



**Food Standards Agency
Departmental Report**

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State
for Health and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury
by Command of Her Majesty

May 2003

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Contents

	Page
Foreword by the Chair of the Food Standards Agency	3
The Chair and Acting Deputy Chair	5
The Food Standards Agency Board	6
The Food Standards Agency Chief Executive	12
Chapter 1: Who we are	13
Chapter 2: What we do	17
Chapter 3: What we are aiming to achieve	19
Chapter 4: What we spend our money on	21
Chapter 5: How we are doing	23
Chapter 6: The year ahead	45
Annexe 1: FSA organisation	50
Annexe 2: Common core tables	51
Annexe 3: Performance against Service Delivery Agreement targets	58
Annexe 4: Expert and Strategic Advisory Committees	72
Annexe 5: Glossary of terms	74

The purpose of this report is to present to Parliament and the public a clear and informative account of the expenditure activities and performance of the Food Standards Agency.

This report and those of 2001 and 2002 are available on the Internet at www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps

Foreword by the Chair of the Food Standards Agency

I am pleased to present the Food Standards Agency's annual Departmental Report for the period 2002/03, the third year since our launch in April 2000.

In 2002 we have seen encouraging early signs that the Agency continues to make headway towards its strategic aim of earning public trust. The Agency's third annual consumer attitudes survey suggests that public trust in the FSA is increasing while, at the same time, most people are less concerned about food safety than they were three years ago.

That we have achieved these measures of success this year alongside potential crises such as the surprise discovery of acrylamide (a probable human carcinogen) in a range of cooked foods and the continuing possibility of BSE in sheep is, I think, particularly rewarding. Our open and transparent approach to handling risk and our commitment to giving people clear and honest advice have played a big part in helping to establish the Agency's reputation and to build confidence in our role. However, we cannot be complacent and the Agency will continue to be vigilant in the protection of public health.

During the past year we have continued to lay solid foundations for achieving the objectives we have set out in our five-year strategic plan.

In the area of food safety, the Agency launched two major initiatives: a national five-year Food Hygiene Campaign and a review of the Over Thirty Months (OTM) rule.

Our hygiene campaign, promoting food hygiene messages relevant to caterers and people at home, was launched in February 2002 and forms a major component of the strategy to reduce foodborne illness by 20% by 2006. The campaign has already been successful in raising awareness of basic hygiene practices among catering managers, staff and consumers. Over the next three years we will aim to increase people's knowledge and understanding of food hygiene issues and influence behavioural change.

With the BSE epidemic continuing to decline, in July 2002 we launched a major review of the Over Thirty Months rule, one of the key controls that protect consumers from BSE. To inform the review, we commissioned a comprehensive risk assessment steered by a group of eminent independent experts chaired by Professor Peter Smith, Chair of the Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee. A group of core stakeholders was also convened to advise the FSA Board on whether the OTM rule was still a proportionate measure to reduce the BSE risk posed by older cattle and, if not, what should replace it. We held a public meeting in March 2003 at

which the group's emerging findings were discussed and at the end of that month we began a full public consultation on the group's conclusions.

An important function of the Agency is to provide consumers with clear, timely advice on possible risks from consumption of food. In February 2003 we issued important food safety advice to pregnant and breastfeeding women to limit consumption of certain predatory fish, including tuna. This followed findings that levels of mercury present in these fish posed a small risk of harm to the nervous system of the developing fetus and breastfed babies.

Another key function of the Agency is to promote honest and informative food labelling. In 2002 the Agency commissioned a major independent review of the main UK Food Assurance Schemes to assess their potential impact on food safety and consumer choice. We published its report in July 2002 with a draft Agency position paper that proposed a number of changes to the way schemes operate and present themselves to consumers. Our key recommendations included that schemes should increase involvement of consumers in their governance arrangements, improve scheme transparency and adopt a set of minimum operating standards. In December 2002 the Board agreed that Agency advice for schemes should be developed and published. It is proposed to do this during 2003. We have also published a range of Agency advice which should lead to clearer, more informative food labelling, including the use of marketing terms such as fresh, natural and pure, clear labelling and country of origin declarations.

Diet and health is an area on which the Agency is becoming increasingly focused. In February 2003 the Agency achieved a significant milestone with the launch of the *Food and Wellbeing* nutrition strategy for Wales. This strategy aims to tackle one of the major causes of ill health – and particularly heart disease – in Wales. The launch marked the culmination of two years of hard work during which FSA Wales led a range of stakeholders in the strategy's development.

Throughout our third year I am pleased to say that we have remained wholly committed to our guiding principles: to put the consumer first; to be open and accessible; and to be an independent voice. We have consolidated and built on the progress made over our first two years in establishing ourselves as an effective body protecting the interests of consumers.



John Krebs

The Chair and Acting Deputy Chair

Sir John Krebs FRS – Chair of the Food Standards Agency



Since 1988 **Sir John Krebs** has held a Royal Society Research Professorship in the Department of Zoology, Oxford University, where he is also a Fellow of Pembroke College. He has also held posts at the University of British Columbia and the University of Wales, Bangor. Sir John is an internationally renowned scientist for his research on the behaviour and ecology of animals.

Between 1994 and 1999, Sir John was Chief Executive of the Natural Environment Research Council. Sir John is a Fellow of the Royal Society, a member of Academia Europaea, Foreign Member of the American Philosophical Society, member of the Max Planck Society, Honorary member of the British Ecological Society and Honorary Foreign Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Among the awards he has received for his scientific work are: Scientific Medal, Zoological Society of London; Frink Medal, Zoological Society of London; Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour Medal; Bicentenary Medal, Linnaean Society of London; Elliot Coues Award, American Ornithologists Union. He has received honorary degrees from the following universities: Birmingham, Cranfield, Exeter, Kent, Herriot-Watt, Plymouth, Queens in Belfast, Sheffield, South Bank, Stirling, Wales, Warwick.

Ann Hemingway – Acting Deputy Chair of the Food Standards Agency and Chair of the Advisory Committee for Wales



Ann Hemingway is Chair of the Advisory Committee for Wales and is currently Acting Deputy Chair of the Agency. Ann is an experienced businesswoman qualified in Home Economics and Marketing. Her early career experience was in publicity for the milling industry before she moved to British Gas, initially in a marketing role using her home economics background but later taking senior management positions in information technology, personnel and general management of customer service operations. She played a significant role in developing the new direction for British Gas from privatisation through to demerger, leading the management team responsible for customer service in the first phase of gas competition. She is currently involved in a non-executive role with the strategic development of Driver and Vehicle Operator Services with the DfT.

The Food Standards Agency Board



Top (left to right): Prof. Sir John Krebs, Chair; Ann Hemingway, Acting Deputy Chair; Dr Sati Ariyanayagam; Christine Dunn; Richard Ayre.

Middle (left to right): Baroness Valerie Howarth; Iain MacDonald; Prof. Andrew Miller; Robert Rees; Vernon Sankey.

Bottom (left to right): Sandra Walbran; Michael Walker; Michael Gibson.

Michael Gibson

Michael Gibson is the Chair of the FSA's Scottish Food Advisory Committee and the Managing Director of a small family meat firm, Macbeth's Butchers, which employs five full-time and three part-time staff. He runs this in conjunction with Edinvale Farms, which consists of 900 acres of farmland and some 600 head of cattle. Michael Gibson is Chairman of the Agricultural Committee of the Scottish Landowners Federation. Since 1996 he has co-ordinated the Federation's handling of BSE and all red meat-related matters. He is currently leading a Scottish initiative on Less Favoured Area support in conjunction with the Macauley Land Use Research Institute. He is also a member of the

Michael Gibson –
continued

Highlands & Islands Agricultural Partnership, a newly formed group consisting of local authorities, enterprise companies, producer organisations, and environmental groups advising politicians and civil servants of local issues. In his role as Senior Fieldsman to the Highland Cattle Society, Mr Gibson provides advice to breeders on feeding, marketing, breeding policy and general husbandry as well as formulating Society policy on breed development.

Professor Andrew
Miller

Professor Andrew Miller is a biophysicist interested in the structure and arrangement of the molecules in biological fibres, particularly collagen, keratin and muscle. He has spent two-thirds of his career in universities and one-third in publicly funded research laboratories, mainly in the UK but also in Australia, France and the USA. The output from research in molecular biophysics is applicable to problems in medicine, agriculture and the food industry. He helped to develop the application of physical methods, particularly synchrotron radiation and neutron scattering to biology. He was the first Head of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory in France from 1975–80 and was the first Director of Research at the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility in Grenoble, France from 1986–91. From 1994–2001 he was Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Stirling and from 2001–2002 the Interim Chief Executive of Cancer Research UK where he oversaw the merger of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund and the Cancer Research Campaign into the largest cancer charity in the world. At present he is General Secretary of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Michael Walker

Michael Walker is Chair of the FSA's Food Advisory Committee for Northern Ireland. As a partner in a private firm of consulting chemists accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service, he is the resident Public Analyst for Northern Ireland. The Public Analyst provides an official food control laboratory for local authorities, dealing with, among other things, chemical enforcement services relating to food composition, additives, contaminants, labelling and consumer complaints. He was appointed to the General Consumer Council (Northern Ireland) in February 1999, and is convenor of the Council's combined Food and Consumer Education Groups. He is also a member of the Advisory Board of the All-Ireland implementation body, the Food Safety Promotion Board. His academic background is in chemistry and he is a fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry and a member of the Institute of Food Science and Technology.

Dr Sati Ariyanayagam

Dr Sati Ariyanayagam is a consultant physician and Chair of the Senior Medical Staff Committee at Oldchurch Hospital in Essex, and is a general consultant body representative with the North Thames Advisory Committee on Distinction Awards. A Justice of the Peace with the Lord Chancellor's Department, he also serves as a Management Governor at King Edward VI Grammar School in Chelmsford. Dr Ariyanayagam champions the cause of the consumer. As a member of the Consumers' Association for many years he takes an active interest in ethical matters pertaining to 'Public Interest' issues. He serves in a number of committees including the Professional Conduct and Performance Panels of the General Medical Council. He has been a regular contributor to the Commission for Health Improvement (CHI) as a Clinical Governance Reviewer, to the Community Fund as an External Research Assessor and the Eastern Region Multi Centre Research Ethics Committee as a professional expert. As a member of the Committee on Toxicology and the Advisory Committee on Research, Dr Ariyanayagam has been active in representing the public interest agenda within the FSA for the past two years.

Richard Ayre

Richard Ayre is a consultant in media ethics and broadcast management. He was Deputy Chief Executive of BBC News until 2000 and before that he was the BBC's Controller of Editorial Policy, responsible for the editorial and ethical standards of all BBC programme making. He now advises media organisations in the UK and overseas and trains young journalists, especially in the new democracies of eastern Europe. He is Freedom of Information Adjudicator for the Law Society, and a trustee and international board member of Article 19, a charity based in London and Johannesburg which works around the world to encourage freedom of expression and to fight censorship.

Christine (Chrissie) Dunn

Christine (Chrissie) Dunn was a founder and until 2002 Managing Director of Danby's Foods Limited. Danby's Foods are manufacturers of own label and branded, frozen and chilled ready meals for the retail and foodservice sectors in the UK and Northern Europe. Mrs Dunn has comprehensive knowledge of all stages of food production and the supply chain, from primary production, secondary processing and distribution through to consumer sales via retail and foodservice outlets. Her breadth of knowledge is particularly strong with regard to matters of food safety and quality assurance standards. Mrs Dunn was a Director of Business Link York and North Yorkshire from 1996–1999 and she is currently a Council Member of Food from Britain.

**Baroness
Howarth of
Breckland**

Baroness Howarth of Breckland (Valerie Howarth) was until July 2001 the Chief Executive of the charity ChildLine, the free national helpline for children in trouble or danger. Under her leadership, ChildLine counselled over one million children and young people since it opened in 1986 and developed from a small London-based project to a UK-wide children's charity. A social worker by background, she worked in the Family Welfare Association, the London Borough of Lambeth and then Brent where she was Director of Social Services. During this time she served on numerous working parties and chaired several child care service groups. She was the first UK representative of the European Forum for Child Welfare, a founder member and first Chair of the Telephone Helplines Association, founded the King's Cross Homelessness Project and London Homelessness Forum. She has taken a leading role in changing the law concerning child witnesses and serves on the Department of Health's Quality Protects Steering Group. She has spent more than ten years in consumer protection and standard setting as a committee member of the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Telephone Information Systems. She is Vice Chair of John Grooms Association for Disabled People, Vice Chair of the Faithfull Foundation, an organisation providing treatment for child abusers and a Trustee of the Seiff Foundation. She chairs the 'Stop It Now' campaign, a partnership organisation involved in child abuse education. In February 2000 she was appointed to the Board of the Food Standards Agency and serves on the Meat Hygiene Advisory Committee. In February 2001 she joined the Board of the National Care Standards Commission. Awarded the OBE in 1999, she became Baroness Howarth of Breckland in the summer of 2001, one of the first of the new commission-appointed peers.

Iain MacDonald

Iain MacDonald is currently self-employed as a management consultant and Chartered Surveyor. He is a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and a Member of the Institute of Management and a Member of the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation. He is a former local authority chief executive and a widely experienced senior manager with extensive experience of change and business management in the public, voluntary and private sectors. His most recent assignment was as the United Nations Municipal Administrator for the City of Pristina in Kosovo, combining the role of Mayor, Council Leader and Chief Executive of the city. Mr MacDonald has widespread experience of serving on boards and committees and of chairing meetings. He has served as national president and national chair of a number of professional associations and is currently Chair of the Food Standards Agency Meat Hygiene Advisory Committee.

Robert Rees

Robert Rees is a self-employed chef and restaurateur from Bisley, Gloucestershire. He has a strong catering background. He is currently resident chef for Stroud Farmers' Markets, cooking seasonal and local fresh produce. From 1993 until 2000 he ran a restaurant called The Country Elephant in Painswick. He has also worked at restaurants in Bath, in the Grand Cayman Islands (West Indies) and at Le Gavroche, one of London's most fashionable eating houses. He has had entries in many international restaurant guides, including the Michelin Guide (Gourmande and Red Meal Award); Taste of West Country; the Good Food Guide; the Egon Ronay Guide; the Ackerman Guide; and two Automobile Association Rosettes in four consecutive years. Robert is a regular contributor on Central Television and BBC Radio Gloucestershire. He is a part-time employee of Gloucestershire College of Arts and Technology where he is a training adviser, assessor and lecturer in the Hospitality Department where he is involved with Modern Apprenticeships, National Trainee schemes and work-based training. Robert is also a Board member of the Stroud Business Education Partnership, and has worked with Gloucestershire Tourism promoting local foods. Robert does a lot of work with children, and people with various special needs.

Vernon Sankey

Vernon Sankey is currently a non-executive Director of Pearson plc and Zurich Financial Services AG (Swiss). He is Chairman of the Really Effective Development Company Ltd and Deputy Chairman of Photo-Me International plc and Beltpacker plc. He also serves on the advisory boards of a number of companies in the UK and abroad. From 1992 to 1999 he was Chief Executive of Reckitt & Colman plc, having spent 28 years with that company in a number of functions and countries and was also Chairman of Thomson Travel Group plc. Vernon is a former member of the London Stock Exchange's Listed Companies Advisory Committee, a former Board member of the Grocery Manufacturers of America and a former Council member of the UK's Food and Drink Federation.

Sandra Walbran

Sandra Walbran is currently employed as the Food and Health and Safety Manager with South Lakeland District Council. She has extensive experience in the environmental health field, particularly linked to the area of food safety and has long-standing operational experience of management. She currently represents the Cumbria region of the LACORS Food Hygiene Focus Group and the LACORS Food Policy Group and is actively involved in the production of national guidance on many food safety matters.

Suzi Leather

Suzi Leather – Deputy Chair of the Food Standards Agency

Suzi Leather has strong consumer credentials and wide professional experience. Her academic background is in political science and she also has probation and social work qualifications. She has worked in market research, consumer research and university teaching; she has chaired a NHS Trust and was appointed to the Chair of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority in March 2002. At the end of December 2002 she stepped down from her FSA role to prioritise her work at the HFEA.

Ms Leather has worked at regional, national and European level on food, health and consumer issues. She has particular interests in regulation and public health. She has been involved in regulation in both the food and water industries. She helped start one of the first bioethics courses in the university sector, and holds honorary lectureships at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and at the University of Exeter. She is a member of the Royal Society's Inquiry into Infectious Diseases of Livestock.

The Food Standards Agency Chief Executive

Jon Bell – The Chief Executive



Jon Bell is the Chief Executive and Chief Scientific Adviser of the Agency. Before this appointment he was Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Food Safety Policy. Jon Bell joined the Agency on its formation in 2000 following a 25-year career in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food during which time he held a wide variety of posts. These included a number at senior level overseeing areas that are now the responsibility of the Food Standards Agency.



Who we are

- 1.1 The Food Standards Agency was set up in April 2000 to protect public health and to restore public confidence in the way food safety decisions are made. Our main purpose as defined in the Food Standards Act 1999 is:

‘to protect public health from risks which may arise in connection with the consumption of food, and otherwise to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food.’

- 1.2 We are committed to three core values that govern all that we do. They are to:

- put the consumer first
- be open and accessible
- be an independent voice

- 1.3 The FSA is a non-ministerial Government department, operating at arm’s length from Ministers, and governed by a Board appointed to act in the public interest. This independence is crucial if we are to succeed in putting the consumer first.

- 1.4 The Board is responsible for our overall strategic direction, and for ensuring that our legal obligations are fulfilled. The Board consists of a Chair, Deputy Chair and up to 12 other members. The Chair Sir John Krebs was appointed jointly by the Secretary of State for Health, Scottish Ministers, the National Assembly for Wales and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland (‘the appropriate authorities’). Of other current Board members, eight were appointed by the Secretary of State for Health, two by Scottish Ministers, and one each by the National Assembly for Wales and DHSS PS in Northern Ireland. Following Suzi Leather’s decision not to seek reappointment as Deputy Chair from 31 December 2002, the appropriate authorities agreed that Ann Hemingway should act as Deputy Chair from 1 January 2003 in the interim before a new Deputy Chair is appointed. Members of the Board each demonstrate substantial achievement in their chosen field. The Board is subject to public scrutiny through its open meetings.

- 1.5 The Chief Executive manages the day-to-day operations of the FSA. He was appointed by the FSA with the approval of the appropriate authorities, No. 10, and the Head of the Civil Service under normal Civil Service Commission rules. The Treasury has appointed the Chief Executive as Principal Accounting Officer of the Department with overall responsibility for preparing the FSA's accounts and for transmitting them to the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- 1.6 Our staff are civil servants, accountable through the Chief Executive to the Board. Our headquarters in London comprises three main groups, Food Safety Policy Group, Enforcement and Food Standards Group, and Corporate Resources and Strategy Group, together with our Communications and Legal Directorates.
- 1.7 We are a UK-wide body, accountable to the Westminster Parliament and to the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales, and DHSS PS in Northern Ireland through their relevant Health Ministers.
- 1.8 FSA Wales carries out those food safety, food standards and nutrition functions formerly discharged by public health and agriculture staff of the National Assembly, together with the new functions of the FSA. The FSA's role in Wales is augmented by advice from the statutory Advisory Committee for Wales.
- 1.9 FSA Northern Ireland is responsible for providing advice and draft legislation on issues across the food chain to the Northern Ireland Minister with responsibility for Health, Social Services and Public Safety. The FSA's role in Northern Ireland is augmented by advice from the statutory Northern Ireland Advisory Committee.
- 1.10 FSA Northern Ireland liaises closely with the Food Safety Promotion Board (FSPB) and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland in relation to food issues with an all-island dimension, such as foodborne illness.

- 1.11 Food safety and standards are devolved matters and legislation governing Scotland is determined by the Scottish Parliament. In Scotland, the FSA provides advice on proposed legislation to the Minister for Health and Community Care in the Scottish Executive. This ensures consistency of approach while allowing the specific Scottish circumstances to be fully taken into account in the implementation of food safety and standards policy in Scotland. The statutory Scottish Food Advisory Committee provides the FSA with independent information and advice on all food safety and standards issues in Scotland.

- 1.12 The Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) is an Executive Agency of the FSA operating within Great Britain. (The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development – DARD – provides a similar service in Northern Ireland.) Its main functions are to ensure that the highest standards required by the law for the hygienic production of meat and for the welfare of animals at slaughter are maintained, and to provide a meat inspection service to all licensed meat plants. The MHS has its own Agency Accounting Officer (the MHS Chief Executive) and publishes its own Annual Report and Accounts.



What we do

- 2.1 Our job is to protect consumers from health risks, and otherwise to look after their interests in all matters connected with food. Our sphere of influence ranges from pesticides and veterinary medicines, to food safety and hygiene standards in shops, restaurants and takeaways, as well as the home kitchen. We have a wide remit, involving food safety across the whole food chain – ‘from farm to fork’.
- 2.2 We advise Ministers on all issues relating to food safety. We negotiate on behalf of the UK in Europe and other international fora, where much of the legal framework and standards for the food market are set. We provide guidance to the public on healthy eating and carry out surveys on nutrition and diet to monitor changing eating habits.
- 2.3 We work with the Meat Hygiene Service (an Executive Agency of the FSA), local authorities, and with other Government departments, to ensure that regulations on food safety and standards are enforced to protect consumers. In Northern Ireland, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) performs the same functions as the Meat Hygiene Service on behalf of the FSA. There is a need for high levels of vigilance to ensure compliance with the UK’s strict controls on BSE, not least because Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK that has a land border with another European Union country.
- 2.4 Our organisation chart is in Annexe 1. You can find out more about what we do on our website at www.food.gov.uk. The website is updated on a daily basis. A detailed contact list by subject is available at: www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/contactus1/contactusaz/



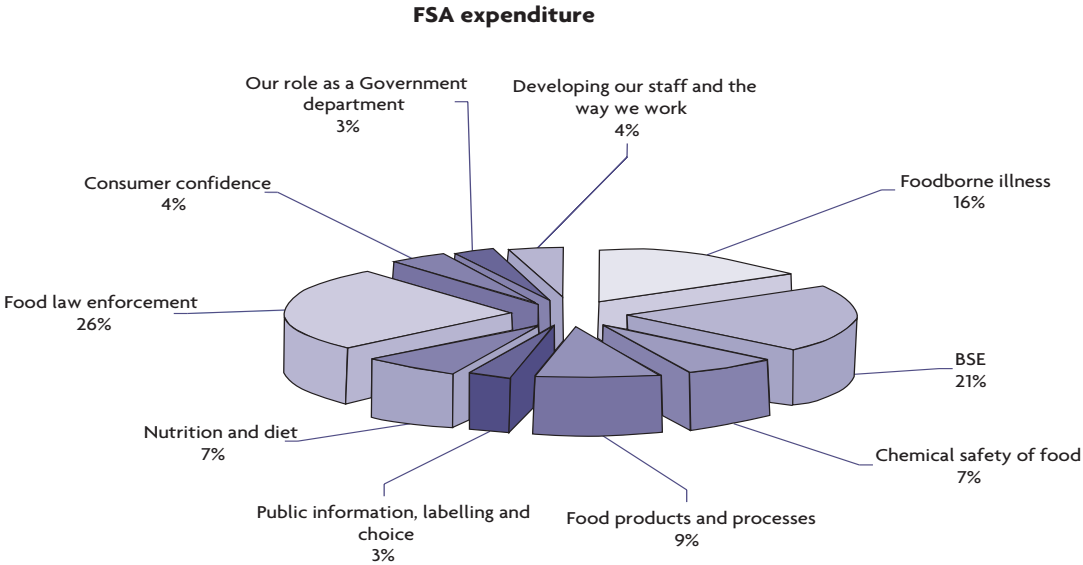
What we are aiming to achieve

- 3.1 Our Strategic Plan 2001/2006 set out our key priorities for food safety, public information, labelling and choice, nutrition and diet, and food law enforcement over a five-year period. In it we describe how we will put our core value of openness into practice. Our aim is to be trusted as the UK's most reliable source of advice and information about food. We want to protect and improve the safety of the food people eat, and to make it possible for people to choose a healthy diet. You can find the full text on our website at www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps
- 3.2 Over the period covered by our Strategic Plan we aim to:
- reduce foodborne illness by 20% by improving food safety right through the food chain
 - help people to improve their dietary health
 - promote honest and informative labelling to help consumers
 - promote best practice within the food industry
 - improve the enforcement of food law
 - earn people's trust by what we do and how we do it



What we spend our money on

- 4.1 The common core tables in Annexe 2 provide a detailed analysis of departmental expenditure in resource terms. The chart below illustrates how we forecast expenditure for 2002/03, by the themes set out in our Strategic Plan.
- 4.2 Detailed information about our actual expenditure can be found in our Annual Report and Accounts 2000/01 and Annual Report and Accounts 2001/02. These publications are available from The Stationery Office bookshops, and are also available on our website at www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps





How we are doing

Food safety:

Lead Contamination of Calabash Chalk

We were notified by a local authority of test results showing high levels of lead in a product commonly known as Calabash chalk. Calabash chalk is not a conventional food, but is eaten by some pregnant women, traditionally those from the Nigerian and wider West African community, as a remedy for morning sickness. Exposure to high levels of lead by pregnant and breastfeeding women poses a risk to the mental development of their developing unborn baby and breastfed infant.

The product could be bought in ethnic shops and markets in the form of blocks, pellets and powders, generally loose and without any particular brand labelling or batch number/durability date.

There are no statutory limits for levels of lead in Calabash chalk. There is, however, a safety guideline set by the Joint WHO/FAO Expert Committee on Food Additives for the amount of lead to which people can be safely exposed. The levels found in the samples would have caused consumers to exceed the safety guideline by 4.5-fold, before taking into account any additional exposure from other sources.

A food hazard warning was issued to local authorities requesting they visit food businesses that may sell Calabash chalk and ensure that the product was withdrawn from sale, if necessary using their powers under the Food Safety Act 1990.

With UK Health Departments, we worked with health professionals and consumer groups to communicate the information to pregnant women and nursing mothers, particularly in the communities most likely to use Calabash chalk. We also raised the issue with the European Commission.

- 5.1 A detailed report of our progress against our published Service Delivery Agreement targets can be found at Annex 3. The rest of this chapter sets out just some of our key achievements in the past year.

INCREASED CONSUMER CONFIDENCE

The Consumer Attitudes Survey

- 5.2 The baseline levels of consumer confidence in the national regulatory system for food safety and standards and in the credibility of the FSA were established in our first (autumn 2000) consumer attitude survey, published in February 2001. The progress reported last year in our second survey has been sustained in our third survey, published in February 2003. This shows increases in overall consumer confidence in current measures to protect health with regards to food safety and in levels of confidence in the FSA, and an increase in awareness of the FSA.
- 5.3 The most noteworthy of the overall trends is a small but steady decline in concern over the safety of meat, with a significant decrease in concern about types of meat such as beef, pork, lamb, and raw meat over the past three years.
- 5.4 Confidence in the role played by the FSA has also increased significantly, with 60% of consumers now claiming to be very or fairly confident in our role in protecting health with regard to food safety, an increase of 10 percentage points since 2000.
- 5.5 The results are based on a representative sample of more than 3,000 consumers across the UK. Although there have been few significant changes in consumer behaviour over the past year, particularly with regards to nutrition, diet and shopping habits, the survey does show that people are slowly becoming more confident about food safety and standards.

Food safety:

Methanol contamination of counterfeit Johnnie Walker Black Label Whisky

We were notified by a local authority about methanol contamination of counterfeit Johnnie Walker Black Label Whisky available in the London area. The UK distributor of the genuine product also advised us that the contaminated product was not genuine, and that both the packaging and liquid were counterfeit.

Samples of implicated product were taken by the local authority who notified the problem, while investigations began into checking potential suppliers as no information was available on the source or origin of the counterfeit product.

There is no maximum limit for methanol in whisky. However, the natural level of methanol found in whisky is very low at approximately 8 grams/100 litres of absolute alcohol. The level of methanol found in the counterfeit product was 2000 times the normal level. Symptoms of methanol poisoning can include severe abdominal pain, drowsiness, dizziness, blurred vision leading to blindness, and coma with breathing difficulties.

A food hazard warning was issued to local authorities asking that they take action to ensure that the counterfeit product was not available in their area. If the product was found, they were asked to ensure that it was withdrawn from sale and destroyed, if necessary using powers under the Food Safety Act 1990.

- 5.6 The 2002 survey also reveals a small but significant increase in the number of people claiming to eat 'convenience' food, illustrated by an increase in the amount of people regularly eating ready-meals and buying takeaway food. Consumers in the south of England are most likely to eat organic food, and vegetarianism is most common in the south-east of England. Scottish consumers had the highest level of awareness of the five-a-day fruit and vegetables message, while Welsh consumers had the lowest.
- 5.7 Survey results are available from our website:
www.food.gov.uk/yourviews/surveys/foodsafety-nutrition-diet/
- 5.8 We undertook to deliver a five-fold site traffic increase to our new website www.food.gov.uk by December 2002. This was achieved in May 2002, seven months ahead of target. Site traffic has continued to increase. From December 2001 to the end of 2002 the site notched up 2,155,521 visits. There were 87,890,164 page impressions over the same period. The site now has 18,191 subscribers to a range of email alert categories, including Food Hazard Warnings, Consultations, Board Meeting Agendas and Press Releases. The site was shortlisted for two national awards, coming second (highly commended) in the *New Statesman* e-government award category. The web team have continued to add consumer and stakeholder-facing content and functionality, including a weekly poll, quizzes and games, a live webcast of the Brussels Board Meeting, microsites on food hygiene and GM, plus the integration of the BSE Review website into our main site.
- 5.9 Priorities for 2003 include an improved search engine, enhanced performance and the launch of a portal for food enforcers.

Food safety:
Acrylamide in food

Research reported in Sweden in April 2002 found frying and baking generate high levels of acrylamide in a wide range of home-cooked and processed food. These included crisps, chips, bread and crispbreads. We take this issue extremely seriously, since it is UK policy that people's exposure to genotoxic carcinogens such as acrylamide should be as low as reasonably practicable.

Since the initial discovery, we have conducted our own research, which confirmed the findings in Sweden. We have also played a central role in contributing to European and international efforts to find out how acrylamide forms in food and are funding a cluster of research projects to assist in addressing this issue. UK stakeholders have been involved throughout this process via regular meetings and correspondence.

On the basis of the current scientific understanding of this issue, we have advised that people do not need to change their diet or the way they cook their food. We advise people to eat a variety of fruit and vegetables and to moderate their consumption of fried and fatty foods, as part of a healthy, balanced diet. Our advice on acrylamide is being kept under review as the situation evolves and more information becomes available.

Consumer Committee

5.10 Our new Consumer Committee, which was established in April 2002 to help identify consumer needs and views, has met five times. The wide range of its members' expertise and experience relevant to consumers has been applied to discussions on: how we can put into practice our core value of putting consumers first; low income consumers; horizon-scanning and assurance schemes. The Board has specifically invited the Committee's views on those areas of food policy that have a particular impact on, and on getting a better understanding of how best to target messages to, children and young people. This will form the basis of the Committee's first open meeting in June 2003.

Bad Food Live!

5.11 Our spoof celebrity chef show, *Bad Food Live!*, continues to be one of the major draws at the BBC *Good Food Show* with our biggest audiences yet. The show will be revamped for 2003. A video version has been produced in reaction to demand and will be marketed to schools.

BETTER FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS

5.12 Activity continues to achieve the target of reducing foodborne disease by 20% by 2006. The number of laboratory reports of the five main foodborne bacteria, which are being used to monitor progress in achieving our foodborne disease target, were largely the same in 2001 as in 2000. Preliminary data for 2002 suggests that there has been a major decrease in laboratory reports, possibly in the order of 14%.

5.13 The Food Hygiene Campaign, using television, radio and press advertising continues to be a major activity with Phase 1 continuing into April and Phase 2 running in October-November. A bespoke video for training purposes has been sent to all caterers on our database. Comprehensive evaluation of campaign activity shows that messages are beginning to get through and awareness continues to rise. A mini-campaign aimed exclusively at

Food safety:
Shellfish reviews

During the spring and summer of 2002, FSA Scotland commissioned a major review of its shellfish programme. The remit of the review was to examine all aspects of our work in relation to shellfish, such as toxin monitoring, classification of production areas and communication of information to stakeholders. The review was carried out independently and was presented in January 2003. FSA Northern Ireland commenced a review of the Northern Ireland Shellfish Monitoring Programme in March 2003. On completion of the review, an Action Plan will be developed and implemented by December 2003. Following an earlier review of the classification of production areas in England and Wales, a consultation paper was issued in autumn 2002. Responses to the paper are currently being evaluated.

new caterers was launched in February 2003. Complementary high profile activity (including television advertising) aimed at consumers on safe cooking on barbecues and at Christmas has also raised our profile and been successful in communicating simple messages in an innovative and creative way. In preparation for the launch of the campaign to consumers, a pilot television campaign in the Granada television region aimed at mothers of young children ran for three weeks in March 2003.

- 5.14 The Bank Holiday and Golden Jubilee weekend saw our first barbecue campaign. Simple key hygiene tips were printed on 2 million disposable barbecue packs and bags of charcoal. Advice was published on our website www.food.gov.uk
- 5.15 An EU requirement to implement HACCP-based controls has been introduced in all large red meat and poultry plants. The implementation deadline for small plants is 7 June 2003. A manual, CD-ROM and other guidance has been issued to plants in the run-up to implementation. Six one-day workshops were held in November/December, attended by 77 staff from 38 operators, and more have been arranged for 2003. MHS vets have received HACCP enforcement training. Guidance on frequency of microbiological testing of red meat carcasses has been issued. Clean cattle and meat safety information days were held from January to April 2003 to help promote messages relating to the clean livestock policy, HACCP and microbiological testing of animals from farm to slaughter.
- 5.16 Methods of controlling campylobacter and salmonella in broiler production, crate washing and information on testing and scheduling of birds at slaughter have been reviewed. This work, together with advice from the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food's campylobacter working group, has provided the basis for a draft strategy to reduce levels of campylobacter in chicken, which is being prepared for consultation.

Salmonella

During autumn 2002, there was an increase in the number of outbreaks of *Salmonella enteritidis* infection, including three nationwide outbreaks. Many of these were associated with consumption of dishes containing raw or undercooked eggs. In many cases, investigation showed that the eggs originated from Spain and tests on a large number of eggs from catering premises showed a level of around 5% contamination of pooled samples in eggs from Spain. When the last national surveys were carried out in 1995-96, levels of contamination were 1% in UK-produced and 2% in non-UK eggs. We issued guidance to caterers reminding them of advice about the handling and use of raw shell eggs. We also advised those importing eggs from Spain to send them for commercial heat treatment. Subsequently, the outbreaks have returned to normal background levels.

- 5.17 We have worked with industry, Defra and the British Pig Executive to reduce salmonella in pigs through implementation of the Zoonoses Action Plan salmonella monitoring scheme.
- 5.18 We held a successful stakeholders' meeting to discuss the need to minimise pesticide residues in food and agreed a minimisation policy with the Board. We agreed on how to initiate development of an action plan to implement this policy and are taking that forward. Consumers see this as an important initiative, defining a key role for the FSA on pesticides. We have also carried out a survey of veterinary residues in Chinese animal products to find out how widespread they are.

Taking the food safety debate to Brussels

- 5.19 The November 2002 open meeting of our Board was held in Brussels, the first Board meeting to be held outside the UK. European law now governs much of our work, and the Brussels venue offered an opportunity to demonstrate our desire to help develop a framework of well-founded and effective food law. It supported our aim to build constructive working relationships with European institutions, and enabled the Board to extend its efforts to ensure that important decisions on food risk, nutrition, and food labelling issues were taken in an open and transparent way. The meeting carried out the normal business of the Board, including on this occasion items on our action plan on food labelling, GM labelling and consumer involvement in policy making, and was followed by a question and answer session with the audience. Attendance was, as with all the Board's open meetings, open to all; a simultaneous webcast ensured that UK stakeholders were able to watch the proceedings. More than a thousand people, representing a wide range of stakeholders, were able to participate in the meeting, either attending in person or through the Internet broadcast (which included an opportunity to email questions during the meeting). Feedback from those taking part was very positive, with the meeting a clear success and an effective way of demonstrating, in Brussels, an open approach to decision-making in practice.

Food incidents

We have dealt with more than 1200 food incidents including chemical contamination incidents, and taken action when necessary to protect consumers. We continue to assess food incidents reported to us by local authorities, the European Commission, the food trade and other sources, to determine the need for local authorities to take action to protect the consumer. In 2002 some 201 incidents were assessed, and we have assessed a further 59 so far in 2003. These resulted in the issue of 31 food hazard warnings (including updates) to local authorities in 2002.

Review of the Over Thirty Months rule

- 5.20 The Over Thirty Months (OTM) rule, a UK BSE protection measure which prevents older cattle from entering the food chain, is currently the subject of a review. The BSE epidemic in cattle is now in steep decline. Rigorously enforced specified risk material controls are estimated to remove more than 95% of infectivity from the food chain. There has been a complete ban on the feeding of mammalian protein to farm animals since August 1996.
- 5.21 The question therefore arises, whether the OTM rule is still a necessary and proportionate measure to apply, given the other protection measures now in place in the UK and elsewhere in the EU.
- 5.22 A stakeholder group comprising representatives from consumers, industry specialists, key experts and others has met several times and worked up recommendations. Two public meetings have also been held to examine the issues at stake. Interested parties are being consulted about the proposals, which we expect to put to the Board in time for their July 2003 meeting. The Board are then likely to make recommendations to Ministers.
- 5.23 BSE has never been found in the UK sheep flock. However, sheep ate the same food that gave cattle BSE and laboratory research has shown that sheep can be artificially infected with BSE. There is, therefore, a risk that BSE is in sheep. We are not advising against the consumption of sheep, but will continue to take a precautionary approach and recommend precautionary and proportionate measures to protect the public, were BSE ever to be found in sheep.
- 5.24 Following recommendations from a core stakeholder group which had been reviewing BSE and sheep questions, we made arrangements to brief the Muslim, Asian and African-Caribbean communities about the possible risk of BSE. Three briefing meetings were held, involving the Chair and senior FSA officials. The first, in November 2002, was held with a cross-section of

organisations representing all three communities. The second and third, in January 2003, involved presentations to Muslim scholars and imams. In all the briefings the possible risk of BSE in sheep and older goats was pointed out. At the same time it was made clear that we were not advising against the consumption of sheep and goat meat. The presentations were well received.

FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT

5.25 We remain committed to improving food standards and consumer confidence by increasing the consistency and effectiveness of food law enforcement. In 2002/03 we continued to monitor and audit local authorities against our *Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement*. As of 24 February 2003, 72 local authorities had been subject to a full audit, 26 to themed audits and all 32 Scottish authorities to partial audits of their food enforcement services. A further six local authorities in Wales have also been audited. Action plans for improvement are agreed with authorities and progress against these action plans is monitored. We have also developed the approach in England to include themed audits to further examine enforcement trends identified by our monitoring and audit activity. To date, two series of themed audits have been undertaken to look at local authority food sampling work and formal enforcement action. In line with our policy of openness and transparency, local authority monitoring information, audit reports (including summary reports of themed audits) and action plans are published on our website.

Working with enforcement bodies

5.26 We have continued to work closely with enforcement bodies to tackle other breaches in food safety rules. Examples include:

- providing help, guidance and support to local authorities investigating and aiming to prevent unfit meat entering the food chain; and

- setting up the Waste Food Task Force to examine the measures required to ensure the appropriate disposal of food waste and reduce the scope for fraud. The report of the Task Force was issued for a three month public consultation exercise in January 2003.

5.27 In order to develop policy on food law enforcement controls and secure greater consistency in these controls we have worked with stakeholders and enforcement bodies on a number of initiatives, including:

- The review of 20 statutory codes of enforcement practice issued under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990. A draft new code was issued for public consultation in March 2003.
- The provision of update seminars and low-cost training courses for local authority officers on various aspects of food law enforcement including HACCP, food canning, cheese production, food labelling, meat products, and food factory inspection.
- Assessment of food safety and standards issues relevant to diverse community groups. In particular, this led to the issue of new enforcement guidance on issues related to halal foods.

Imported food

5.28 In light of continuing concerns about animal health and public health issues related to imported foods we have been taking forward our 10-point plan for improving the effectiveness of inspection of imported food. We continue to improve the co-ordination of enforcement action on imports by developing contacts with local authorities, port health authorities and other Government departments, and providing a focal point for import issues. We are also developing guidance and training for local authorities on imported food controls.

5.29 An important recent development is that the Cabinet Office has asked us to lead a project to secure a step-change in the co-ordination and delivery of local authority imported food controls. Meetings are taking place with stakeholders and across

Government to develop plans for taking the project forward within the resources available. A major seminar of representatives of port health authorities was held on 4 March 2003 for enforcement officers to propose and discuss how to achieve this step-change.

Working with other Government departments

5.30 We have continued to work actively with other Government departments, in particular the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and HM Customs & Excise on the cross-Government action plan. A significant achievement from this programme was the introduction of powers for enforcement officers to search personal luggage for illegal food imports. A large number of seizures have been made by teams of local authority and port health authority staff working closely with HM Customs & Excise, to remove this illegal food before it enters the UK.

IMPROVED CONSUMER CHOICE AND DIET

Low-income Action Plan

5.31 We have developed an Action Plan on consumers on low incomes as part of our policy of widening the consultation process to include all groups of consumers. The plan is designed to help us learn more about the particular needs of groups of disadvantaged consumers and to take their needs into account in developing policy.

5.32 A research programme on involving consumers in policy making has been established and two projects funded to test innovative methods for involving disadvantaged groups in policy making. The Action Plan includes work to improve the evidence base for best practice in this area, to strengthen links with networks and 'gateway' organisations, and to map where people on low incomes are located.

5.33 Work is also being done to develop partnerships with other organisations working on low income issues and with other Government departments to publicise our work and strengthen cross-Government co-operation. Another integral element of the Action Plan is to provide guidance and training for our staff on how to take into account the particular needs of low income consumers.

New leaflets

5.34 Two sets of new leaflets have been produced. One set covers those issues of most concern to consumers (as indicated by the Consumer Attitudes Survey) and the other demystifies healthy eating messages and targets them directly at particular audiences, such as breastfeeding mothers, men, senior adults, and so on. We produce a number of different language information publications, including ones in: Welsh, Bengali, Hindi, Gujerati, Punjabi, Urdu, Greek, Turkish and Chinese.

School meals

5.35 FSA Scotland participated as a member of the Scottish Executive's Expert Panel on School Meals and the nutritional sub-group, which culminated in the publication of the report *Hungry for Success* in February 2003. The report makes recommendations for establishing standards for the nutritional content of school meals, improving the general uptake and eliminating any stigma associated with taking free meals.

5.36 FSA Wales commissioned a study into the effect of new regulations on the nutritional standards for school lunches. The study involved observation of food availability and selection in both primary and secondary schools in Wales before and after the regulations were made. The draft report suggests that although more vegetables and fruits are now available there has been little impact on the foods actually consumed by pupils.

5.37 Agreement has been reached with DfES to commission the first evaluation of school meals standards since they were introduced in England in 2001. The study, to start in 2003 and report by the end of that year, will provide information on:

- whether the food provided by caterers met the statutory nutritional standards
- whether the food provided meets nutritional guidelines for school meals
- the food composition and nutrient intakes of secondary school children from school meals

Elementary food and health course

5.38 FSA Scotland worked in partnership with the Scottish Executive, HEBS, the Scottish Community Diet Project and the Healthy Choices Award Scheme to produce a short training course providing elementary knowledge of the relationship between food and health. The course will be available from spring 2003 and is aimed at all those working directly or indirectly with food in a range of settings such as the voluntary sector, public sector, hospitality and the workplace.

Catering for Health

5.39 *Catering for Health* was launched in March 2001. The guide supports both catering lecturers and students by providing practical help on how to apply healthier catering principles to food preparation and presentation. Evaluation of the publication has been commissioned and is due to report in late spring 2003, covering the target audience. Evaluative work will also consider interest within the catering industry.

5.40 Scottish and Welsh versions of the *Catering for Health* publication were launched in May 2002. A competition for all catering students in Scotland was organised, inviting them to develop a healthy alternative to a recipe traditionally high in fat, salt, sugar, and so on.

Healthy living campaign in Scotland

5.41 The Scottish Executive's 'healthyliving' campaign was launched on 7 January 2003, encouraging the public to call an information line to receive practical advice and information packs relating to healthy eating. Working closely with HEBS and colleagues in FSA HQ we helped to collate the underlying food safety and healthy eating advice supporting the campaign database. We also produced a leaflet *Ten Tips for Food Safety*, jointly branded with the FSA Scotland and 'healthyliving' logo, for inclusion in the information packs. We are continuing to participate as a member of the Campaign Steering Group. George Paterson, representing FSA Scotland, and Michael Gibson, representing SFAC, are members of the associated Food Champions Group established by SEHD.

Nutrition strategy for Wales

5.42 'Food and Well Being – reducing inequalities through a nutrition strategy for Wales' was launched by the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Health and Social Services on 13 February 2003. The strategy was developed by FSA Wales, in conjunction with the National Assembly for Wales and key stakeholders, in recognition of diet-related ill health in Wales. It is intended to promote the adoption of a healthier diet by the whole population of Wales, but there is specific emphasis on those in disadvantaged groups, and on children and infants.

Folic acid and the prevention of disease

5.43 The FSA, together with the four UK Health Departments, held an open stakeholder meeting in March 2002 to ensure that all stakeholders had the opportunity of being heard in advance of the consideration of folic acid and the prevention of disease by the FSA Board. The Board considered this issue in May 2002 with advice from the Advisory Committees in the devolved countries. Advice was provided to Health Ministers in July 2002. FSA staff are continuing their contacts with other countries who have fortified flour with folic acid to establish the impact of

fortification on rates of neural tube defects, masking of vitamin B12 in vulnerable individuals and other technical issues of relevance. This information will provide additional data for consideration in the coming year.

Stakeholder fora

- 5.44 The Nutrition Forum and the Scottish Diet and Nutrition Forum continue to meet on a regular basis. Their aims are to facilitate the sharing of information and good practice among stakeholder organisations working to improve diet and nutrition, in order to maximise effectiveness and avoid duplication of effort.
- 5.45 A separate forum to gather Scottish stakeholder views in relation to Food Assurance Schemes was organised in September 2002. This allowed specific Scottish issues to be taken into account during Board discussions in December 2002, to develop advice on improving the contribution assurance schemes could make towards informing consumer choice.

MORE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT WAYS OF WORKING

Public service

- 5.46 Our employees are our biggest asset. Development of staff – in line with our core values – continues to be a key aim. We are committed to the principles of the Reforming the Civil Service programme.
- 5.47 We continued to make progress during 2002/03 on our development programme. We increased the training and development opportunities for all staff. This included new modules in our Management Scheme – a development programme for all managers – to help continue to move our culture forward in line with our core values of being open and accessible. The new modules have been designed to improve leadership, communications, and change and project management skills in a diverse environment and in the context of working with devolved administrations and in Europe.

Diversity

- 5.48 We are committed to valuing diversity. In support of this commitment, we continually seek to ensure that equal opportunities are an integral part of all personnel policies. We have undertaken a range of initiatives within an overall strategy to increase diversity amongst the workforce. As part of this, we carried out an initial analysis of our staffing position. This revealed that at 31 March 2002, 49% of our staff were women, 20% were from a minority ethnic group and 8% were people who had a disability. This analysis will form the base against which changes in future years can be measured.
- 5.49 Due to popular demand, we continued to run a comprehensive seminar programme during 2002/03 as part of our development programme to increase staff's understanding of our work and its relationship with external stakeholders. Seminars included both presentations from external stakeholders and from FSA staff about their work. Staff in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are able to participate regularly in these seminars through videoconferencing. We also continued to develop our intranet site to improve internal communications.
- 5.50 We undertook another survey of staff's attitudes using MORI, the third since the FSA was established.
- 5.51 Following significant planning we applied for Investors in People accreditation in November 2002. The assessment took place in March 2003. Whilst not achieving IiP status at this first attempt, the Agency met seven out of the 12 indicators, which was considered a significant achievement for such a new organisation. We now plan to ask for a further assessment towards the end of 2003/04.
- 5.52 During the year, after consultation with the FSA trade unions, we introduced new staff appraisal arrangements. These follow the requirements of the civil service reform programme and link with our competency framework. We implemented the second part of our first pay agreement with the trade unions.

5.53 All permanent staff were given the opportunity to transfer to new superannuation arrangements introduced throughout the civil service.

Senior Civil Service

5.54 The table below gives at 31 March 2003 the number of Senior Civil Service staff paid in each of the £5,000 bands. Figures exclude those staff in our offices in Scotland and Wales who are on secondment from their Executives.

Number of staff in salary bands	SCS salary bands, £
3	50,000 – 54,999
3	55,000 – 59,999
7	60,000 – 64,999
4	65,000 – 69,999
4	70,000 – 74,999
3	75,000 – 79,999
1	80,000 – 84,999
2	85,000 – 89,999
0	90,000 – 94,999
1	95,000 – 99,000
0	above 100,000

5.55 In December 2002 we started the recruitment process for a new Chief Executive following the departure of the previous Chief Executive, Geoffrey Podger, to take up the post of Executive Director of the new European Food Safety Authority. Following an open competition, and the agreement of the appropriate authorities, the Chair announced the appointment of Dr Jon Bell as Chief Executive on 8 April 2003.

5.56 We also introduced new pay arrangements for SCS staff in line with the requirements of the Cabinet Office.

Board recruitment

5.57 We recruited three new Board members and also began a recruitment exercise for a new Deputy Chair following Suzi Leather's resignation. In all instances the Nolan rules were followed.

Recruitment practice

5.58 Our recruitment policy follows the principles of fair and open competition as set out in the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code. External recruitment exercises are advertised widely as well as appearing on our website. We have used the permitted exceptions to fill only positions on a casual basis for less than 51 weeks and for short-term secondments.

5.59 Underpinning all recruitment exercises are equal opportunities policies agreed with trade unions. We operate a guaranteed interview scheme for disabled applicants. When advertising externally we encourage applications from under-represented groups. In order to raise our profile, we had representatives at a number of recruitment fairs, including Diversity UK. On a Senior Scientific Officer recruitment exercise, we worked with Fullemploy, an organisation that encourages applicants from minority groups. We advertised the FSA on the Black Britain website, the Ethnic Britain Employers Directory, and worked with the University of London Careers Service. We also worked with Workable, an organisation that places suitable people with disabilities in work experience placements and we provided two placements.

5.60 We have a strong commitment to interchange of staff with enforcement bodies and other external organisations. Several of our inward secondees provide expertise not available within the organisation. Our outward secondment programme helps our staff to broaden their experience as well as contributing to the work of organisations. It includes three people working in the European Commission on secondment, one with the National Consumer Council and one with the National Care Standards Commission. One officer is currently with the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland on a six-month bi-lateral exchange.

5.61 The table below shows the number of staff we have recruited through open competition during the year.

Recruitment into the FSA through open competition 1 April 2002-31 March 2003					
	Male	Female	Ethnic minorities	Disabled	Total
Senior Civil Service*	0	1	0	0	1
Posts at UG6 and below	27	35	20	3	62
Total	27	36	20	3	63

* appointment was to the MHS

Public appointments

5.62 Under the Food Standards Act 1999, we are responsible for appointments to a range of expert and strategic advisory committees. We make these appointments following consultation with Health Ministers and their equivalents in the devolved administrations. In making our appointments we follow the guidance laid down by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments and the Cabinet Office.

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

5.63 We are committed to promoting racial equality. The Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, gives public authorities a general duty to promote race equality. Under this duty, when they carry out their functions, public authorities must aim to: eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; promote equality of opportunity; and promote good relations between people of different racial groups. While our core values of putting the consumer first and openness are intrinsically linked to these principles, in accordance with the specific duty placed on public authorities we published our Race Equality Scheme on 31 May 2002.

Health and Safety

5.64 We are committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of staff and others working in and visiting all our buildings. Trained in-house staff carry out workstation risk assessments. Our health and safety committee, which includes trade union representation, meets on a quarterly basis and, as part of its role, carries out a full building inspection.

Environmental policy and activities

5.65 We are fully committed to conserving energy, water and other resources, and reducing waste. The FSA and MHS offices are on a number of sites around the country; each is committed to pursuing environmental practices.

Waste

5.66 Our headquarters building, Aviation House, follows an active recycling policy through our contract with the Waste Removal Company, HANNAY, which recycles 85% of our waste – an increase of 5% from last year. The recycling programme, operated by HANNAY waste, is supported by documentation for audit purposes to ensure all legal obligations are met to observe the Data Protection Act 1990 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The Disposal Services Agency dispose of our consumable items such as IT items and display systems through recycling and reuse, minimising the need for landfill. We are able to monitor the waste management for Aviation House and identify areas where improvements can be made.

Energy

5.67 We are able to monitor the energy efficiency of Aviation House through the Building Management System software. We have taken a further step in our commitment to conserving energy and protecting the environment by signing up to London Electricity's Green tariff. The Green tariff supplies electricity generated from eligible renewable sources under the Government's climate change levy renewable exemption scheme.

Purchasing

5.68 Our policy on procurement will help to minimise the procurement of goods and supplies which are dependent on the use of non-renewable resources or pollutant substances. We encourage the purchase of products based on recycled material and produced with due consideration to energy efficiency. In partnership with Office of Government Commerce buying solutions we are benefiting from competitive utility contracts for cleaner fuels and renewable energy. OGC monitoring and targeting service helps us cut energy consumption.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

5.69 Openness and accessibility are enshrined in our core values. We are publicly committed to doing our business in as open and transparent a way as possible, and we work in accordance with our Code of Practice on Openness. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 places a specific duty on public authorities to adopt and maintain a scheme which relates to the publication of information by the authority. We published our Publication Scheme in November 2002.

Concordats

5.70 During this year, concordats have been agreed between ourselves and the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland).

Legislative database

5.71 In June 2002 we created a database system to track the progress of all EU proposals relevant to our work.

Publicity and advertising

5.72 The evaluation of the first phase of the Food Hygiene Campaign showed highly positive results. The independent evaluation commended the successful reach of the campaign. In terms of

formal evaluation of publicity activity, the success of phase one was consolidated by phase two. By December 2002, two-thirds correctly recalled the campaign (rising to more than 80% for the key target audience of 16-25 year olds, reflecting accurate media targeting). Generally, both awareness of the campaign and its messages have continued to rise amongst consumers, catering managers and workers, and the highest figures for washing hands (the campaign's core message) were reached by the end of phase two. A range of positives can be drawn from the findings so far:

- very high campaign recall
- a consolidation of awareness of food hygiene issues (among what was always a relatively knowledgeable, but potentially sceptical, audience)
- a well received video that should be further promoted for use in training programmes

5.73 We have learned that it is important that the campaign continually reinforces fundamental hygiene messages because it is clear that while respondents can identify the links when related to the campaign, they do not necessarily have them at the top of their minds when asked about hygiene issues in isolation.

5.74 The video *Bacteria Bites Business* was the focus of direct mail communication with caterers for the second phase of the campaign. This was a notable success with, by Christmas 2002, an estimated audience of up to 100,000 managers and as many as 500,000 staff. Almost 100% of those who had seen it found it useful, informative and entertaining. The video was also greeted by the visual communication industry with great enthusiasm and admiration and won two gold awards (including the prestigious best motivational training video) and one silver at the UK's International Visual Communications Association 2003 awards and also won a finalist's award at the international New York Festivals.

5.75 *Food Standards Agency News* continues to be popular amongst its readership and aims to be current, topical and authoritative.

Public enquiries

5.76 The FSA has an enquiry point that fields calls from the general public on a variety of queries. From 1 October last year we dealt with 3,192 calls from the public, and 1,907 emails. We receive a large number of letters and emails from members of the public and from MPs. Our key target is to send a full reply within 20 working days of receiving written correspondence and, if we are unable to meet this target, to let correspondents know why and when they will get a full reply.

5.77 We have:

- provided Health Ministers with draft answers to Parliamentary Questions (321 in the 2001/02 Parliamentary session) and to Ministerial Correspondence (507 in 2001/02, 474 in 2002/03)
- answered more than 2,400 pieces of 'treat official' correspondence over the past two years
- provided answers to Assembly Questions and dealt with Ministerial correspondence for the Welsh Assembly Government, and regularly briefed the Assembly's Health and Agriculture Committees on issues of interest
- provided answers to Assembly Questions (9 in 2002/03) and dealt with Ministerial correspondence (63 in 2002/03) for the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Minister for the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
- provided Health Ministers in Scotland with 40 draft answers to Parliamentary Questions in 2002/03 and 134 draft answers to Ministerial correspondence
- answered over 25,000 letters from members of the public since we were set up in April 2000



The year ahead

- 6.1 Our Strategic Plan and our Service Delivery Agreement together provide a framework for delivering our longer term aims. We will continue to address all the areas in our Strategic Plan. But to focus our efforts, the Executive Management Board has identified the following key priorities for delivery by April 2004.

Better food safety and standards

- 6.2 To improve food safety throughout the food chain, and promote best practice in the food industry, our priorities are to:

- publish our strategy for reducing campylobacter contamination of chicken, make a start on implementation, and agree a plan for monitoring and evaluating the success of the strategy
- issue guidance to caterers on HACCP, test methods for supporting catering businesses, and launch a pilot scheme testing guidance for caterers in Scotland. Reviews of progress against our April 2004 30% uptake SDA target will be carried out during 2003 and after April 2004
- give advice to Ministers following our OTM review, and deliver the FSA/MHS contribution to any new control regime
- agree and publish a strategy for minimisation of pesticide residues in food – recognising that consumer preferences go beyond strict safety requirements

Public information, labelling and choice

- 6.3 To promote honest and informative labelling to help consumers, our priorities are to:

- implement new EU legislation on clearer labelling, supported by guidance for industry and enforcers
- complete surveys to check our guidance on 'misleading claims' is being followed and to check on health claims

Improved consumer choice and diet

6.4 To help people to improve their dietary health, our priorities are to:

- publish the SACN report on salt intake and health, and agree salt reduction plans with four key industry sectors
- complete the joint DfES/FSA school meals survey, a survey of foods targeted at children, and an OFSTED survey of whole (primary) school approaches to food
- agree and issue the first *Food Vision* guidance (on local community activities on diet and nutrition)
- publish an FSA Scotland diet and nutrition strategy
- implement the first year of Welsh nutrition strategy action plan, agreed jointly with the Welsh Assembly Health Department

Food law enforcement

6.5 To improve the effectiveness of food law enforcement our priorities are to:

- deliver as agreed the 'step-change' on imported food controls, within resources provided
- develop a strategy with the MHS to ensure that the measures used to enforce the law are cost effective

More effective and efficient ways of working

6.6 To continue developing our staff and the way we work, our priorities are to:

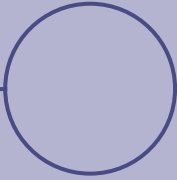
- develop a draft conceptual framework setting out how we prioritise food risks and discuss it with key stakeholders, and revise our statement on risk ready for consultation
- launch a quality assurance code of practice for research jointly with Defra, BBSRC and NERC
- establish links to EFSA and develop networks with other EU food agencies. We will host at least one seminar for heads of EU food agencies
- raise our performance to liP standard and secure liP status

- provide a return to the Welsh Language Board on our commitments in operating the Welsh Language Scheme
- review our Strategic Plan, and draft a report – with clear deliverables and performance indicators – ready for publication

Other activities

6.7 In addition to these specific targets we will maintain 'business as usual', including:

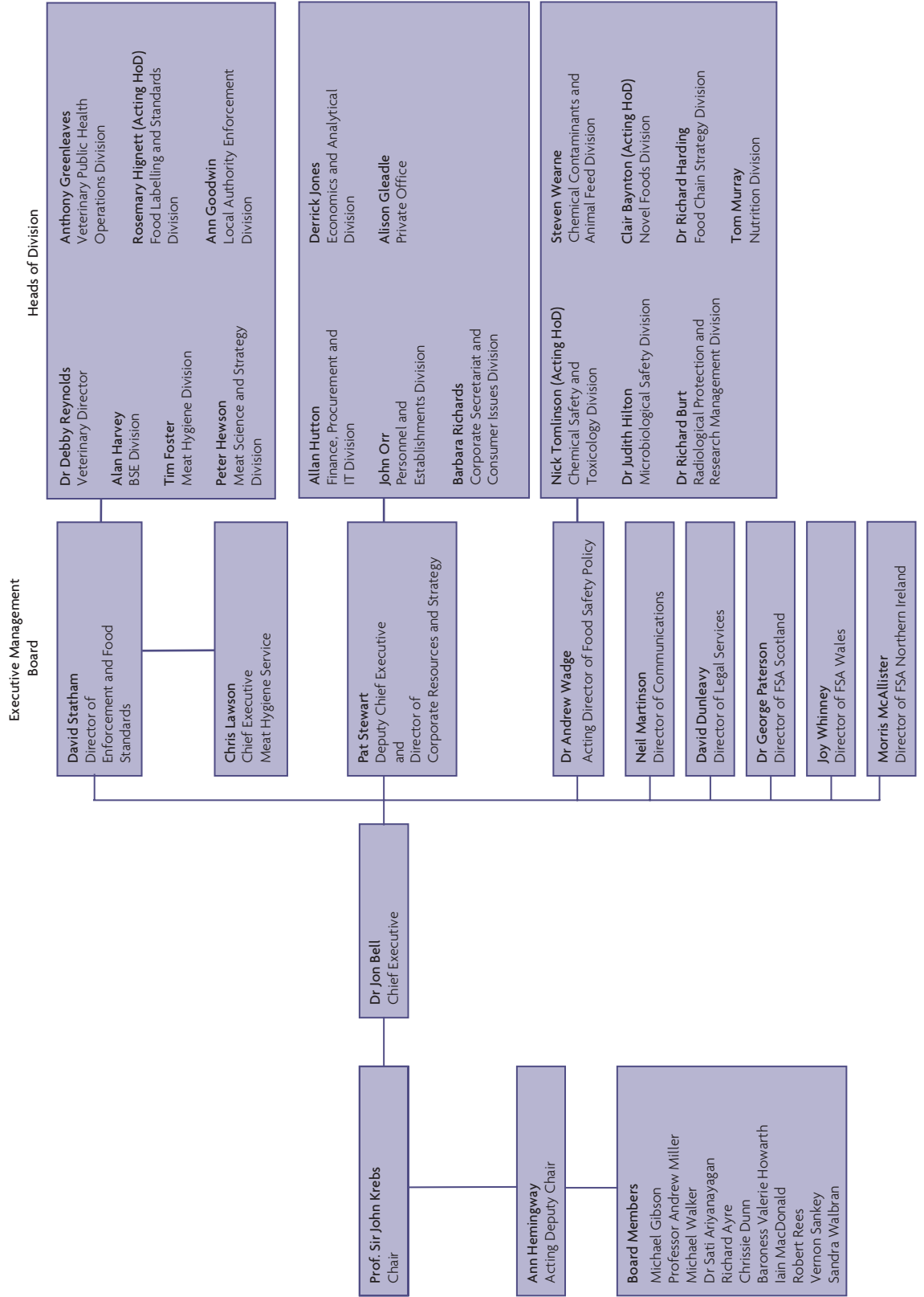
- protecting consumers by dealing effectively with food incidents and risks and providing advice to consumers as necessary
- discharging our responsibilities as a Government department. Specific issues this year will include developing more comprehensive costing information and performance indicators in line with NAO recommendations; responding to a review of food regulation by the Better Regulation Task Force; and contributing to a cross-Whitehall NAO study on Regulatory Impact Assessments
- playing our part in Government emergency exercises (and any real incidents)



Guide to the annexes

Annexe 1: FSA organisation	50
Annexe 2: Common core tables	51
Annexe 3: Performance against Service Delivery Agreement targets	58
Annexe 4: Expert and Strategic Advisory Committees	72
Annexe 5: Glossary of terms	74

Annexe 1: FSA Organisation (April 2003)



Annexe 2: Common core tables

Introduction to the format of the tables

Following the introduction of Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB), there have been a number of changes to the core tables in this year's departmental report. RAB provides a more accurate measure of departmental expenditure by matching costs to time, taking account of the full consumption and investment of arms-length bodies such as NDPBs and public corporations, and measuring the full cost of Government activity, including non-cash expenditure such as depreciation, cost of capital charges, and provisions.

The aim of the tables is to provide a detailed analysis of departmental expenditure plans in resource terms, showing: resource consumption and capital investment; and expenditure in three year Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) and Annually Managed Expenditure (AME).

The scope of the resource tables is restricted to 2000/01 to 2005/06, the last year covered by the 2002 Spending Review.

TABLE 1: TOTAL PUBLIC SPENDING FOR THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY

	2000/01 Outturn £'000	2001/02 Estimated Outturn £'000	2002/03 Plans £'000	2003/04 Plans £'000	2004/05 Plans £'000	2005/06 Plans £'000
<i>Consumption of Resources</i>						
Request for Resources: ⁽¹⁾						
Protecting and promoting public health in relation to food						
a) administration, inspections, surveillance, managing research and development, education, publicity and publications	78,510	88,665	112,299	94,947	112,447	115,447
b) slaughterhouse inspections and controls	3,749	18,135	25,000	24,581	24,581	24,581
c) FSA devolved funding:	–	–	–	–	–	–
<i>of which:</i>						
Scotland:						
Expenditure	3,567	5,410	5,055	5,255	6,200	6,200
Income	(3,567)	(5,410)	(5,055)	(5,255)	(6,200)	(6,200)
Wales:						
Expenditure	1,277	2,041	2,151	2,133	2,323	2,323
Income	(1,277)	(2,041)	(2,151)	(2,133)	(2,323)	(2,323)
Northern Ireland:						
Expenditure	928	1,245	1,200	1,200	1,311	1,311
Income	(928)	(1,245)	(1,200)	(1,200)	(1,311)	(1,311)
Total Resource Budget	82,259	106,800	137,299	119,528	137,028	140,028
<i>of which:</i>						
Resource DEL ^(1,2)	82,259	106,800	137,299	119,528	137,028	140,028
<i>of which:</i>						
Depreciation	824	1,510	2,004	2,004	2,004	2,004
Cost of Capital charges	241	150	1,307	762	762	762
Changes in provisions and other charges						
Capital Spending						
a) administration, inspections, surveillance, managing research and development, education, publicity and publications	6,537	1,158	322	322	322	322
b) slaughterhouse inspections and controls	416	359	315	2,325	325	325
Total capital budget	6,953	1,517	637	2,647	647	647
<i>of which:</i>						
Capital DEL ⁽¹⁾	6,953	1,517	637	2,647	647	647
Total public spending	88,388	106,807	135,932	120,171	135,671	138,671

(1) Departmental Expenditure Limits, set as part of the 2002 Spending Review

(2) of which, resource 'near-cash' DEL 81,194 105,140 133,988 116,762 134,262 137,262

(3) Total public spending calculated as the total of the resource budget plus the capital budget, less depreciation.

Departmental Resource Budget – Table 2

This table sets out, in resource terms, a summary of expenditure by departmental split from 2000/01 to 2005/06. It details the split of total resources by Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) and Annually Managed Expenditure (AME), including the new non-cash AME items introduced by Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB).

The DEL and AME figure illustrate total resource expenditure in the Department's budget.

Non-cash expenditure in AME is shown by category – depreciation, cost of capital charge, changes in provisions and other charges.

TABLE 2: RESOURCE BUDGET FOR THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY

	2000/01 Outturn £'000	2001/02 Outturn £'000	2002/03 Estimate Outturn £'000	2003/04 Plans £'000	2004/05 Plans £'000	2005/06 Plans £'000
<i>Consumption of resources by activity:</i>						
a) administration, inspections, surveillance, managing research and development, education, publicity and publications	78,510	88,665	112,299	94,947	112,447	115,447
b) slaughterhouse inspections and controls	3,749	18,135	25,000	24,581	24,581	24,581
Total Resource Budget	82,259	106,800	137,299	119,528	137,028	140,028
<i>of which:</i>						
Resource DEL^(1,2)	82,259	106,800	137,299	119,528	137,028	140,028
(1) Departmental Expenditure Limit, set as part of the 2002 Spending Review						
(2) of which, resource 'near cash' DEL	81,194	105,140	133,988	116,762	134,262	137,262

Departmental Capital Budget – Table 3

Table 3 gives a detailed breakdown of the investment or capital spending plans from 2000/01 to 2005/06 by department splits.

TABLE 3: CAPITAL BUDGET FOR THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY

	2000/01 Outturn £'000	2001/02 Outturn £'000	2002/03 Estimated Outturn £'000	2003/04 Plans £'000	2004/05 Plans £'000	2005/06 Plans £'000
<i>Capital Spending</i>						
a) administration, inspections, surveillance, managing research and development, education, publicity and publications	6,537	1,158	322	322	322	322
b) slaughterhouse inspections and controls	416	359	315	2,325	325	325
Total Capital Budget	6,953	1,517	637	2,647	647	647
<i>of which:</i>						
Capital DEL ⁽¹⁾	6,953	1,517	637	2,647	647	647

(1) Departmental Expenditure Limit, set as part of the 2002 Spending Review

Capital Employed – Table 4

RAB gives a much clearer picture of the capital assets used by a Department. This is used as the basis for calculating the cost of capital charges paid by Departments to reflect the economic costs of holding the assets. Table 4 sets out Total Capital Employed by the Department within the accounting boundary, and by its sponsored bodies outside the boundary.

TABLE 4: ANALYSIS OF CAPITAL EMPLOYED

	2000/01 Outturn	2001/02 Outturn	2002/03 Estimated Outturn	2003/04 Plans	2004/05 Plans	2005/06 Plans
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund	7,310	(3,173)	0	0	0	0
Revaluation Reserve	21	62	0	0	0	0
Total Capital Employed	7,331	(3,111)	0	0	0	0

Analysis of Administration Costs – Table 5

This table shows analysis of administration costs (formerly known as running costs).

TABLE 5: FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY ADMINISTRATION COSTS

	2000/01 Outturn £'000	2001/02 Outturn £'000	2002/03 Estimated Outturn £'000	2003/04 Plans £'000	2004/05 Plans £'000	2005/06 Plans £'000
Gross Admin Costs:						
Pay bill:	16,035	18,708	22,363	22,363	28,339	29,953
Other	17,782	24,142	25,028	26,084	32,330	33,716
Total Gross Admin Costs	33,817	42,850	47,391	48,447	60,669	63,669
Related administration cost receipts	(8,721)	(11,595)	(11,640)	(11,822)	(13,068)	(13,068)
Total net administration costs	25,096	31,255	35,751	36,625	47,601	50,601
<i>of which:</i>						
Departmental expenditure limit (DEL)	25,096	31,255	35,751	36,625	47,601	50,601
Non-cash AME	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total net administration costs by activity:						
a) administration, inspections, surveillance, managing research and development, education, publicity and publications	25,096	31,255	35,751	36,625	47,601	50,601
Total Administration Costs	25,096	31,255	35,751	36,625	47,601	50,601

Staff Numbers – Table 6

These tables show analyses of staff numbers, including the Meat Hygiene Service, in terms of Civil Service Full Time Equivalents (CS FTEs).

TABLE 6: STAFF NUMBERS

	2000/01 Outturn £'000	2001/02 Outturn £'000	2002/03 Estimated Outturn £'000	2003/04 Plans £'000	2004/05 Plans £'000	2005/06 Plans £'000
CS FTEs	1,891	2,055	2,175	2,225	2,225	2,225
Overtime	271	144	138	137	137	137
Casuals	40	40	51	55	55	55
Total	2,202	2,239	2,364	2,417	2,417	2,417

Annexe 3: Performance against Service Delivery Agreement targets – Aim 1

Aim 1	Target during Spending Review period 2001–04	Progress to date
<p>Measurably improve public confidence in the national food safety and standards arrangements.</p>	<p>In 2000/01 we will establish a baseline, and then set targets over the three years of the Spending Review period which will show an overall improvement in consumer confidence.</p>	<p>The results of our first consumer survey were published in February 2001 and set the baseline levels of consumer confidence in the national regulatory system for food safety and standards and in the credibility of the FSA.</p> <p>The results of our second survey, published in February 2002, and our third, published in February 2003, demonstrated our success through significant increases in both confidence in and awareness of the FSA.</p> <p>Survey results are available from our website www.food.gov.uk/yourviews/surveys/foodsafety-nutrition-diet/</p>
<p>We will:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance our website so that it is truly interactive from 2002, so that members of the public can outline what they would like us to do. Develop our facilities for providing advice for consumers by piloting new approaches that harness recent developments in e-technology, and publish performance against targets. 		<p>✓</p> <p>Our new website www.food.gov.uk was launched in December 2001. We want the site to be accessible to all users, including those with visual impairments. A text-only version of the site is available simply by selecting 'Text only'. We regularly add new interactive features such as 'Ask an expert' and 'Food poll'.</p> <p>Our website has been developed to take advantage of the latest developments in e-technology. It is easy to navigate, has links to other related websites, and includes a 'text only' version aimed at people with limited vision. Our site is also regularly monitored for 'Bobby' compliance.</p>

continued

We will:	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish annual reports that are understandable to consumers about the Agency's scientific and surveillance work, and food safety information. 	<p>✓</p> <p>Our annual Research and Survey Programmes Annual Report 2002 was published in October 2002. This year's report differs from the 2001 report, in that it contains additional information on our surveillance activities. The report is a compendium of the scientific research and survey projects, supported by the FSA, that were active during the financial year 2001/02. The full report is available on our website at www.food.gov.uk/science/research/researchannualreports/. Each chapter explains the strategic objectives of the research programmes, and how they are intended to benefit consumers.</p> <p>In addition, recommendations to improve the presentation of the results of research and surveillance programmes, made by the FSA's independent review of research which was published in July 2001, are being implemented. We are currently reviewing our research procurement and commissioning processes. We want to know what consumers think of them and how they could be improved. Anyone can assist by completing and returning the questionnaire which can be found on our website www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/webpage/94657.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the availability of research results, and by April 2001 make reports publicly available. 	<p>✓</p> <p>All research and surveillance final reports are published and available through the library.</p> <p>During 2002, we introduced a new content area on our website www.food.gov.uk/science/research/ which gives wide-ranging information on all research programmes and projects, including a summary of findings.</p>

continued

We will:	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hold Board meetings in public and hold open discussions with the public in order to listen to their concerns and to act on them. 	<p>✓</p> <p>Seven open Board meetings were held across the UK in 2002/03, with a further open meeting held in Brussels in November 2002. We aim to hold at least seven open Board meetings each year. In addition, all of our scientific advisory committees will hold at least one open meeting each year.</p> <p>We publish Board meeting agendas, papers, and decisions on our website www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/</p> <p>We have held several stakeholder meetings to promote debate on issues of consumer concern and scientific uncertainty, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Labelling of foods produced from GM technology ▪ The possible risk of BSE in sheep ▪ Potential controls to reduce consumer exposure to <i>Mycobacterium avium</i> subsp. <i>paratuberculosis</i> from milk. ▪ Folic acid and the prevention of disease
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publish our independent advice to Ministers (and to other appropriate authorities) on matters of substance, so that people will understand and know what we are saying about food safety. 	<p>✓</p> <p>We regularly issue advice on a wide range of issues. All advice is published on our website www.food.gov.uk which is updated frequently. We publish 'frequently asked questions' on subjects such as BSE and sheep, and acrylamide in packaging.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a system for post hoc audits of major food incidents, involving relevant stakeholders. 	<p>✓</p> <p>The Incidents Response Branch became operational on 8 July 2002. The Branch has held five post hoc evaluation meetings of major food incidents since 15 August 2002. The meetings involved internal and external stakeholders. On closure, all major environmental contamination incidents are subject to formal review involving relevant stakeholders. Action points are documented and incorporated into procedures, as appropriate.</p>

We will:	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a system for post hoc audits of major food incidents, involving relevant stakeholders. <i>(continued)</i> 	<p>✓</p> <p>In addition, the Branch began a programme of quarterly focused meetings examining trends and analysing the progress of minor environmental contamination incidents with a view to improving procedures. The first meeting was held in November 2002. The subject was on-farm incidents. Representatives from FSA and the Veterinary Laboratories Agency attended the meeting.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out and publish annual consumer surveys of attitudes towards food issues, and towards the FSA. 	<p>✓</p> <p>Results of our annual consumer attitudes surveys are published on our website www.food.gov.uk/yourviews/surveys/foodsafety-nutrition-diet/. Results of the 2002 survey show that awareness of and confidence in the FSA has risen since 2001. Poor standards of hygiene in food outlets remain a key concern for consumers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish performance information including Hygiene Assessment System (HAS) scores, information on local authority enforcement activity, and audit reports on local authority performance. 	<p>✓</p> <p>HAS scores are published on our website www.food.gov.uk (search for 'HAS scores'), and updated monthly. Information on local authority enforcement activity and audit reports are published on our website.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage local authorities to publish local information about hygiene standards in food premises. 	<p>✓</p> <p>Local authorities consulted in order to collate information on the various ways in which they promote local initiatives (e.g. hygiene award schemes, convictions registers) to local consumers about standards of food businesses. A register of initiatives is now being developed and will be placed on our website.</p>

continued

Performance against Service Delivery Agreement targets – Aim 2

Aim 2	Target during spending review period 2001–04	Progress to date
<p>Reduce foodborne illness by 20% over the next five years, including reducing levels of salmonella in UK-produced chickens on retail sale by at least 50% by the end of 2004/05.</p>	<p>Establish a baseline during 2000/01 for monitoring targets. Establish targets to assess progress over the Spending Review period. Target will be set once the baseline survey has been undertaken.</p>	<p>The key measure of performance for this target is the annual number of laboratory reports of the five main foodborne bacteria, salmonella, campylobacter, <i>E.coli</i> O157, listeria and <i>Clostridium perfringens</i>, which provide the most reliable information to monitor trends in levels of foodborne illness and so to assessing progress towards the target.</p> <p>Results of the baseline study, our findings of trends in infectious diseases, and our progress reports to the Board are published on our website www.food.gov.uk/science/sciencetopics/microbiology/.</p> <p>Preliminary results for 2002 indicate a reduction from the baseline year of around 14% in England and Wales.</p>
<p>We will:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a cost-effective strategy to reduce the incidence of foodborne illness in humans. 		<p>✓</p> <p>The foodborne disease five-year strategy was published in July 2001 and is available on our website www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/fdscg-strategy-revised.pdf along with six-monthly reports on progress.</p>

continued

We will:	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus activity on reducing incidences of salmonella in UK-produced chickens on retail sale by at least 50% in the coming five years. 	<p>✓</p> <p>We announced on 16 August 2001 the results of a survey of retail chickens that showed that the target to reduce salmonella in chickens was achieved ahead of schedule. The survey indicated that there were high levels of campylobacter present in retail chickens. The results are published on our website www.food.gov.uk/news/pressreleases/salmonellachick.</p> <p>Focus of activity has shifted to another major cause of foodborne disease – campylobacter. During 2002/03 we have developed a strategy for reducing levels of campylobacter in chicken. We intend to consult on the proposed strategy in the coming months, agree an implementation plan and begin implementation during 2003/04.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set new targets for the Meat Hygiene Service. 	<p>✓</p> <p>Targets are set on an annual basis in consultation with key stakeholders including Defra, industry, consumer and trade associations and interest groups. Targets for 2002/03 were set by the Board in March 2002. Draft targets for 2003/04 will be considered by the Board at its meeting in March 2003.</p> <p>Targets and performance information is published in the MHS Annual Report and on our website www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/meathygieneperformance2002.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tackle the food hygiene knowledge gap across the whole population. Note: see also activity on 'protecting consumers' shown in the next table. 	<p>✓</p> <p>The five-year Food Hygiene Campaign was launched in February 2002. The results of the first phase of activity have been evaluated and used to develop the next phase of activity aimed at caterers. The report on the evaluation activities for the first phase of the campaign can be downloaded from our website. The second phase of the catering campaign is being evaluated and the findings will be posted on our website.</p>

We will:	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tackle the food hygiene knowledge gap across the whole population. <i>(continued)</i> <p>Note: see also activity on 'protecting consumers' shown in the next table.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>A barbecue and summer eating campaign was launched over the Queen's Golden Jubilee Weekend and ran throughout the summer to promote the 'cook properly' and other food hygiene related messages.</p> <p>A Christmas safe eating campaign was launched in England, Wales and Scotland the week before Christmas 2002 to remind consumers to defrost and cook their turkeys thoroughly.</p> <p>Material was also produced in autumn 2002 in the wake of the number of food poisoning outbreaks associated with eggs, to remind consumers and caterers about egg safety. A new leaflet and sticker containing advice on egg safety was mailed to caterers and NHS trusts in January 2003.</p> <p>A booklet aimed at new catering businesses and people who are thinking of setting up a catering business was launched on 10 February 2003.</p> <p>A video of 'Bad Food Live' with teachers' notes was launched in March 2003.</p> <p>A food hygiene award scheme developed in conjunction with local authorities in Wales was launched in spring 2002.</p> <p>A scheme is being trialled in 2003 to help up to 10 local authorities in England undertake activities to promote food hygiene messages effectively.</p> <p>FSA Wales produced food hygiene resource packs in English and Welsh for primary and secondary schools and conducted a number of school-based activities. It has helped the Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales to produce guidance for the Welsh curriculum, advising on how food-related aspects should best be taught.</p>

Performance against Service Delivery Agreement targets – Aim 3

Aim 3	Target during Spending Review period 2001–04	Progress to date
<p>To protect consumers through improved food safety and standards by:</p> <p>a) Improving local authority enforcement</p> <p>b) Promoting the use of HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points)</p> <p>c) Improving the safety of fresh meat through MHS action to ensure the effective enforcement of hygiene controls</p>	<p>We will develop a new framework agreement with local authorities to promote high and consistent standards of enforcement throughout the UK.</p> <p>30% of food premises to have implemented HACCP food safety management systems by the end of the Spending Review period.</p> <p>To set annual targets for the MHS to ensure the application of clean livestock policy, health marking, and strict enforcement of SRM controls. Targets will be agreed by the FSA Board and published by the MHS.</p>	<p>Framework Agreement published in September 2000, and fully operational by 1 April 2001. For further details of what we will do during the Spending Review period see below.</p> <p>Strategy for wider implementation of HACCP was published in November 2001, and is available on our website www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/fsa_01_07_02.pdf.</p> <p>A local authority survey in 2001/02 confirmed that 20% of premises now have documented HACCP in place. For further details of what we will do during the Spending Review period see below.</p> <p>Targets are set on an annual basis in consultation with key stakeholders including Defra, industry, consumer and trade associations and interest groups). Targets and performance information are published in the MHS Annual Report and on our website www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/meathygieneperformance2002.</p>
<p>We will:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new Framework Agreement with local authorities by 1 April 2001 to promote high and consistent standards of enforcement throughout the UK. 		<p>✓</p> <p>Our <i>Framework Agreement with Local Authorities</i> became fully operational from 1 April 2001, and is available on our website www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/role/framework/. The way we work with local enforcement authorities is set out in the <i>Framework Agreement</i>, and an Enforcement Liaison Group has been set up to strengthen links between the FSA and local authorities. We monitor the enforcement performance of enforcement authorities, and there is an audit scheme in place.</p>

continued

We will:	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new Framework Agreement with local authorities by 1 April 2001 to promote high and consistent standards of enforcement throughout the UK. <i>(continued)</i> 	<p>✓</p> <p>Six auditors trained by April 2001. In 2001/02 we audited 10% of local authorities under the new scheme. Thereafter, in light of the first year's results we decided on an expanded programme to cover a larger sample of local authorities, and to undertake audits targeting specific policy issues, for 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05. Further 5% (21) of local authorities audited from 1 April to 30 September 2002.</p> <p>Audit programme for October 2002 to March 2003 consisted of four more full audits and 30 focused audits – 15 in Oct-Dec 2002 looked specifically at local authority food sampling activity and 15 in Jan-March 2003 looked specifically at local authority formal enforcement activity. A further five full audits, 15 focused audits on authorisation and training of food law enforcement officers and 15 on internal monitoring and peer review (inter authority auditing) will take place in 2003/04.</p> <p>In Scotland, an Audit Unit within the FSA and agreed local authority audit scheme has been established. A three-year rolling audit programme started in April 2001, with all Scottish authorities being partially audited in 2002/03. We are on track to complete the second year of a three-year programme, with all Scottish authorities partially audited in the year. One report has been completed and has been published. Work is currently under way on agreeing the action plans for the other four.</p> <p>In Wales, four audits to be completed during 2002/03. One audit completed so far, and another awaiting completion.</p> <p>In Northern Ireland, we will complete five audits of local authorities during the 2002/03 financial year. One report completed and published. Work is currently under way on agreeing the action plans for the other four.</p> <p>All audit results are published on our website www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/audits/.</p>

We will:	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult on and implement a strategy for the promotion of HACCP throughout the food chain, so that 30% of food premises have implemented food safety management based on the HACCP principles by the end of 2003/04. 	<p>✓</p> <p>Strategy for wider implementation of HACCP was published in November 2001, and is available on our website www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/fsa_01_07_02.pdf.</p> <p>A local authority survey in 2001/02 confirmed that 20% of premises now have documented HACCP in place.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake additional research into new techniques for assessing the safety of genetically modified foods. 	<p>✓</p> <p>A new three-year programme of research commenced in September 2001. Two workshops were held in June 2002 to promote discussion and collaboration between research contractors. All annual site visits to monitor progress were completed by August 2002 and annual progress reports received for all projects by 30 September 2002.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure effective enforcement of animal feed legislation. 	<p>✓</p> <p>In November 2001 we announced £7.5 million extra funding to be distributed to local authorities over three years. The funds are to help them devote more resources to carrying out surveillance and checks on animal feed, registering, assessing and checking a range of activities, including on-farm mixing, and also compliance of imported animal feed. In 2001/02 the money was used to fund a project for local authorities to make checks on contaminants and additives in feeds. Some 30,000 were carried out and the results were published in March 2003.</p> <p>The Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs has embarked on a review of animal feed law enforcement and began with hearing presentations from the main enforcement bodies at its April 2003 meeting.</p>

continued

We will:	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Specified Risk Material (SRM) controls are fully enforced, and improve ante- and post-mortem inspections. 	<p>✓</p> <p>MHS targets for 2001/02 included challenging targets relating to the enforcement of SRM controls. Similar targets apply in 2002/03 and have been proposed for 2003/04. Since April 2001, there have been a small number (four sheep and one beef) spinal cord findings in health-marked carcasses. These did not enter the food chain.</p> <p>The level of veterinary supervision in full throughput plants has been brought into line with EU requirements. The MHS has been asked to bring veterinary supervision in low throughput abattoirs into line with EU requirements by 31 March 2003.</p> <p>Since 1 January 2001, and up to the end of January 2003, there have been 49 cases where SRM has been found in imported meat (48 in beef, one in sheep meat), 47 from other Member States, and two from Poland. Each case has been reported to the veterinary authorities of the other state for appropriate action to be taken. The MHS in GB continues to check every notified consignment of imported carcass beef for any presence of SRM. Similar arrangements are in place in Northern Ireland.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the agreed recommendations of the Pooley Report in the MHS as a means of securing improved public health and better value for money. 	<p>✓</p> <p>There were originally 29 recommendations in the Pooley Report for the FSA to take forward, including those relating to meat inspection and the work of the Meat Hygiene Service. One of these recommendations was subsequently transferred by agreement to Defra. Of the remaining 28 recommendations, 15 have been completed, six are being taken forward in EU negotiations, and the remaining seven are being acted on.</p>

continued

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to re-negotiation of the European Meat Hygiene Directive so as to better protect public health and produce a more efficient enforcement system. 	<p>✓</p> <p>During 2002/03 FSA officials took part in negotiations in Europe on three regulations to replace the existing 17 food hygiene directives, including those covering meat, with new rules based on HACCP principles. Political agreement was reached on two of these regulations and negotiations on the third is continuing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policy on the nutritional quality of foods and diets and their effect on public health, especially amongst disadvantaged groups. 	<p>✓</p> <p>Our Nutrition Action Plan was agreed by the Board in December 2002. The Nutrition Forum met three times during the year. Details of these can be found on our website www.food.gov.uk. Regular reports to the Board can also be found on our website.</p> <p>We work closely with the Department of Health to ensure that our advice to consumers on nutritional issues is always based on the best and most recent scientific evidence. Jointly with the Department of Health we provide the secretariat for the UK-wide Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN). SACN advises health departments as well as the FSA. Full details of SACN can be found on the Committee's website at www.sacn.gov.uk.</p> <p>Improved and extended consumer information is now available via our website www.food.gov.uk.</p> <p>The first of five reports of the latest National Diet and Nutrition Survey, on adults aged 19-64, was published in December. The report provided results on the types and quantities of foods consumed by adults in Great Britain.</p>

continued

We will:	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policy on the nutritional quality of foods and diets and their effect on public health, especially amongst disadvantaged groups. <i>(continued)</i> 	<p>✓</p> <p>In July we advised health departments on the evidence for and against fortification of food with folic acid to prevent disease. Details of the advice are at www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/folicacid_disease_annexa.pdf</p> <p>In August the Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals issued for comment its draft review on safe levels of intakes of vitamin and mineral supplements.</p> <p>Together with LGA and LACORS we published in September 'Food: the Local Vision' which sets out the joint objectives of the three organisations in encouraging local activities to promote healthy eating.</p> <p>In November the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition issued for comment its draft review of the evidence for the health effects of salt intake.</p>

continued

We will:	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publish consultation document on future labelling policy, in light of responses to the 'Better Labelling' initiative. 	<p>✓</p> <p>We have made progress on a number of the initiatives in our Labelling Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposal for EU rules requiring more comprehensive allergen labelling is close to agreement. ▪ A proposal for EU legislation on health and nutrition claims setting up a prior approval regime is likely to be adopted shortly. ▪ Consumer testing of improved nutrition label formats is under way. ▪ Our advice on use of terms like fresh and traditional was published in July, and a follow-up survey has been commissioned. ▪ Research into prevalence and consumer impact of 'may contain nuts' labelling was published in June 2002. ▪ Two open Labelling Fora have been held, in Cardiff in June and London in December, and have discussed clear labelling, GM labelling and enforcement of labelling rules. ▪ A research review relating to evidence on the effect of promotional activity on eating behaviour has been commissioned. ▪ Agreed a number of actions to protect consumers' interests in relation to distance selling. ▪ Consultation on a position paper on assurance schemes has been completed. ▪ Published a report of a study on voluntary labelling. ▪ Published new advice on country of origin labelling. ▪ Published new advice on clear labelling.

Annexe 4: Expert and Strategic Advisory Committees

Advisory Committees at 31 March 2003

The following advisory committees were transferred to the FSA by Ministerial Direction under section 5 and schedule 2(7) of the Food Standards Act in June 2000. Under the terms of their transfer, these advisory committees became statutory committees of the FSA.

- Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes
- Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food
- Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals (Report expected late spring 2003)

Responsibility for the following Tribunal and Panel were also informally transferred to the FSA on its establishment on 1 April 2000:

- Meat Hygiene Appeals Tribunal for England and Wales
- Beef Assurance Scheme Membership Panel

The following advisory committees have been established since 1 April 2001 under Section 5(3) and Schedule 2 of the Food Standards Act:

- Meat Hygiene Advisory Committee*
- Consumer Committee
- Advisory Committee on Research

**Chaired by a Board Member and comprising some other Board members, FSA officials and external members.*

ADVISORY COMMITTEES THAT REPORT JOINTLY TO THE FSA AND OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Joint FSA/Defra Secretariat (FSA Lead)

- Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs

Joint FSA/Department of Health Secretariat (FSA lead)

- Committee on the Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment

- Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

Joint Defra/FSA/Department of Health Secretariat (Defra lead)

- Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee

Joint Department of Health/FSA Secretariat (DH lead)

- Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment
- Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment

Further Information

Further information on our advisory committees can be found on our website at: www.food.gov.uk/science/ouradvisors

Information on our advisory committees as at 31 March 2002 can be found in the 2002 edition of the Cabinet Office Public Bodies publication (The Stationery Office, ISBN 011 430 1840).

Annexe 5: Glossary of terms

AME	Annually Managed Expenditure
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
BBSRC	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
CHI	Commission for Health Improvement
CSFTEs	Civil Service Full Time Equivalents
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DEL	Departmental Expenditure Limits
DfES	Department for Education and Science
DH	Department of Health
DHSS PS	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
DTLR	Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSA	Food Standards Agency
FSPB	Food Safety Promotion Board
GB	Great Britain
GM	Genetically modified or genetic modification
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point: a documented food safety management system widely regarded as the most effective way of managing and controlling hazards inherent in the food handling and

production process. It is a structured approach based on seven principles which may be applied flexibly in food businesses of all sizes to ensure that proportionate risk-based controls are in place and safe food is produced.

HAS	Hygiene Assessment System
HEBS	Health Education Board for Scotland
liP	Investors in People
LACORS	Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services
LGA	Local Government Association
MHS	Meat Hygiene Service
MPs	Members of Parliament
MORI	Market & Opinion Research International market research company
NAO	National Audit Office
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
OGC	Office of Government Commerce
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
OTM	Over Thirty Months
RAB	Resource Accounting and Budgeting
SACN	Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition
SCS	Senior Civil Service
SEHD	Scottish Executive Health Department
SFAC	Scottish Food Advisory Committee
SRM	Specified Risk Material
WHO	World Health Organization

