices and two area management teams, all of which are staffed by veterinary, technical and administrative staff. One of the deputy CVOs deals with EU policy and international trade while the other is responsible for regional veterinary offices and field operations. The staffing resource for the delivery of the various programmes is kept under constant review.

The veterinary reporting structure is described in Figure 25.

FIGURE 25. THE VETERINARY REPORTING STRUCTURE OF DAFM



4.2.2 SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES/ACTIVITIES

The following list of control functions are performed by the relevant section of DAFM:

- Registration of holdings (of farmed animals)
- Animal identification (bovine, ovine, caprine, equine, porcine)
- Animal welfare (on-farm, during transport, at slaughter and of laboratory animals)
- Trading premises (marts, dealers and assembly centres)
- Contingency planning regarding former OIE list A diseases (foot and mouth, swine fever, bluetongue, avian influenza etc.)
- International trade (imports and exports of animals and animal products, BIPs, pets, personal luggage, TRACES)
- Animal health, TB, brucellosis, leucosis
- Animal bi-products and TSEs
- Veterinary medicines and residues/contaminants
- Animal breeding (semen, ova and embryos)
- Zoonoses (*salmonella* and *trichinella* control programmes)
- Internal audit

Each of the five divisions has responsibility for a number of official control activities and these are summarised in Table 7.

TABLE 7. SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL CONTROL ACTIVITIES OF THE ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE DIVISIONS OF DAFM

ERAD	Animal Welfare and Domestic Trade	TSEs and Animal Bi-products	Veterinary Medicines and Residues	Veterinary International and List A Diseases
Holding registration	Maintenance of official freedom of bovine brucellosis, leucosis and brucellosis in sheep	Controls in relation to BSE, scrapie	Controls in relation to the distribution and use of veterinary medicines	Contingency planning and control of former OIE List A Diseases
Bovine ID and registration		Controls in relation to animal bi-products		Controls regarding EU and international movement of live animals.
Eradication programmes (TB and brucellosis)	Animal welfare on farm, during transport and at slaughter		Controls in relation to residues of controlled and uncontrolled substances	
Ovine and caprine identification systems	Welfare of laboratory animals		Controls in relation to zoonoses	Third country and EU imports of animals and third country imports of products of animal origin
	Controls on trading premises (marts, dealers and assembly centers)		Controls in relation to animal breeding (semen, ova and embryos)	
	Equine identification			

Operational methodology

Each division performs the following tasks where appropriate:

- Arrange introduction of new legislation
- Authorisation of staff
- Provision of standard operating procedures, instruction manuals etc
- Provision of inspection forms (hard copy or electronic)
- Provision/organisation of training
- Co-ordination of activities with other relevant bodies
- Checks/systems to ensure the effectiveness of the control system
- Provide direction regarding official control activity for a given period
- Prescribe enforcement measures and sanctions

4.2.3 REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Internal reporting and communication channels

Veterinary reporting arrangements are outlined in Figure 25 above. The Agriculture Field Inspection & Test (AFIT) system is used increasingly for the scheduling, performance and reporting of official controls. Hard copy documents are used in areas where the AFIT system has not yet been introduced. Electronically captured data are readily available to management while data captured in hard copy format are reported to line management manually.

Where it is a requirement, specific (sector) reports are submitted to European Commission annually. DAFM contributes to the compilation of the MANCP annual report which summarises the control activity of the previous calendar year. The relevant data are forwarded to the FSAI for inclusion in the final report.

DAFM liaises with other divisions in DAFM as necessary, as outlined in Table 8.

Communication channels with other authorities

DAFM liaises with other authorities as outlined in Table 8.

4.3 DELEGATION OF TASKS TO CONTROL BODIES

There are no official control activities delegated to control bodies. However, some aspects of official controls are performed by external bodies, e.g. the training of animal transporters with regard to Regulation 1/2005 EC.

4.4 LABORATORIES INVOLVED IN OFFICIAL CONTROLS

A number of laboratories perform the necessary analysis as part of the system of official control described in this chapter.

The following laboratories are approved laboratories under Trade Directive 64/432 EC as amended:

- DAFM, Central Veterinary Research Laboratory (CVRL), Backweston Campus, Young's Cross, Celbridge, Co. Kildare
- DAFM, Blood testing laboratory, Cork

Details of the official laboratories under Regulation 882/2004 which are used are listed on the FSAI website (http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/laboratories/labs.html).

In addition, a number of private laboratories are used for analysis of official control samples.

4.5 ORGANISATION OF OFFICIAL CONTROLS BY DAFM

The key components in the organisation of official controls by DAFM are described in Table 9.

TABLE 8. DETAILS OF OFFICIAL CONTROLS ACTIVITIES FOR ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE AND DETAILS OF DAFM COORDINATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS FOR EACH AREA

Official Control Area	Key Components of the Official Control Activity	Stakeholders with which Communication/Co-ordination takes Place
Registration of holdings	Registration of bovine holdings is performed by ERAD Division while registration of ovine and caprine holdings is performed by AHW Division.	Integrated Controls Division NBAS
	Most official controls are carried out under cross compliance and single farm payment schemes by the Integrated Controls Division.	Animal Health and Welfare Division VPH
	Staff from regional veterinary offices perform inspections during some disease-investigation and surveillance visits.	FSAI
Bovine identification	Policy is determined by NBAS Division in conjunction with ERAD Division.	Integrated Controls Division ERAD
	Integrated Controls Division carries out on-farm inspections in the context of support payments. Controls on animal movement are largely conducted at computer level (AIM database).	Farmers representative groups industry
	Animal identification is also verified as part of herd tuberculin testing.	

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Official Control Area	Key Components of the Official Control Activity	Stakeholders with which Communication/ Co-ordination takes Place
Sheep and goat identification	AHW division determines the policy to implement Regulation 21/2004 EC. Disease investigation, surveillance and control involve checks on animal identification which are performed through the regional office structure. All other on-farm inspections are performed by Integrated Controls Division. Movements to Markets (marts) and for slaughter are checked by the keepers of the relative holdings and random inspections of these checks are carried out by DAFM staff present on the holding. The controls on ovine and caprine identification and movement are also done at computer level – controlling the tags allocated to all animals and any of their subsequent movements between holdings.	Co-ordination between cross compliance inspectorate AIM Project unit NBAS Tag suppliers Teagasc Farmers representative groups Food business operators Industry
Equine identification	NBAS division determines the policy. NBAS division approves and monitors agencies that issue equine identification documents for non-registered equines while those for registered equines are issued from Livestock Breeding Division in Cavan. Applications from intending issuing bodies are assessed by administrative and inspectorate staff from NBAS or Livestock Breeding Division as appropriate. The premises is inspected and assessed for approval. DAFM regional office staff perform inspections at horse sales to ensure compliance with Regulation 504/2008 EC. NBAS division controls the issuing of RFID devices for the identification of equines.	Co-ordinate document issuing bodies, veterinary and technical inspectorates in VPH, ERAD, animal health and welfare and livestock breeding divisions
Animal welfare on farm	Risk-based animal welfare inspections are conducted annually in each sector (calf, pigs, sheep cattle goat, laying hens, poultry). Premises for risk-based farm animal welfare inspections are selected centrally and sent to each regional office. Animal welfare incidents are investigated by regional office staff.	Communication with DAFM staff, stakeholders such as farmers, advisers, Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council (FAWAC) and private veterinarians. Promotion of animal welfare improvement schemes
Animal welfare during transport	DAFM operates a system for the authorisation of transporters. Approval of vehicles is carried out by specialist DAFM staff with additional outside expertise in relation to sea-going vessels. Risk-based inspections are conducted on national transporters by regional veterinary office staff and VPHIS staff. Inspections of international transporters are also carried out at the time of loading. Additional inspections/controls are carried out at ports.	Meetings/contacts with NBAS, regional office staff, transporters/ exporters and VPHIS as required.
Animal welfare at slaughter	The Animal Welfare Division of DAFM is the competent authority for animal welfare at slaughter. Communication/coordination takes place between representatives of the local authority veterinary service (LAVS) and DAFM regarding welfare at slaughter. The welfare of animals at slaughter is overseen by the DAFM veterinary inspectorate at DAFM supervised plants and by the LAVS at plants under local authority supervision.	Representatives of the LAVS

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Official Control Area	Key Components of the Official Control Activity	Stakeholders with which Communication/ Co-ordination takes Place
Welfare of laboratory animals	DAFM veterinary staff inspect registered laboratory premises to ensure legislative compliance. The Department of Health and DAFM have a memorandum of understanding outlining the delivery commitments of DAFM. Premises are selected for inspection on a risk basis.	DOH
Trading premises (marts, dealers and assembly centres)	<p>Controls are performed at trading premises to ensure compliance with animal health, animal welfare and animal identification requirements.</p> <p>Marts and assembly centres are subject to an annual inspection by regional office staff.</p> <p>Dealers are subject to an initial approval inspection and further inspections at three year intervals.</p> <p>Marts and dealers are inspected in the interim by DAFM staff on a risk basis.</p>	Formal meetings with NBAS Division approximately every 2 months and frequent contact with AHW Division regarding trade related issues
Contingency planning and control of former OIE list A diseases	<p>Training, drafting of contingency plans/manuals, surveillance plans and reports and managing of outbreaks are carried out centrally.</p> <p>Real-time alerts and alarm drills are planned centrally in conjunction with AMTs. These are implemented using the delivery of operational programmes.</p>	<p>Animal Health and Welfare Division (publication of material)</p> <p>IT systems and AHCS (development of outbreak management system)</p> <p>RVLs/CVRL (sampling plans, testing, expert advice)</p> <p>Regional office staff (investigation and control measures)</p> <p>Other departments (DoH, HPSC, HSE, DEHLG, NPWS).</p> <p>Other agencies (Met office, fire service, local authorities, Police, Civil Defence, farm relief service, HSA, veterinary Ireland).</p> <p>Farming representatives, consultants on GIS, occupational health</p> <p>Suppliers of gas, equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE). In the event of an outbreak of exotic disease, a Government Task Force ensures coordination across departments</p>

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Official Control Area	Key Components of the Official Control Activity	Stakeholders with which Communication/ Co-ordination takes Place
International trade	<p>All animals for export are inspected and certified in accordance with EU and/or 3rd country requirements as appropriate. This is implemented by local office and area management teams.</p> <p>All animal export consignments are recorded and processed through the Traces system.</p> <p>Imported animals are inspected based on risk.</p>	<p>AHW Division, ERAD, AHCS/Aim, Corporate Affairs, Meat Policy Division, TRACES administrator, traders, transporters, embassies overseas, Veterinary Ireland, Bord Bia, zoos, breed establishments, horse transport agencies, Bord na gCon, BIPs and associated companies, national parks and Wildlife Service.</p>
Imports of animals and animal products	<p>All animals and product of animal origin arriving in Ireland direct from a third country are inspected and examined in accordance with EU rules at the BIP by BIP staff.</p> <p>Controls on pet animals</p> <p>All third country pets are checked for compliance with EU rules before embarkation in the case of ferry travel, and upon arrival for air travel. The entry points for third country pets are Dublin airport or Rosslare and Cork ferry ports. All pets are scanned for identification, with subsequent examination of accompanying passports/veterinary certificates. Full records are kept.</p> <p>Third country pets must travel on approved transporters. Where there is no suitable approved airline travellers are facilitated by being permitted to use an alternative airline if travel details and evidence of compliance with EU requirements are supplied to DAFM in advance.</p> <p>Information for the general public is provided on DAFM website.</p>	<p>Co-ordination between Veterinary International Division, BIPs, Customs, the SPPA, the HSE, and the FSAI as required</p>
Maintenance of official freedom of bovine brucellosis leucosis and brucellosis in sheep	<p>Programmes are in place to maintain official free status, as required under the relevant EU legislation.</p>	<p>Coordination between ERAD division and the regional veterinary offices, the laboratories, the farm organisations and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of Northern Ireland (DARDNI)</p>

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Official Control Area	Key Components of the Official Control Activity	Stakeholders with which Communication/ Co-ordination takes Place
TSE and ABP Controls	<p>TSEs</p> <p>VPHIS staff carry out the following activities in relation to TSE controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervise the TSE testing of healthy slaughter animals at abattoirs Monitor the implementation of SRM controls at abattoirs <p>Regional veterinary office staff carry out the following activities in relation to TSE controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TSE testing of fallen animals at knackeries (Category 2 intermediate plants) Dealing with TSE suspects and positive animals Inspections of premises that have been approved to feed processed animal protein (PAP) to pigs, poultry and fish Genotyping of sheep and registration of flocks that are involved in trading of sheep with other Member States <p>Staff from the NRL for TSEs carry out approvals and monitor the activities of rapid testing laboratories.</p> <p>Staff from the NRL for feed controls approve and monitor the activities of laboratories engaged in testing feed samples for meat and bone meal (MBM).</p> <p>Staff from Animal Feedingstuffs Division monitor the implementation of official controls relating to feed at import points, feed mills and on farm.</p> <p>Animal Bi-products (ABPs)</p> <p>VPHIS staff monitor the implementation of ABP controls at high throughput abattoirs large meat establishments and petfood plants</p> <p>Regional veterinary office staff monitor the implementation of ABP controls at other plants, including processing plants, intermediate plants, storage plants, technical plants, biodiesel plants, incinerators, collection centres, meat feeders. They also play a role in official controls relating to imports and exports</p> <p>Staff from the Dairy Controls and Certification Division (DC&CD) of DAFM monitor the implementation of ABP controls at manufacturing milk plants.</p> <p>The Veterinary International Division of DAFM is responsible for controls of ABPs at BIPs.</p> <p>ABP controls at low throughput abattoirs, retail premises and fish plants are conducted by the local authority veterinary inspectorate, Environmental Health Officers of the Health Service Executive and staff from the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority respectively. Regional veterinary office staff also monitor certain fish plants.</p>	<p>Co-ordination of official controls for TSEs is carried out by two central DAFM divisions, TSE & ABP Division (veterinary) and Animal Health and Welfare Division (administrative)</p> <p>Co-ordination of official controls for ABPs is carried out by two central DAFM divisions, TSE and ABP Division on the veterinary side and Milk and Meat Hygiene and Animal By-product Division on the administrative side.</p> <p>Dairy Controls & Certification Division, Animal By-product Division, Animal Feed Division coordinate controls of ABP at milk manufacturing establishments.</p> <p>In addition, a cross-agency body of the departments and agencies involved in the official controls of ABPs was set up in 2007. These agencies include different DAFM divisions involved in ABPs, local authorities, the HSE and the Department of the Environment. It is attended by the FSAI in an observer capacity. The cross-agency group generally meets four times a year.</p>

Official Control Area	Key Components of the Official Control Activity	Stakeholders with which Communication/ Co-ordination takes Place
Control on authorisation, distribution and use of veterinary medicines	<p>Authorisation of veterinary medicines The Irish Medicines Board (IMB) is the competent authority in Ireland with the statutory responsibility and expertise for determining what substances are animal remedies. On receipt of an application, the IMB assesses and may grant a marketing authorisation for supply/sale of an animal remedy via a designated route. In addition, animal remedies authorised in accordance with Directive 726/2004 have pan EU authorisation. DAFM also issues 'special licences' for the import and use of medicines in animals in accordance with provisions of Articles 8 (special health situations) and Articles 10 and 11 (cascade).</p> <p>Wholesale licensing/distribution: DAFM's Veterinary Medicines Section (VMS) at central level oversees the controls of over 70 wholesale enterprises. VMS schedules the inspections (done by a HQ officer), some on a risk basis and some at random. Licences may be issued for an indefinite period or VMS have the facility to refuse a licence or revoke an existing licence.</p> <p>Retail licensing: VMS at HQ on a risk and random basis schedule annual inspections of 10-12% of over 700 retail premises. Officers at regional veterinary offices complete the inspections and delivery is monitored on Animal Field Inspection Testing by the area management teams. VMS at HQ issue/refuse/ revoke the licence.</p> <p>Veterinary Practice and Farm Inspections: HQ issues instructions to regional veterinary office staff to target, both on a risk and random basis, veterinary practices for inspection by local officers (regions). Regional veterinary office inspectors select farms for inspection.</p> <p>Medicated Feedingstuffs: Inspections are managed and conducted centrally from HQ. Compound feed mills are inspected on risk basis and are licensed indefinitely or refused/ revoked. Home-mixers inspected are licensed for a defined period (3year max).</p>	<p>Formal meetings (bilateral) with the Irish Medicines Board (IMB) together with consultation by e mail and phone on issues related to authorisation of medicines and regulatory policies. Formal meetings with the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI) and conjoint action, (DAFM and PSI), as part of investigating breaches of Animal Remedies Regulations. HQ liaises with the IMB on issues relating to the authorisation of medicines.</p> <p>VMS, through its own inspectorate, applies the legislation relating to wholesalers and the manufacture of medicated feedingstuffs whereas it directs the inspectorate at regional level to monitor/enforce the required legislation re the distribution and use of medicines at retail, veterinary practice and farm level</p>

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Official Control Area	Key Components of the Official Control Activity	Stakeholders with which Communication/ Co-ordination takes Place
Monitoring of residues of medicines and contaminants	DAFM staff at HQ, together with the FSAI, are responsible for the development and management of the National Residue Control Plan (NRCP) (See Section 2.8.1).	A Cross-agency Residue Management Group meets annually and is attended by DAFM, the FSAI, the SFPA, local authorities and the MI. In the context of the operation of the NRP, all updates on relevant legislation and compliance therewith are discussed/ outlined. DAFM schedules one formal meeting annually with each laboratory with additional meetings in the interim (as appropriate). Any updates on EU legislation are communicated electronically to the laboratories, the FSAI, and to specific sectors within DAFM.
Controls in animal breeding (semen, ova and embryos)	Initial approval of centres is achieved by inspection involving both HQ and the regional office personnel. Biannual inspections of centres are conducted by veterinary inspectors. Inspections in relation to compliance with license conditions relating to the internal distribution and use of semen are conducted in tandem.	Co-ordination in providing advice and direction to field staff dealing with semen and embryo imports and exports and liaising with Class A disease response division of DAFM. Co-ordination with the EU in the development of harmonised certificates for trade in germinal products and also in the amendments to existing legislation. Co-ordination with industry in the development of certificates to facilitate trade with third countries in germinal products and inspections by third country officials. Communication takes place, via email and telephone between animal breeding in HQ and regional veterinary offices, between animal breeding in HQ and Class A disease response division and TRACES and between animal breeding and the CVRL and official laboratory involved in health checks.

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Official Control Area	Key Components of the Official Control Activity	Stakeholders with which Communication/ Co-ordination takes Place
Controls in relation to Trichinella	A survey of the fox population is conducted periodically.	<p>Co-ordination with trade division of DAFM in relation to Echinococcus</p> <p>Co-ordination with VPH in relation to Trichinella</p> <p>Co-ordination with the National Association of Regional Gun Clubs in relation to the procurement of foxes</p>
Zoonoses	Controls in relation to zoonoses are achieved through Official Control Programmes and food business operator own checks.	<p>Meetings between headquarters, laboratory, administrative colleagues and the agricultural inspectorate are held when deemed necessary. There is regular communication by phone or email between the parties mentioned. Producers and the industry are notified in writing of any changes to the legislative requirements as and when necessary.</p> <p>Regular meetings with the IFA and industry are held to discuss progress with the national pig salmonella control programme.</p> <p>Targets, control plans and results are communicated to regional veterinary offices as necessary by email or telephone. Communications with VPHIS and the FSAI are carried out by email, telephone or, when appropriate, meetings.</p>
Eradication programmes (TB & Brucellosis)	The TB eradication programme is implemented in accordance with the programme approved by the European Commission.	<p>Co-ordination and communication between DAFM and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herd owners • Veterinary practitioners • VPHIS staff at slaughterplants • Milk processors • Animal valuers • Laboratory staff

4.5.1 RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR OFFICIAL CONTROLS

Staffing resources

Details on staff numbers are included in the MANCP annual report.

IT resources

Regarding IT resources, the Information Systems Division of the DAFM is responsible for the maintenance and security of databases used by the Animal Health and Welfare Divisions. These databases include: the food business operator register, the inspection database, the imports database and the sampling results database.

4.6 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPLICATION OF HORIZONTAL LEGISLATION ACROSS DIFFERENT SECTORS/ SUB SECTORS

Where elements of control activity fall within the remit of different sectors or subsectors, the parent division performs a coordinating role to ensure that gaps are avoided. Communication is established with all such sectors to ensure that the controls are applied in a coordinated and uniform way. The sectors with which communication/coordination takes place are listed in Table 8.

4.7 CONTINGENCY PLANS AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

Specific plans are in place to deal with incidents related to zoonotic disease, e.g. salmonella. Specific contingency plans are in place for List A diseases such as Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Newcastle Disease, Classical Swine fever, Avian Influenza and Bluetongue. Ireland has agreed plans to mutually share staff with other countries in the case of animal health emergencies (USA, Canada, NZ, UK, Australia).

DAFM may communicate directly with a MS in relation to a List B disease, e.g. Bovine TB. Contingency plans are also in place in respect of BSE in cattle and BSE in sheep. Divisions within DAFM have contributed to a business continuity plan outlining how critical activities may be carried out following the occurrence of unforeseen obstacles. As a minimum, in the case of an emergency in an area involving animal health or animal welfare, the Management Advisory Committee (MAC) of DAFM would coordinate the response. Contact points in the context of Regulation 1/2005 EC are used to communicate with other Member States.

Guidelines are in place in relation to managing acutely injured animals and during on-farm slaughter.

Problems regarding consignments of animals or animal products are addressed with the relevant member state as the need arises.

DAFM supports the concept of mutual assistance and is ready to provide such assistance as the need arises in line with the criteria contained in Directive 89/608 EC. Feed and food safety alerts are communicated to DAFM through the FSAI (RASFF). Animal health and welfare alerts are communicated through the CVO.

Documented procedures are in place for the management of on-farm animal welfare incidents, emergency slaughter and for large-scale slaughter on farm in the event of a disease outbreak.

4.8 SPECIFIC CONTROLS PLANS

Previous chapters describe general official control programmes regarding animal health and animal welfare. Table 9 describes specific control plans as defined in EU legislation.

TABLE 9. SPECIFIC CONTROL PLANS FOR ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

Official Control Area	Summary of Specific Control Plans
TSEs and ABPs	Specific control plans are in place for: TSE sampling in cattle, sheep and goats (Annex III, EU Regulation 999, 2001) Annual genotyping sampling of sheep (Annex III, EU Regulation 999, 2001)
Maintenance of Official Freedom of Bovine brucellosis, leucosis and brucellosis in sheep	Control programme for Enzootic Bovine leucosis (EBL) in line with Directive 64/432/EC Control programme for brucellosis (cattle) in line with Directive 64/432/EC Control programme for brucellosis (sheep) in line with Directive 91/68/EC
Trading premises	Controls/approval of trading premises is in line with the requirements of Directive 64/432/EC
Bovine ID	Commission Regulation 1082/2003 as amended specifies the inspection regime for Council Regulation 1760/2000, which concerns Bovine ID and holdings
Contingency planning and control of former OIE list A diseases	AI survey (Directive 90/424 & Decision 2007/268) Bluetongue survey (Directive 90/424 & Regulation 1266/2007) AI vaccination in zoos (Decision 2007/598) Contingency Plans required under Disease Control Directives (92/119, 92/35, 92/66, 2000/75, 2001/89, 2002/60, 2003/85, 2005/94) Real-time alerts/alarm drills (Directives 2003/85 & 2001/89)
International Trade	Trade in primates, birds, carnivore, ungulates, lagomorphs - Directive 92/65/EC Trade in cattle and pigs – Directive 64/432/EC Trade in sheep and goats – Directive 91/68/EC Trade in Horses – Directive 2009/156/EC Movement of pets – Regulation 998/2003/EC
Imports of Animals and Food of Animal origin	Import section of national residue control Plan
Control on the distribution and use of veterinary medicines	The monitoring of distribution, possession and use of VMPs is done in accordance with EC legislative requirements –Articles 65, 66, 67, 68 and 69 of Directive 2001/82 as amended and the relevant National AR Legislation
Monitoring of residues of medicines and contaminants	The annual National Residue Control plan is drawn up in accordance with the Council Directive 96/23/EC.
Animal Breeding (semen, ova and embryos)	The requirements for the approval and official supervision of approved centres and the certification of semen, ova and embryos are specified in semen, ova and embryos is Council Directive 88/407/EEC, 92/65/EEC, 90/429/EEC and 89/556/EEC. The requirement for licensing regarding the use of germinal products within Ireland is specified in the Live Stock (Artificial Insemination) Regulations, 1948
Trichinella	Specified in Regulation 2075/2005 EC
Zoonoses	See sections 2 & 5
Eradication programmes (TB & Br)	Annual TB Programme as approved under Council Decision 807 of 2011.

4.9 TRAINING OF STAFF CARRYING OUT OFFICIAL CONTROLS

The training unit of DAFM organises staff training as required by the various Divisions. Heads of Division assess training requirements. In particular, training is provided in the following situations:

- Introduction of new requirements
- Significant legislative changes
- Changes to official control (OC) protocols or documented procedures
- Requested by staff as part of the performance management and development system (PMDS) process
- Significant interval since previous training

In the case of veterinary staff, such training fulfils the requirement for each staff member to accumulate 20 continuous veterinary education points in a calendar year. In addition, training can be requested by the job-holder as part of the PMDS. Separate training on the use of IT is provided on request.

4.10 DOCUMENTED PROCEDURES AND AUDITS

4.10.1 DOCUMENTED PROCEDURES

All official control activity is described in a standard operating procedure (SOP) or procedures manual which is prepared by the division with responsibility for the particular activity. Such procedures are regularly updated. Where necessary, relevant inspection forms are also prepared by the division and provided to field staff. Relevant notices and SOPs are available to staff on the DAFM intranet (ezone).

4.10.2 INTERNAL AUDIT SYSTEMS

The State Veterinary Service Internal Audit Group (SVSIAG) has been setup as required by Article 4(6) of Regulation 882/2004. Staff perform audits to independently assess the effectiveness of official control systems. An audit committee is in place to further ensure the effectiveness and independence of the SVSIAG. Each year the SVSIAG prepares an audit programme and consults with the Agriculture Internal Audit Unit (AIAU) and the FSAI. Audit reports are posted to the DAFM intranet. Divisions are required to prepare, and submit to the auditor, a corrective action plan following the completion of the audit report. Audit reports and action plans pertaining to areas related to food safety are copied to the FSAI.

4.10.3 EXTERNAL AUDIT SYSTEMS

DAFM is subject to external audits of official controls by the FVO in accordance with Article 45 of Regulation 882/2004.

4.11 COMPLIANCES WITH THE OPERATIONAL CRITERIA OF REGULATION 882/2004

Operational Criteria of Regulation 882/2004

Risk based controls

The Head of Division (HoD) provides guidelines to field staff regarding the selection of premises for official control activity. Such premises are selected based on a combination of risk-based criteria and random assessment. In some cases the premises to be subjected to official control are selected centrally based on certain risk-based selection criteria. Where possible, controls are carried out without prior warning. However this may not always be possible, particularly if the business operator's presence is required at the inspection.

Transparency and conflict of interest

General information regarding official control activity is available to the public through the following means:

- On request
- Written publications and literature
- The DAFM website
- The Freedom of Information (FOI) System

Personal data or commercially sensitive information are withheld.

Staff holding designated positions are required to complete conflict of interest forms each year so that such conflict can be managed appropriately where it arises.

Selection of premises for official control activity

A level of risk assessment is applied to the selection of premises for official control activity.

The factors taken into account include the following:

- The nature of the business operator's activity
- The volume of activity
- The interval since commencement of activity
- Results of previous inspections (if any)
- Compliance record of the operator
- Legislative considerations requiring specific levels of control
- Other local knowledge

Checks to ensure that the official control system is effective

Staff within each division perform some checks to ensure that the official control system operates effectively. These checks may include:

- Review (both ongoing and end-of-year) of progress of the official control system. This can be obtained either directly from computer databases or, from data provided by the relevant DAFM managers. Feedback from middle managers regarding the outcome of official control activity is also taken into account
 - On the spot visits by staff from DAFM to business operator premises
 - Supervisory inspections by DAFM staff
 - Follow-up of stakeholder feedback where relevant
 - Outcome of re-performance inspections by integrated controls division
 - Results of audits
 - Monitoring by area management teams
 - Laboratory feedback on sample numbers, quality and turnaround times
-

Operational Criteria of Regulation 882/2004

Enforcement and sanctions

Depending on the type of activity, enforcement measures may include any of the following:

- Verbal advice
- Written letter/notice
- Restriction notice
- Re-inspection

Sanctions of varying severity may be applied depending on the type of enterprise, the nature and extent of non-compliance and the legislative provisions as follows:

- Restriction of movement of animals or product (including seizure/destruction)
- Fixed penalty notice
- Forfeiture of compensation
- Application of a penalty to the Single Farm Payment
- Withdrawal of operational approval
- Legal proceedings

External support

The activity within each division can be supported by a number of entities as follows:

- Legal Services Division (transposition, interpretation of legal issues, assessment of potential court proceedings etc)
 - Special Investigation Unit (investigation of legislative breaches sometimes with the view to prosecution)
 - Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis (CVERA) (impact of disease etc)
-

SECTION 5:

THE NATIONAL CONTROL SYSTEM FOR PLANT HEALTH

5.1 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR PLANT HEALTH

The specific objective of the National Control System for plant health is to ensure and enforce the highest possible standards of plant health and in particular the requirement under Article 27 (a) of Council Directive 2000/29/EC as amended. The specific quantifiable objectives are:

- Attend and contribute to all appropriate EU and international meetings
- Collaborate with member states in implementing agreed measures
- Ongoing collaboration with Northern Ireland
- Carry out annual plant health surveys and inspections for a range of quarantine diseases and pests and eradicate all new pest introductions
- Inspect all third country imports that are subject to plant health controls
- Carry out all necessary plant health inspections leading to the issuing of phytosanitary certificates
- Ensure up-to-date legislation is in place

5.2 COMPETENT AUTHORITIES FOR PLANT HEALTH

DAFM is the central competent authority for plant health. The plant health section of Horticulture and Plant Health Division (HPHD) and Crop Policy, Production and Safety Division (CPPSD) in association with the Forest Service (FS) is responsible for the negotiation, transposition and enforcement of legislation in the plant health area. HPHD is assisted by staff from Crop Evaluation and Certification Division in respect of a number of work areas including tuber sampling for Brown Rot and Ring Rot control and soil sampling of seed potato ground for Potato Cyst Nematode.

HPHD and FS also work with Revenue's Customs Service to control the introduction of quarantine organisms in Ireland. DAFM has a memorandum of understanding agreed with Revenue's Customs Service for the profiling of plants and plant products which require additional official controls prior to clearance from customs jurisdiction.

5.2.1 DAFM ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Each division involved in official controls is headed by a senior inspector. These divisions liaise with each other on relevant issues through the MANCP Management/Co-ordination Board. Each year business plans are prepared by divisions outlining how resources for carrying out the various control programmes are allocated.

FIGURE 26. ORGANISATIONAL AND REPORTING STRUCTURE OF THE DAFM AGRICULTURAL INSPECTORATE
See also Figure 6 for overall DAFM structure

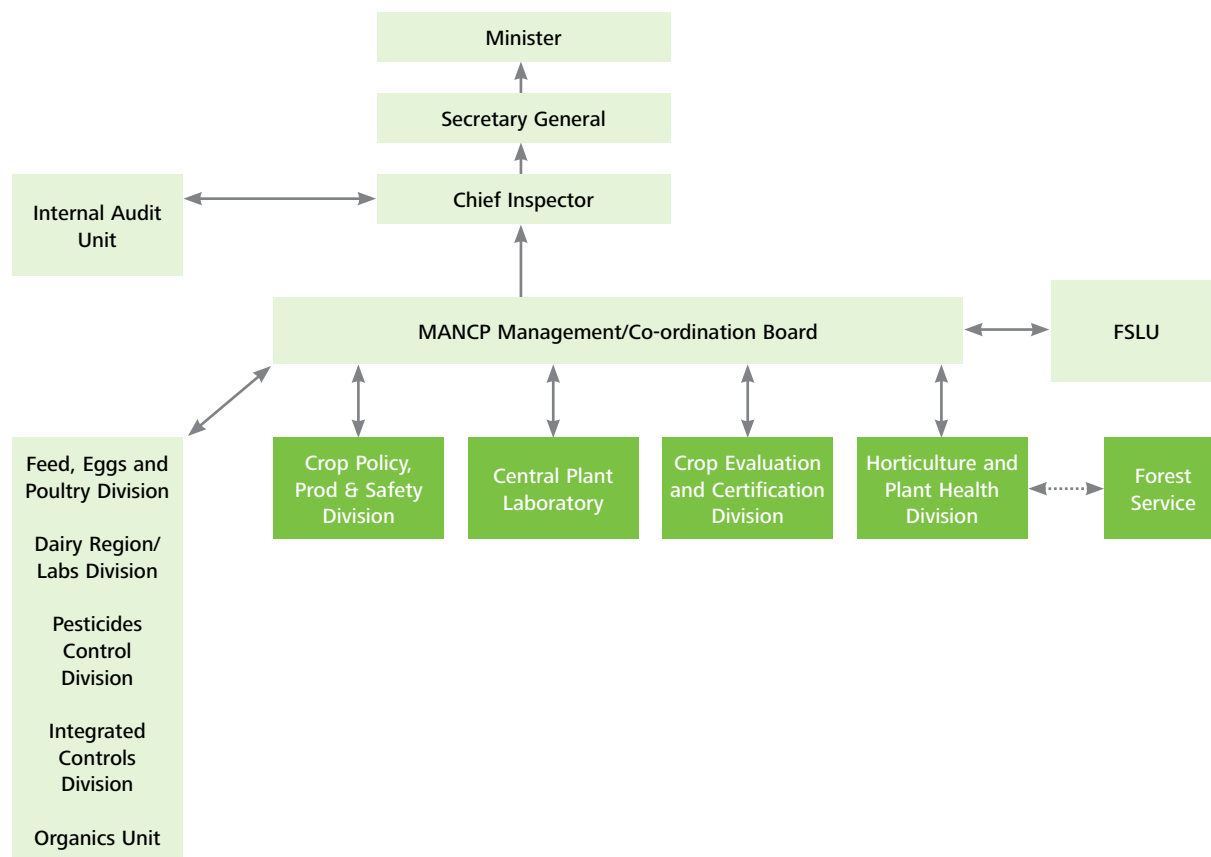
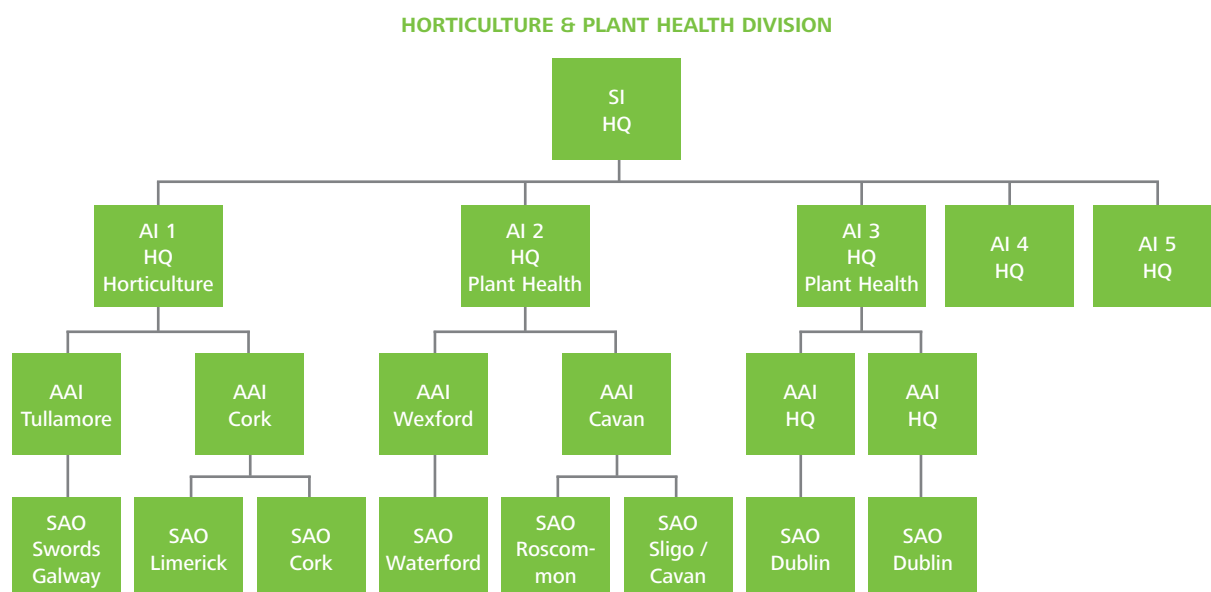


FIGURE 27. ORGANISATION STRUCTURE IN PLANT HEALTH SECTIONS OF HORTICULTURE AND PLANT HEALTH DIVISION



Agricultural inspectors (AIs) deal exclusively with plant health matters. Assistant AIs and supervisory agricultural officers (SAOs) deal with all aspects of the divisions work spending approximately half their time on plant health. The main duties of AIs in the division are as outlined in Table 10.

TABLE 10. DUTIES OF AIs IN THE HORTICULTURE AND PLANT HEALTH DIVISION

Horticulture and Plant Health Division	
Agricultural Inspectorate	Duties
AI 1	National Rural Development Plan for horticulture, policy analysis and briefing, statistics, marketing standards for fruit and vegetables, bees and honey, food labelling
AI 2	Plant health inspections and surveys, policy analysis and briefing, plant health registration and database, propagating material, invasive alien species
AI 3	Plant health inspections, BIPs, policy analysis and briefing, Risk Management Committee, potatoes (grants, quality control), staff training, health and safety, Secretary to North/South Plant Health Screening Committee
AI 4	Producer organisations, policy analysis and briefing
AI 5	Food safety (MANCP, contaminants)

5.2.2 SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES/ACTIVITIES

The main duties of AIs in the HPHD division are as outlined above in Table 10. A broad range of control measures in relation to plant health are implemented as outlined in Table 11.

TABLE 11. SUMMARY OF CONTROL MEASURES CARRIED OUT BY HPHD

Plant Health Control Measures	Details
General controls (surveys, inspections, register)	<p>Endeavour to maintain protected zone status for relevant organisms by carrying out surveys and follow-up actions (in the case of positive findings)</p> <p>Develop systems for rapid reaction to outbreaks of plant diseases by carrying out surveys and follow-up actions (in the case of positive findings) in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ralstonia solanacearum</i> • <i>Clavibacter michiganensis</i> ssp. <i>sepedonicus</i> • <i>Erwinia amylovora</i> • Beet necrotic yellow vein virus • Pepino mosaic virus • <i>Ciborinia camelliae</i> • <i>Phytophthora ramorum</i>, • <i>Diabrotica virgifera virgifera</i> • <i>Dryocosmus kuriphilus</i> • <i>Rhynchophorus ferrugineus</i> • PSTVd • <i>Anoplophora chinensis</i> – and other surveys (including citrus) as required <p>Surveys by the Forest Service of the national forest estate for the relevant protected zone harmful organisms and other specific forestry harmful organisms such as <i>Bursaphelenchus xylophilus</i> and <i>Gibberella circinata</i></p> <p>Targeted inspections of plants, water, soil and other growing media at nurseries and traders premises</p> <p>Maintenance of plant health register by inspection of registered producers, importers, traders etc. for compliance with plant health regulations (includes plant passport requirements and data base development)</p>
Import controls	<p>Inspection of relevant direct imports of third country plant material (and machinery) for compliance with Council Directive 2000/29/EC</p> <p>Targeted inspections of plants and cut flowers from EU and third countries and their associated records for compliance with legislation (in particular for <i>Liriomyza</i> spp., <i>Bemisia tabaci</i> and Thrips palmi and other plant health requirements)</p> <p>Targeted inspections of imported products, especially potatoes and close leaved vegetables, for <i>Leptinotarsa decemlineata</i></p> <p>Targeted inspections of imported ware potatoes for quarantine pests</p> <p>Inspections by the Forest Service of imports of wood and wood packaging material</p>
Exports/ phytosanitary certificates	<p>Issuance of phytosanitary certificates in respect of plants and plant products destined for export to third countries and harmonisation of phytosanitary certificates issued by other divisions</p>

Note: Organisms for which plant health controls exist in Ireland are listed in the appendices to Council Decision 2000/29/EC and other legislation.

5.2.3 REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

HPHD internal reporting and communication channels

The internal reporting arrangements are generally in line with the organisational structure outlined in Figure 26 and 27.

The HPHD liaises with other divisions in DAFM in implementing some of these controls, as follows:

- Crop Policy, Production and Safety Division who are responsible for transposing legislation, providing administrative support and maintaining registers
- Crop Evaluation and Certification Division which carry out plant health controls in the seed potato sector in relation to Ring Rot, Brown Rot and Potato Cyst Nematode
- Forest Service which is responsible for implementing the forestry aspects of plant health regulations, such as surveys for harmful forestry organisms and provisions relating to wood, wood packaging material and forest plants
- The Central Plant Laboratory (CPL) which comprises the Seed Testing Laboratory (STL) and the Plant Health Laboratory (PHL). The PHL provides analytical services in support of plant health controls in the areas of pathology and entomology. In addition, HPHD uses the services of a number of other laboratories

All these units co-operate closely on the implementation of controls.

HPHD communication channels with other authorities

DAFM liaises with Revenue's Customs Service regarding the import control of plants.

5.3 DELEGATION OF TASKS TO CONTROL BODIES

HPHD has not delegated any tasks.

5.4 LABORATORIES INVOLVED IN OFFICIAL CONTROLS

A number of laboratories are used by HPHD for plant health diagnostic services. Details of these laboratories are listed in Table 12 (see following).

TABLE 12. LABORATORIES USED BY HPHD

Laboratory	Location	Discipline/Analysis
State Laboratory	Backweston, Celbridge, Co Kildare	Bacteriology
Central Plant Laboratory	DAFM, Backweston, Celbridge, Co. Kildare	Pathology and Entomology
Teagasc	Agricultural and Research Institute, Oakpark, Co. Carlow	Nematology
Agri-food and Bioscience Laboratory and	Belfast, Northern Ireland	Bacteriology, Virology
The Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA)	York, UK	

5.5 ORGANISATION OF OFFICIAL CONTROLS BY DAFM

Official controls are implemented annually on the basis of plant health risk and performed in accordance with the frequencies and timing required by legislation including Council Directive 2000/29/EU and various EU plant health emergency decisions.

Controls are carried out in accordance with documented procedures and guidance notes. The risk assessment criteria used in developing the annual inspection programme are also outlined in the standard operating procedures manual.

5.5.1 RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR OFFICIAL CONTROLS

Staffing resources

Details of staff resources are reported on annually in the MANCP report. Laboratory facilities available to DAFM for plant health controls are outlined in Section 5.4.

IT resources

CPPSD maintains a record of registered producers, importers and traders, in line with plant health regulations.

5.6 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPLICATION OF HORIZONTAL LEGISLATION ACROSS DIFFERENT SECTORS/ SUB SECTORS

As outlined above, DAFM is the sole competent authority responsible for the enforcement of official controls for plant health. Consistency in enforcement is achieved through training, documented procedures and regular liaison within DAFM divisions. The effectiveness of official controls is examined through FVO audits.

5.7 CONTINGENCY PLANS AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

Whilst not directly applicable to plant health, HPHD has a general contingency plan and a specific contingency plans in relation to the following organisms:

- *Ralstonia solanacearum* Brown Rot of potatoes
- *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *Sepedonicus*-Ringrot of potatoes
- *Phytophthora ramorum*

5.8 SPECIFIC CONTROLS PLANS

Control priorities, resource allocation and risk categorisation are detailed in the integrated plant health plan. The business plan programme includes details on:

- Staff resources involved in formulating and implementing control measures
- Type and number of inspections to be undertaken
- Type and number of samples to be taken
- Organisms subject to control
- Prioritisation of control measures

5.9 TRAINING OF STAFF CARRYING OUT OFFICIAL CONTROLS

The annual training needs of staff are assessed via the performance management development system. Staff attend training courses organised centrally by DAFM's Training and Development Unit as well as more specific training relating to plant health controls etc. organised by the division at an annual two day training course. Additionally, all AAIs are encouraged to attend EU Better Training for Safer Foods courses specific to plant health. Training records are maintained by the division and the effectiveness of training is monitored on an on-going basis.

5.10 DOCUMENTED PROCEDURES AND AUDITS

5.10.1 DOCUMENTED PROCEDURES

Official controls are carried out in accordance with documented procedures and guidance as set out in the procedures manual. As mentioned above, inspections are carried out in a targeted manner using risk assessment criteria.

5.10.2 INTERNAL AUDIT SYSTEMS

In accordance with Article 4(6) of Regulation (EC) No 882 of 2004, DAFM's Internal Audit Unit conduct audits on the effectiveness and suitability of official controls performed by DAFM personnel in a number of divisions. While the auditing requirement under this Regulation is not applicable to plant health, part of their operations have been audited on a voluntary basis using this Regulation.

5.10.3 EXTERNAL AUDIT SYSTEMS

DAFM is subject to external audits of official controls by the FVO in accordance with Article 45 of Regulation 882/2004.

A summary of audits carried out in accordance with Regulation 882/2004 is provided in Appendix 3.

5.11 COMPLIANCES WITH THE OPERATIONAL CRITERIA OF REGULATION 882/2004

Articles 41 - 46 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 are the only articles applicable to plant health. However, Directive 2000/29/EC (3) provides for requirements that are broadly equivalent to those established by Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. Details on plant health controls are published as part of the MANCP process and HPHD also provides bi-annually updates on their control programme to the MANCP management/co-ordination board with DAFM.

SECTION 6:

REVIEW AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

6.1 REVIEW AND ADJUSTMENT OF THE PLAN

Ireland will regularly update the national control plan in light of developments and will amend the national control plan to take account of factors including:

- New legislation
- The emergence of new diseases or health risks
- Significant changes to the structure, management or operation of the competent authorities
- The results of Irish official controls
- The results of Community controls
- Any amendments to the guidelines for MANCP
- Scientific findings
- The outcomes of audits performed by third countries

6.2 PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

During the period of the NCP, the FSAI, DAFM and the other competent authorities will continue to work together to ensure an effective system of official food, feed, animal health, animal welfare and plant health controls.

APPENDIX 1: CATEGORIES OF FOOD LEGISLATION IN EACH OF THE SERVICE CONTRACTS

Category of Legislation	HSE	LA	DAFM	SFPA	MI	NSAI
General Food Law (including traceability)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Official Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Food Hygiene	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Control of Imports	✓		✓			
Labelling, Presentation and Advertising	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Additives and Flavourings	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Contaminants	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Residues of Veterinary Medicines		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Pesticide Residues			✓			
Microbiological Criteria	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Aquaculture				✓	✓	
Specified Risk Material	✓	✓	✓			
Zoonoses	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Food Contact Materials	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Slaughter of Animals		✓	✓			
Foods for Particular Nutritional Uses	✓	✓	✓			
Genetically Modified Foods	✓		✓			
Novel Foods	✓					
Processed Cereal-based Baby Foods	✓					
Infant Formula	✓		✓			
Foodstuffs Treated with Ionising Radiation	✓					
Marketing Standards	✓		✓			
Organic Foods			✓			
Use of Protected Names (PGO, PGI, TSE)			✓			
Food Supplements	✓					
Nutrition and Health Claims	✓	✓	✓			
Bottled Water	✓					
Food Fortification	✓	✓	✓			
Manufacturing and Processing Methods	✓	✓	✓			

APPENDIX 2:

NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORIES AND OFFICIAL LABORATORIES

Information on Ireland national references laboratories and official laboratories is provided on the FSAI website.
http://www.fsai.ie/enforcement_audit/laboratories/labs.html

APPENDIX 3:

SUMMARY OF AUDITS CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH REGULATION 882/2004

Sector	Role	Competent Authority	Internal Audits (Article 4(6) of Reg.882/2004)	External Audits	Audits/ Inspection of Control Bodies (Article 5(3) of Reg.882/2004)
Food law enforcement	Central competent authority	FSAI		FVO	
	Competent authorities (through service contracts with the FSAI)	DAFM	DAFM internal audit unit	FSAI, FVO	DAFM
		Local authorities	Local authorities	FSAI, FVO	
		HSE	In development	FSAI, FVO	
		SFPA	SFPA	FSAI, FVO	
		MI		FSAI, FVO	
		NSAI		FSAI, FVO	
Feed law enforcement	Central competent authority	DAFM	DAFM internal audit unit	FVO	
Animal health and welfare	Central competent authority	DAFM	DAFM internal audit unit	FVO	
	Competent authorities	Local authorities	Local authorities	FVO	
Plant health	Central competent authority	DAFM	DAFM internal audit unit	FVO	

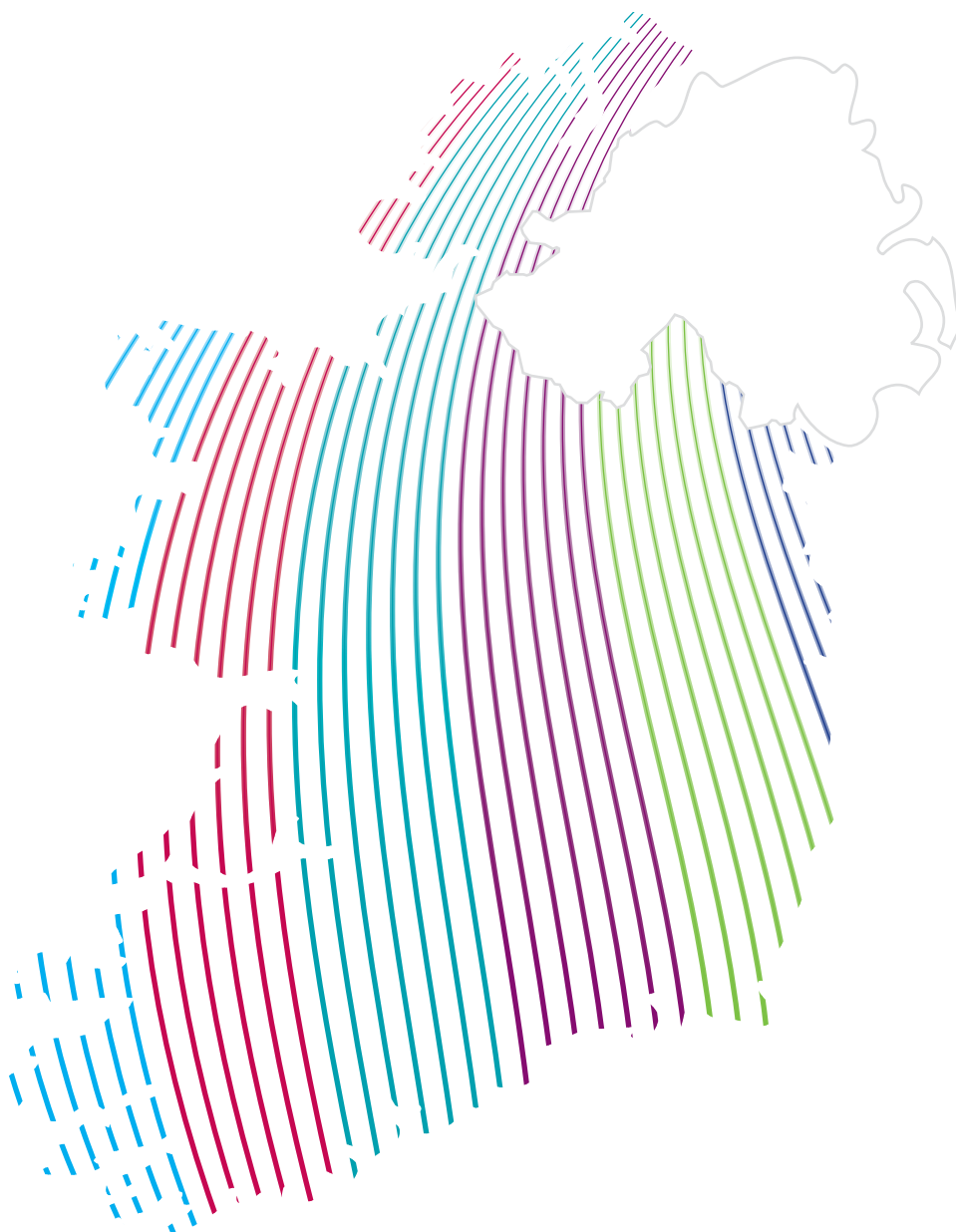
APPENDIX 4:

SUMMARY OF COMPETENT AUTHORITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPORTS OF FOOD, FEED, ANIMALS AND PLANTS

Sector	Competent Authority	Designated Entry Point*
Food of non-animal origin	HSE DAFM (specific pesticide testing only)	Dublin port and Dublin airport
Food of animal origin (including live fish)	DAFM	Dublin port and Shannon airport
Feed	DAFM	Dublin port
Animals	DAFM	Dublin airport and Shannon airport Dublin airport, Rosslare and Cork ports**
Plants	DAFM	Dublin port and Dublin airport

*Includes 'point of import' and 'control point'

** Import points for pet animals from third countries





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