

**Report on the Audit of Local Authority Food Law
Service Assessment of Food Businesses'
Food Safety Management System (FSMS)**

Wychavon District Council
23-24 March 2010



Foreword

Audits of local authorities' food law enforcement services are part of the Food Standards Agency's arrangements to improve consumer protection and confidence in relation to food. These arrangements recognise that the enforcement of UK food law relating to food safety, hygiene, composition, labelling, imported food and feeding stuffs is largely the responsibility of local authorities. These local authority regulatory functions are principally delivered through Environmental Health and Trading Standards Services. The Agency's website contains enforcement activity data for all UK local authorities and can be found at: www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring.

The attached audit report examines the Local Authority's Food Law Enforcement Service. The assessment includes the local arrangements in place for officer authorisation and training, inspections of food businesses and internal monitoring. The audit scope was developed specifically to address Recommendations 9 and 15 of the Public Inquiry Report¹ into the 2005 E. coli outbreak at Bridgend, Wales. The programme focused on the local authority's training provision to ensure that all officers who check Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) and HACCP based plans, including those responsible for overseeing the work of those officers, have the necessary knowledge and skills. Also, that existing inspection arrangements and processes to assess and enforce HACCP related food safety requirements in food businesses are adequate, risk based, and able to effect any changes necessary to secure improvements.

Agency audits assess local authorities' conformance against the Food Law Enforcement Standard ("The Standard"), which was published by the Agency as part of the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement and is available on the Agency's website at: www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring. It should be acknowledged that there will be considerable diversity in the way and manner in which local authorities may provide their food enforcement services reflecting local needs and priorities.

The main aim of the audit scheme is to maintain and improve consumer protection and confidence by ensuring that local authorities are providing an effective food law enforcement service. The scheme also provides the opportunity to identify and disseminate good practice and provide information to inform Agency policy on food safety, standards and feeding stuffs. Parallel local authority audit schemes are implemented by the Agency's offices in all the devolved countries comprising the UK.

For assistance, a glossary of technical terms used within this audit report can be found at Annexe C.

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/ecolidocs/3008707/reporten.pdf?skip=1&lang=en>

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report records the results of an audit at Wychavon District Council with regard to food hygiene enforcement, under relevant headings of the Food Standards Agency Food Law Enforcement Standard. The audit focused on the Authority's arrangements for the management of food establishment inspections, enforcement activities and internal monitoring. The report has been made available on the Agency's website at:

www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring/auditreports.

Hard copies are available from the Food Standards Agency's Local Authority Audit and Liaison Division at Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH, Tel: 020 7276 8428.

Reason for the Audit

- 1.2 The power to set standards, monitor and audit local authority food law enforcement services was conferred on the Food Standards Agency by the Food Standards Act 1999 and the Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009. This audit of Wychavon District Council was undertaken under section 12(4) of the Act as part of the Food Standards Agency's annual audit programme.
- 1.3 The Authority was included in the Food Standards Agency's programme of audits of local authority food law enforcement services, because it had not been audited in the past by the Agency and was representative of a geographical mix of 25 Councils selected across England.

Scope of the Audit

- 1.4 The audit examined Wychavon District Council's arrangements for food establishment inspections and internal monitoring with regard to food hygiene law enforcement, with particular emphasis on officer competencies in assessing food safety management systems based on HACCP principles. This included a reality check at a food business to assess the effectiveness of official controls implemented by the Authority at the food business premises and, more specifically, the checks carried out by the Authority's officers to verify food business operator (FBO) compliance with legislative requirements. The scope of the audit also included an assessment of the Authority's overall organisation and management, and the internal monitoring of other related food hygiene law enforcement activities.
- 1.5 Assurance was sought that key authority food hygiene law enforcement systems and arrangements were effective in supporting business compliance, and that local enforcement was managed and

delivered effectively. The on-site element of the audit took place at the Authority's office at the Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore on 23-24 March 2010.

Background

- 1.6 Wychavon District Council covers 260 square miles and is the largest of six districts in Worcestershire. With a population of 117,100, the District is made up of the three main towns of Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore, and nearly 100 villages.
- 1.7 There are approximately 1,179 food establishments within the Authority's area. The majority are in the small to medium retail and catering sector categories. There were 9 establishments in the Authority's area which required approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004.
- 1.8 Food safety enforcement was delivered by the Environmental Health (Commercial) Team within the Environmental Services department. The Commercial Team was managed by a Commercial Services Manager, who was the appointed Lead Officer for food safety. The team also enforced Health and Safety at Work legislation, some Licensing Act applications and were involved with the local Primary Care Trust in a number of promotional health advisory services including 'FSA Mission possible'.
- 1.9 The profile of Wychavon District Council's food businesses as of 31 March 2009 was as follows:

Type of food establishment	Number
Primary Producers	57
Manufacturers/Packers	58
Retailers	214
Restaurant/Caterers	804
Distributors	2
Importers/Exporters	44
Total number of food establishment	1,179

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Authority had drawn up a Service Delivery Plan 2009/2010 for the range of duties carried out by Environmental Services including the Commercial Services Team. The Plan identified a number of key achievements, stated targets for the year ahead and had received Member Approval. The auditors recognised that with the advent of the proposed merger of the department into a Shared Service structure it may be necessary to adopt a standardised method of service planning in a format that would be able to be aligned to that with other authorities.
- 2.2 The policies and procedures in use were generally detailed and comprehensive, providing guidance to officers of the methods and processes to follow for food law enforcement. An effective system for review of these policies and procedures was in place and some had been recently reviewed. The Authority had maintained a document control system based on ISO 9000 quality management principles with documents being available electronically for officers.
- 2.3 The Authority had a procedure for the authorisation of officers which took account of officer qualification, experience and competency. The authorisations generally covered the range of legislation under which officers were authorised.
- 2.4 Records of the food hygiene inspections and other actions undertaken by the Authority confirmed that file records were well organised and easily retrievable. There were a number of different inspection aides-memoire on the files but most recent forms reflected the improvements that had been made over the past year in response to the outcome of the Pennington report.
- 2.5 Officer training and qualifications records confirmed that generally the Authority had provided adequate training to officers commensurate with their tasks and in accordance with the specified levels of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training requirements as required by the Food Law Code of Practice. Officers had recently received update training on HACCP evaluations.
- 2.6 The approved establishment files should be reviewed to reflect the information required by Annexe 12 of the Food Law Code of Practice Guidance. Although approval documents were available, there was insufficient information on some of the files particularly in relation to the evaluation of HACCP systems. The use of an appropriate inspection aide-memoire specific to the approval activity would prompt officers to capture the full business compliance history.

- 2.7 The Authority had developed a procedure for the investigation of food complaints and it was evident that all complaints had been thoroughly investigated.
- 2.8 The Authority had set up, maintained, and were implementing a documented sampling policy, procedure and a sampling programme. File checks showed that letters had been sent relating to follow-up actions in all cases of unsatisfactory samples, and food business operators had been informed of outcomes.
- 2.9 The Authority was using appropriate and effective enforcement powers in accordance with their enforcement policy to ensure that food business operators were compliant with the legislation, including the use of Hygiene Improvement Notices (HINs), and a prosecution. When using these powers, the Authority was able to show that they had, in general, used a graduated approach to enforcement.
- 2.10 The Authority had an internal monitoring system as part of their ISO 9000 accreditation. In practice monitoring was undertaken across the range of food law enforcement activities particularly with regard to quantitative aspects of the inspection programme. Auditors were informed that officers received informal feedback from these monitoring activities at team meetings and at one of the four monthly reviews. However, the absence of records relating to internal monitoring made it difficult to ascertain the effectiveness of the monitoring which had taken place. It was noted that the new aide-memoire form already incorporated a monitoring reference to address this issue.
- 2.11 Although there was no current third party or peer review system in place, the Authority had participated in a number of initiatives, particularly in relation to consistency exercises for the assessment of food establishments. The Authority had also worked with local manufacturing businesses on a joint training day for officers in relation to HACCP assessments.
- 2.12 An interview with an officer and a reality check visit to a food business with another officer were undertaken during the audit. Both officers could demonstrate a clear understanding of the key aspects of carrying out an inspection and the assessment of a food safety management system (FSMS) appropriate to their level of authorisation.

3.0 Audit Findings

3.1 Organisation and Management

Strategic Framework, Policy and Service Planning

3.1.1 The Authority had developed a 5 year strategy based around key priorities which gave a clear direction for all the Authority's services. The areas were developed to deliver on local needs and meet the national agendas. Environmental Services linked into the following strategies:

- Healthier: Improving health and well-being
- Stronger: Vibrant and inclusive communities with a strong economy
- Successful: Delivering excellent and value for money services.

3.1.2 The Service, as detailed in the current Environmental Services Plan, included the following Performance Indicators, which were of particular relevance to the scope of the audit:

- *To undertake the specified number of interventions in line with their risk rating frequencies and report these using the Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS);*
- *The number of food establishments in the area which were broadly compliant with food hygiene law (NI 184);*
- *The satisfaction of businesses with local authority regulatory services (NI 182);*
- *To investigate requests for service and complaints relating to food purchases and food hygiene in food establishments within specific time periods;*
- *To undertake a programme of food sampling. To identify areas for improvement through comparisons with neighbouring Authorities;*
- *The number of candidates taking Foundation Food Hygiene Courses;*
- *Businesses adopting Safer Food Better Business through workshops and coaching;*
- *The number of businesses subject to an Alternative Enforcement Strategy.*

3.1.3 The Environmental Services Plan was developed through discussion at the Environmental Services Management Team and submitted for further ratification at the Senior Management Team with the Portfolio Holder subsequently sanctioning the Plan. The Authority had completed a review against the previous year's Service Plan and

highlighted key achievements against the previous year's plan as well as any objectives that were not met.

- 3.1.4 The performance of the Service was monitored by the Commercial Services Manager using a software system. Quarterly reports against targets were produced, highlighting any shortfall with service delivery and corrective actions were developed to correct any variances. These reports were reviewed by the Managing Director and Head of Strategy. The outcome of the review was reported to Members as risks in a report format of 'Signals to Success'.
- 3.1.5 The Commercial Services Manager had developed a procedure for the 'Allocation of resources to Service Standards' together with a supporting spreadsheet which determined the time food safety officers spent in undertaking food enforcement, which linked directly to the strategies outlined in the Service Plan.

Activity	Staff (FTE)
Commercial Services Manager	0.4
Environmental Health Officers	1.7
Food Safety Officers	1.3
TOTAL	3.4

Good Practice – Service Planning

The Authority had produced a table to show yearly trends and a summary of the performance of the Environmental Health (Commercial) Team against National and Local Indicators.

Documented Policies and Procedures

- 3.1.6 The Authority had developed documented food service policies and procedures, and a document control system was in use to confirm their dates of issue. The Authority had been accredited since 2002 against ISO 9000 but this had not received external accreditation in 2009 due to cost savings and the ability to maintain the process in house.
- 3.1.7 Documented policies and procedures had been reviewed at regular intervals. Documents were reviewed by the food team and any corrections were agreed with the Commercial Services Manager. New documents were stored electronically and older versions were archived by the systems administration officer.

Officer Authorisations

- 3.1.8 The Authority had a procedure for the authorisation of officers. Delegated authority was given to the Head of Environmental Services and the Commercial Services Manager. The procedure included the use of a matrix which cross referenced officers against their current level of authorisation. The Commercial Services Manager was responsible for ensuring that individual officers were correctly authorised in line with their qualifications, experience and competency, the level of authorisation was reviewed annually.
- 3.1.9 The Authority was committed to providing staff training and development and officer training needs were individually assessed at appraisal meetings. Officers submitted requests for training arising from their appraisals. The records relating to the staff training were accessible from an electronic spreadsheet co-ordinated by the Commercial Services Manager. Individual officer training was fed back into the team at team meetings and one officer had organised and delivered cascade training provided by the European Union across authorities within the County.
- 3.1.10 Training records for five authorised officers were examined during the audit. Evidence of qualifications and update training, including training on HACCP principles were being maintained. Many of the qualification certificates were held by Human Resources and were not evidenced by the auditors. Officers had completed Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training per year, in line with Food Law Code of Practice requirements, but in some instances the records were not fully maintained.

Good Practice – Appraisals

The Authority had used one of the 4 monthly appraisals meetings that they undertook with each officer to review all establishments that were scored as a 'one star' rating under the 'Scores on the Doors' rating system. The review included an agreed course of action to be undertaken at the next intervention visit.

3.2 Food Premises Inspections

- 3.2.1 The Authority had updated previously issued procedures for general food hygiene interventions (in 2008) and an approved establishment procedure (in February 2010).

Good Practice – Inspections

The Authority had produced a Food Safety 'Scores on the Doors' Progress Record which was used to discuss and agree outcomes with the FBO on their progress towards compliance. The form was subsequently signed off by the Commercial Services Manager.

- 3.2.2 The current aide-memoire used for interventions had been developed in collaboration with other authorities within the Food Liaison Group. The existing file records reflected the need to evaluate food safety management systems in more detail to inform future interventions. However, following the introduction of the new aide-memoire there was some evidence to show that more detailed information was being recorded as evidence of effective FSMS evaluations. A report or letter had been issued in all the files examined, these made a clear distinction between legal requirements and recommendations of good practice.
- 3.2.3 The Authority's food establishment records were held on paper files and on an electronic database system. File and database records of five food establishments and three approved establishments were examined. The intervention records of food hygiene inspections and other actions undertaken by the authority were generally well organised and easily retrievable and confirmed that officers were supporting food businesses within their area at every intervention.
- 3.2.4 The approved establishment files did not reflect the recently introduced approved establishment procedure, specifically in relation to the requirement for the file to contain the information in Annexe 12 of the Food Law Code of Practice. The procedure also stated that the appropriate pro-forma inspections forms should be used (available from the LACORS website), however only one file contained the appropriate inspection form.

Recommendations

The Authority should:

- 3.2.5 Use an appropriate product based aide-memoire to capture information in establishments subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004, including the assessment of the compliance of premises and systems, particularly in relation to HACCP based food safety management systems. [The Standard – 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4]
- 3.2.6 Ensure the records for all establishments sufficiently detail the determination of compliance with legal requirements in particular the evaluation of HACCP systems made by the authorised officers. Records of approved establishments subject to Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 should be reviewed in accordance with Annexe 12 of the Food Law Code of Practice Guidance. [The Standard - 16.1]

Verification visit to a Food Premises

- 3.2.7 During the audit, a verification visit was undertaken to a local retail butcher with an officer from the Authority, who had carried out the last food hygiene inspection of the premises. The main objective of the visit was to assess the effectiveness of the Authority's assessment of food business compliance with food law requirements. The specific assessments included the conduct of the preliminary interview of the FBO by the officer, the general hygiene checks to verify compliance with the structure and hygiene practice requirements and checks carried out by the officer to verify compliance with HACCP based procedures.
- 3.2.8 The audit visit confirmed that the checks carried out by the officer reflected the support that officers gave to FBO's when carrying out their interventions, but also confirmed the need to undertake more thorough assessments of FSMS and to record more details onto the aide-memoire form to support future interventions.

3.3 Enforcement

- 3.3.1 The Authority had developed an Enforcement Policy for the Environmental Services, which had been reviewed and published in 2008.
- 3.3.2 Formal enforcement action had been taken in some food establishments due to the lack of a FSMS in line with the Authority's enforcement policy, legal requirements, the Food Law Code of Practice and official guidance.
- 3.3.3 Three hygiene improvement notices were examined, two of which had been served against businesses failing to comply with Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 Article 5, were selected for review. In each case, the use of the notice had been the appropriate course of action and had been served in accordance with the Authority's own policy and procedures.

3.4 Internal Monitoring and Third Party or Peer Review

Internal Monitoring

- 3.4.1 It was evident that quantitative performance monitoring against inspection targets was carried out both within the team and at senior management level. Any shortfall of inspection activity was monitored and inspections were re-assigned to ensure the inspection programme remained on target. In addition, audit record checks and discussions with officers confirmed that officers jointly reviewed enforcement decisions and held team meeting discussions to promote consistent enforcement.
- 3.4.2 The Authority had previously been accredited to ISO 9000 which contained a requirement to undertake internal monitoring. However, the current operational internal monitoring arrangements which included inspection and complaint investigations and other food law enforcement service procedures were not recorded.

Recommendation

3.4.3 The Authority should:

Record their internal monitoring activities to ensure conformance with the Standard and Food Law Code of Practice guidance. [The Standard - 19.1 and 19.2]

Food Complaints

- 3.4.4 The Authority had developed a documented procedure for the investigation of food complaints and the response time formed one of the local performance indicators. The procedure outlined the steps that should be followed by officers when dealing with food complaints and referrals under food safety legislation.
- 3.4.5 Records of five complaints relating to FSMS issues were examined. In all cases complaints were found to have been appropriately investigated and follow-up action taken as necessary. Complete information on the complainant was recorded and the food business operator was contacted.

Food Sampling

- 3.4.6 The Authority had a documented sampling procedure which had been recently reviewed.
- 3.4.7 The Authority were participating in local and national food sampling programmes and there was evidence that unsatisfactory samples had been appropriately followed up with the food business operator (FBO).

Third Party or Peer Review

- 3.4.8 Auditors were advised that there had been no recent Inter-Authority audits or other third party review activities. The Authority had participated in a number of consistency exercises including HACCP training involving local food companies.

Good Practice – Peer Review

The Authority encouraged two officers to attend the Food Liaison Group in order for operational officers to gain experience in regional issues.

The Commercial Services Manager, as chair of the food safety liaison group, had led the development of a documented work plan for the Food Liaison Group. The work plan contained outcomes to be achieved by the end of the following year.

A calendar for caterers had been produced which included monthly healthy and safe food messages and advice, as well as training dates for food hygiene training provided by the Department.

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ANNEXE A

Action Plan for Wychavon District Council

Audit date: 23-24 March 2010

TO ADDRESS (RECOMMENDATION INCLUDING STANDARD PARAGRAPH)	BY (DATE)	PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS	ACTION TAKEN TO DATE
<p>3.2.5 Use an appropriate product based aide-memoire to capture information in establishments subject to approval under Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004, including the assessment of the compliance of premises and systems, particularly in relation to HACCP based food safety management systems. [The Standard – 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4]</p>	<p>30/06/10</p>	<p>Rewording of procedure CSP01 to include reference to use of LACORS product based aides-memoire to record interventions where appropriate.</p> <p>Implement results of research into good practice adopted by other authorities/liaison groups.</p> <p>Briefing of team in relation to audit recommendations and discussion of proposed improvements.</p>	<p>Audit recommendation discussed at food liaison group on 11.05.10 and views on best practice sought.</p> <p>Recommendation and rewording of CSP01 discussed at team brief on 13.05.10.</p> <p>Research into good practice outside of the County begun.</p>
<p>3.2.6 Ensure the records for all establishments should sufficiently detail the determination of compliance with legal requirements in particular the evaluation of HACCP systems made by the authorised officers. Records of approved establishments subject to Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 should be reviewed in accordance with Annexe 12 of the Food Law Code of Practice Guidance. [The Standard - 16.1]</p>	<p>30/06/10 - except review of premises files which will be carried out during next intervention</p>	<p>Development of a check-list of Annex 12 requirements as a record of documentation held on file (and recording of reasons where the information is not held).</p> <p>Rewording of procedure CSP01 to include reference to use of checklist referred to above.</p> <p>Briefing of team in relation to audit recommendations and discussion of proposed improvements.</p> <p>On next intervention each approved premises file will be reviewed and any missing documentation requested from the FBO or the reasons for it not being available will be recorded.</p>	<p>Recommendation and rewording of CSP01 discussed at team brief on 13.05.10.</p> <p>Checklist drafted.</p>

<p>3.4.3 Record their internal monitoring activities to ensure conformance with the Standard and Food Law Code of Practice guidance. [The Standard - 19.1 and 19.2]</p>	<p>Underway (1) and during setup of new shared service (2)</p>	<p>(1) The recently adopted inspection pro-forma has space to record monitoring and supervision activities. A simple file record sheet will be used to record detailed discussions relating to officer's actions at premises whenever they occur.</p> <p>(2) Best practice within the county will be adopted during the set-up of the management arrangements for the new shared service, including the recording of monitoring activities.</p>	<p>(1) Completed</p> <p>(2) Recently appointed Head of shared service made aware of recommendation to take forward into new service.</p>
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ANNEXE B

Audit Approach/Methodology

The audit was conducted using a variety of approaches and methodologies as follows:

(1) Examination of LA policies and procedures.

The following LA policies, procedures and linked documents were examined before and during the audit:

The following LA policies, procedures and linked documents were examined before and during the audit:

- Environmental Services Service Delivery Plan 2009/2010
- Procedure for the allocation of resources within Commercial Services team
- Procedure for the Authorisation of Officers in the Commercial Services Team
- Aide-memoire Food Hygiene Inspection File Record;
- Inspection and approval of premises under Regulation (EC) No 853/2004
- Record of Inspection form
- Food Safety 'Scores on the Doors' Progress Record
- Procedure for conducting Food Hygiene Inspections;
- Procedure for the Voluntary surrender of food
- Procedure for dealing with Food Complaints;
- Food Sampling Procedure;
- Food Safety Enforcement Policy Statement;
- Procedure Prohibitions with food businesses

(2) File reviews – the following LA file records were reviewed during the audit:

- General food establishment inspection records;
- Approved establishment files;
- Food complaint records;
- Food sampling records;
- Formal enforcement records.

(3) Officer interviews – the following officers were interviewed:

- Audit Liaison Officer;
- Food Safety Officer.
- Environmental Health Officer

Opinions and views raised during officer interviews remain confidential and are not referred to directly within the report.

(4) On-site verification check:

A verification visit was made with the Authority's officers to a local food business. The purpose of the visit was to verify the outcome of the last inspection carried out by the Local Authority and to assess the extent to which enforcement activities and decisions met the requirements of relevant legislation, the Food Law Code of Practice and official guidance, having particular specific regard to LA checks on FBO compliance with HACCP based food management systems.

Glossary

Authorised officer	A suitably qualified officer who is authorised by the local authority to act on its behalf in, for example, the enforcement of legislation.
Codes of Practice	Government Codes of Practice issued under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990 as guidance to local authorities on the enforcement of food legislation.
County Council	A local authority whose geographical area corresponds to the county and whose responsibilities include food standards and feeding stuffs enforcement.
District Council	A local authority of a smaller geographic area and situated within a County Council whose responsibilities include food hygiene enforcement.
E. coli	<i>Escherichia coli</i> microorganism, the presence of which is used as an indicator of faecal contamination of food or water. <i>E. coli</i> 0157:H7 is a serious food borne pathogen.
Environmental Health Officer (EHO)	Officer employed by the local authority to enforce food safety legislation.
Feeding stuffs	Term used in legislation on feed mixes for farm animals and pet food.
Food hygiene	The legal requirements covering the safety and wholesomeness of food.
Food standards	The legal requirements covering the quality, composition, labelling, presentation and advertising of food, and materials in contact with food.
Framework Agreement	<p>The Framework Agreement consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Law Enforcement Standard • Service Planning Guidance • Monitoring Scheme • Audit Scheme <p>The Standard and the Service Planning Guidance set out the Agency's expectations on the planning and delivery of food law enforcement.</p> <p>The Monitoring Scheme requires local authorities to submit quarterly returns to the Agency on their food enforcement activities i.e. numbers of inspections, samples and prosecutions.</p> <p>Under the Audit Scheme the Food Standards Agency will be conducting audits of the food law enforcement services of local authorities against the criteria set out in the Standard.</p>

Full Time Equivalent (FTE)		A figure which represents that part of an individual officer's time available to a particular role or set of duties. It reflects the fact that individuals may work part-time, or may have other responsibilities within the organisation not related to food enforcement.
HACCP		Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point – a food safety management system used within food businesses to identify points in the production process where it is critical for food safety that the control measure is carried out correctly, thereby eliminating or reducing the hazard to a safe level.
LAEMS		Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System is an electronic system used by local authorities to report their food law enforcement activities to the Food Standards Agency.
Member forum		A local authority forum at which Council Members discuss and make decisions on food law enforcement services.
Metropolitan Authority		A local authority normally associated with a large urban conurbation in which the County and District Council functions are combined.
OCD returns		Returns on local food law enforcement activities required to be made to the European Union under the Official Control of Foodstuffs Directive.
Regulators' Code	Compliance	Statutory Code to promote efficient and effective approaches to regulatory inspection and enforcement which improve regulatory outcomes without imposing unnecessary burdens on businesses.
Risk rating		A system that rates food establishment according to risk and determines how frequently those establishment should be inspected. For example, high risk establishment should be inspected at least every 6 months.
Service Plan		A document produced by a local authority setting out their plans on providing and delivering a food service to the local community.
Trading Standards		The Department within a local authority which carries out, amongst other responsibilities, the enforcement of food standards and feeding stuffs legislation.
Trading Standards Officer (TSO)		Officer employed by the local authority who, amongst other responsibilities, may enforce food standards and feeding stuffs legislation.
Unitary Authority		A local authority in which the County and District Council functions are combined, examples being Metropolitan District/Borough Councils, and London Boroughs. A Unitary Authority's responsibilities will include food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs enforcement.