

**ACM/521**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**  
**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 40<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**  
**(ACM/MIN/40)**

The attached paper records action taken on the various points arising from the draft minutes of the ACMSF's 40<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 21 March 2001.

**Secretariat**  
**September 2001**

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**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**RECORD OF MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 40<sup>TH</sup>  
MEETING (ACM/MIN/40)**

<b>ACM/MIN/40 PARAGRAPH</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ACTION TAKEN</b>
1.6	FSA review of scientific advisory committees.	The FSA's review is under way. The Chairman will provide an oral update under Agenda Item 10 of the 41 <sup>st</sup> meeting.
3.1	Minutes of the 39 <sup>th</sup> meeting.	ACM/MIN/39(FINAL) have been posted on the ACMSF's website. <sup>(a)</sup>
5.1	PHLS/LACOTS examination of ready-to-eat foods with added spices.	It is hoped to take this item at the 5 December 2001 meeting.
6.1	PHLS update on the microbiological status of fresh fruit and vegetables.	It is hoped to take this item at the 5 December 2001 meeting.
7.1	Joint FSA/Scottish Executive Task Force on <i>E. coli</i> O157.	The Task Force reported in June 2001 (see ACM 533).
7.2	FSA MAP Conference	The conference took place on 23-24 May 2001. Members will receive a progress report at the meeting on 5 December 2001. The Report of the Scottish Agriculture College's assessment of surveillance and control of Johne's disease in farm animals in Great Britain is dealt with in ACM 541.
7.4	FSA chicken survey.	The results of this survey are being reported under Agenda Item 6.

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(a) Website address <[www.foodstandards.gov.uk/committees/acmsf/summary.htm](http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk/committees/acmsf/summary.htm)>

ACM/MIN/40 PARAGRAPH	TOPIC	ACTION TAKEN
7.5	Agricultural use of sewage sludge.	A further approach from the water industry for ACMSF help in connection with peer reviewing the industry risk assessment is still awaited.
7.7	<i>Mycobacterium bovis</i>	The draft Report of the <i>M. bovis</i> Working Group is being considered under Agenda Item 8 of the 41 <sup>st</sup> meeting.
8.1	Government's response to the Phillips Report of the BSE Inquiry.	A copy of the ACMSF's comments is at ACM/538
9.1-9.3	Open meeting 2001.	This is dealt with under Agenda Item 5 of the 41 <sup>st</sup> meeting.
10.1-10.7	FSA foodborne disease and poultry strategies.	See FSA press releases (ACM/528 and ACM/530).
11.1	Impact of Foot & Mouth Disease on on-farm surveillance and research.	See DEFRA paper ACM 542.
11.2	FMD issues.	These will be addressed during 2002.
11.3-11.4	High pressure processing.	Campden and Chorleywood Food Research Association have been commissioned by the FSA to produce guidance on high pressure processing. ACNFP Secretariat will liaise with ACMSF Secretariat as things progress.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD

### PREPARATION FOR THE COMMITTEE'S SECOND OPEN MEETING : 5 DECEMBER 2001

#### Introduction

1. The ACMSF will hold its second open meeting on **5 December 2001**. The meeting will be held at Trinity House, Trinity Square, Tower Hill, London EC3 starting at 10 am.

#### First open meeting

2. The Committee's first open meeting was held on 5 December 2000 at the Insurance Hall in the City of London. A short paper (ACM/514) reviewing the arrangements was considered by the ACMSF on 21 March 2001. A copy is at Annex A for ease of reference. Members' comments on the paper appear in Section 9 of the minutes of the 21 March meeting (ACM/MIN/40). An extract is at Annex B.

#### Procedures for second open meeting

3. In preparation for the first open meeting, Members agreed a set of procedures aimed at ensuring that the Committee was able to conduct its business efficiently whilst at the same time allowing members of the public present an opportunity to make statements and ask questions.
4. It is proposed that these same procedures should again be adopted for the conduct of the second open meeting on 5 December 2001. The essential features are :-
  - members of the public attending the meeting will receive the agenda and supporting papers prior to the start of business;
  - in the first instance, the Committee will conduct its business in the normal manner and in accordance with the day's agenda;
  - at the end of normal business, the Chairman will invite comments, statements and questions from members of the public present, either on the day's business or about wider aspects of the Committee and its work. These will be recorded and published as an annex to the minutes of the meeting;

- public participation will be conducted through the Chairman who, where necessary, will identify individual Committee members to respond to any questions.
5. The aim of these proposals is to ensure that the Committee's business is conducted in an orderly manner, and in the time available, but in such a way that members of the public derive the maximum benefit from their attendance.
  6. Members' views are invited.

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**OPEN MEETINGS**

**Introduction**

1. In accordance with its commitment to increasing public access to its work, the ACMSF held its first public meeting on 5 December 2000. The occasion was one of the Committee's routine quarterly meetings. The intention is that the corresponding meeting in 2001 (again on 5 December) should also be held in public. Members' views are invited about the experience of the first open meeting and any lessons to be learned for the future.
2. To inform consideration of this issue, brief notes are provided below on the essential features of the first open meeting.

**Venue**

3. The meeting was held in the Insurance Hall in the City of London. Accommodation consisted of a main meeting room, a committee room (for the Chairman's pre-meeting), and a coffee/lunch room. The Food Standards Agency (FSA)'s Communications Division helped with staging the meeting (including the provision, through COI, of signage and a sound system). Microphones were used throughout the meeting and proceedings were taped.
4. It had not been possible to identify appropriate FSA or Department of Health facilities in which to hold the meeting; thus the use of a non-Government venue. However, appropriate accommodation may be available in the FSA's new Headquarters building in Holborn by December 2001. If it proved necessary to use external facilities again, however, the signage used for the first open meeting would be re-usable (thus providing some cost saving), but there would still be an additional cost for eg. the sound system and, of course, for the hire of the accommodation. The "set" was based on a horse shoe design (see Figure 1).

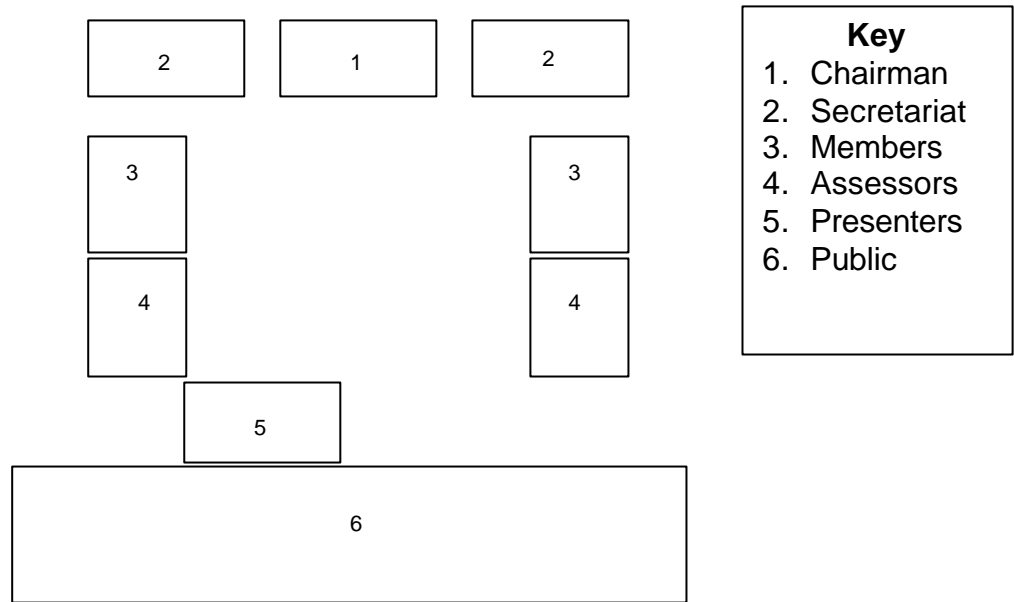
**Advertising the meeting**

5. The meeting was advertised on the ACMSF website and in FSA News. The Secretariat also wrote informing interested parties. In the event, around 30 members of the public attended. It may be that numbers would have been higher had it not been for the severe post-Hatfield rail disruption and difficulties caused by the severe weather. Papers were sent to those attending in advance of the meeting.

**Conduct of business**

6. The pattern of the day was that the Committee's routine business was conducted first, after which, an opportunity was provided for the public to make statements and ask questions. The meeting began at 10.15 am and was scheduled to run through until 1 pm when there was a 30 minute lunch break. Work re-commenced at 1.30 pm and continued until 2.55 pm. There was then a public Q&A session until 3.25 pm. Because the premises had been booked for an evening meeting, the ACMSF was not able to continue beyond 3.30 pm.
7. There was a very full agenda comprising 15 items, of which 7 involved presentations. The time allocated to members of the public to make their statements and ask questions appeared to be sufficient.

**Figure 1 : Set for open meeting**



8. All business was conducted through the Chair, the Chairman involving Committee members as required. Matters proceeded in a very orderly fashion. Starts in the morning and after lunch were prompt. Members were also very disciplined in their interventions.

**Reporting the meeting**

9. A press release was issued reporting the meeting. The draft minutes, including an annex of contributions by members of the public, were placed on the ACMSF website, along with copies of the papers.

**Lessons for 2001**

10. Members views are invited on the 2000 open meeting and on any lessons which could usefully be applied for the 2001 open meeting.

**Secretariat  
March 2001.**

**EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF 40<sup>TH</sup> MEETING (ACM.MIN/40)**

**9. Review of lessons from first ACMSF open meeting.**

- 9.1 Professor Georgala introduced ACM/514 which consisted of an aide-memoire on the main features of the Committee's first open meeting on 5 December 2000. He hoped that it would help inform consideration of the lessons to be learned from this first meeting which could be applied to future open meetings. The next was scheduled for 5 December 2001 and was likely to be held in the FSA's new headquarters building, Aviation House in Holborn.
- 9.2 The general view amongst Members was that the first meeting had gone very well. The presence of the public had not served to inhibit Members in the conduct of Committee business. Some of the topics had been potentially headline-grabbing but discussion of these during the course of the meeting had helped clarify the various issues for members of the public present and had served to avoid creating scare stories. It was felt that, as with the first meeting, the next open meeting should be advertised as widely as possible. There was general satisfaction with the way arrangements had been made to ensure that the public access to the work of the Committee was not disrupted by the requirements of the media. Members were content that the media had been asked to conduct any interviews during the break for lunch or at the end of the meeting. There had been a certain amount of feedback indicating satisfaction with the time allocated for public discussion and with the quality of the minutes.
- 9.3 A number of suggestions were offered for further consideration. One Member felt that the meeting would have benefited from having members of the public closer to the Committee. And another Member thought that there would be advantages in holding the second open meeting at a "neutral" venue (like the Insurance Hall, where the first had been held) rather than at the FSA's headquarters, to help emphasise the essentially independent character of the ACMSF. It was noted that the agenda for the first meeting had been very full and that there had consequently been significant time pressures in dealing with all of the day's business. It was suggested that this should be borne in mind in planning the second open meeting. Finally, Members expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the Secretariat in planning and arranging the first open meeting.



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**GUIDANCE NOTES FOR MEMBERS**

The Secretariat has produced the attached Guidance Notes for the benefit of ACMSF members.

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL  
SAFETY OF FOOD**

**GUIDANCE NOTES  
FOR MEMBERS**

**Advises the Food Standards Agency on the  
Microbiological Safety of Food**

**September 2001**

# **ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD (ACMSF) : GUIDANCE NOTES FOR MEMBERS**

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# ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD (ACMSF) : GUIDANCE NOTES FOR MEMBERS

## THE CHARACTER OF THE ACMSF

### The origins of the Committee

1. The ACMSF and the Steering Group on the Microbiological Safety of Food<sup>1</sup> (SGMSF) were established in 1990, on the recommendation of the Richmond Committee,<sup>2</sup> as the twin arms of a new microbiological food surveillance and assessment system.
2. The original terms of reference given to the ACMSF were “*to assess the risks to humans of microorganisms which are used or occur in or on food and to advise Ministers on the exercise of powers in the Food Safety Act 1990 relating to the microbiological safety of food*”. The Committee was charged with advising UK Health and Agriculture Ministers. Fuller details of the tasks which Ministers set the Committee, and the strategic aims the Committee set itself, can be found in its first annual report.<sup>3</sup>

### Current terms of reference and reporting lines

3. With the setting up of the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in 2000, food safety and other interests of consumers in relation to food became the responsibility of the Agency. An effect of this was that from 1 April 2000 the ACMSF was required to advise the FSA, rather than UK Health and Agriculture Ministers as previously.
4. In order to enable the Agency to assume the responsibilities previously discharged by Ministers (in relation, for example, to appointing and remunerating ACMSF members and defraying ACMSF expenditure) the Secretary of State for Health directed that the ACMSF should be treated as if it had been established, and its members had been appointed, by the FSA. A copy of the Direction, made under Paragraph 7, Schedule 2 to the Food Standards Act 1999, is at Annex III of the Committee’s Annual Report for the year 2000.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The SGMSF ceased to exist in 1995 when it was merged with the ACMSF to ensure more efficient and streamlined consideration of food safety issues.

<sup>2</sup> The Richmond Committee (more properly, the Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food, chaired by Sir Mark Richmond) was set up by the Government in 1989 to provide advice on the microbiological safety of food. The Committee was asked to consider specifically the increasing illnesses of foodborne origin, particularly from *Salmonella*, *Listeria* and *Campylobacter*.

<sup>3</sup> Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food. Report of progress 1990-92. HMSO, London; 1993.

<sup>4</sup> Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food. Annual Report 2000. Food Standards Agency; 2001.

5. The Committee's current terms of reference are :-

***“To assess the risk to humans of microorganisms which are used or occur in or on food and to advise the Food Standards Agency on any matters relating to the microbiological safety of food.”***

### **The Chairman**

6. The Chairman of the Committee is Professor Douglas L Georgala, CBE, PhD, FIFST. Professor Georgala was one of the original members of the Committee, appointed in 1990. He became Chairman in February 1996. He is an independent scientific consultant and retired Director of the Institute of Food Research.

### **Scope of Committee's work**

7. The ACMSF is responsible for providing independent, expert advice on the microbiological safety of food across the whole food chain, from “farm to fork/plough to plate”. Appointments to the Committee are designed to reflect this and to ensure that it has access to a wide range of relevant skills and expertise. Members are drawn from food and medical microbiology, public health medicine, veterinary medicine, human epidemiology, virology, commercial catering, food processing, research and retailing, small and medium sized food enterprises, and environmental health. There are also two consumer/lay representatives on the Committee, as well as an overseas representative. In addition, to assist the Committee in its in-depth consideration of specific topics (see paragraph 9), external expertise is co-opted on to Working Groups and *Ad Hoc* Groups in support of ACMSF members. Current membership details for the Committee and its Working Groups are published in the ACMSF's Annual Reports.
8. The Committee has traditionally provided the FSA (and, pre-2000, UK Health and Agriculture Ministers) with independent, expert advice on the microbiological safety of food in two ways. First, the Committee has addressed a wide range of *ad hoc* issues on which its advice has been sought. Topics include raw milk and raw milk cheeses, New York dressed poultry, agricultural disposal of sewage sludge, *Mycobacterium avium* subsp. *paratuberculosis* in milk, infectious salmon anaemia, *Mycobacterium bovis* in meat, and the pathogenicity of *Listeria monocytogenes*. The Committee also routinely provides advice on the public health implications of the results of Government-funded microbiological food safety surveillance and research.
9. Second, the Committee has itself identified topics with current or potential food safety implications and has provided advice on these. The Committee has judged from time to time that some of these topics would benefit from very detailed investigation and has set up formal Working Groups to take matters forward and report back. The in-depth reports

emanating from such Working Groups are adopted by the full Committee before being submitted to the FSA and then published (through the Stationery Office). The titles of Working Group reports published to date are :-

- Report on Vacuum Packaging and Associated Processes;
- Report on *Salmonella* in Eggs;
- Interim Report on *Campylobacter*;
- Report on Verocytotoxin-Producing *Escherichia coli*;
- Report on Poultry Meat;
- Report on Foodborne Viral Infections;
- Report on Microbial Antibiotic Resistance in Relation to Food Safety;
- Second Report on *Salmonella* in Eggs.

### **Annual Reports**

10. In addition to its subject-specific reports, the Committee publishes annual reports of its work. These review the topics addressed during the reporting period, chart progress on implementing recommendations from published subject-specific reports, and summarise on-going and planned future work. Each Annual Report also contains a Register of Members' Interests.

### **Risk analysis**

11. As indicated in paragraphs 7-9 above, the Committee's principal role is in the area of risk assessment. Risk management is the responsibility of policy making bodies like the Food Standards Agency and other Government Departments. However, in addition to the assessment of the public health risk, the ACMSF also endeavours to offer policy makers risk management options. In the area of risk communication, Government has looked increasingly to the ACMSF to provide independent, expert briefing for the public and the media on "live issues" as they arise.

### **Openness**

12. In order to improve public access to its work, and in line with the Government's commitment to greater openness, the Committee decided in 1998 to publish its agendas in advance of meetings, and that minutes and, subject to certain exceptions on grounds of commercial or other sensitivity, papers should be made publicly-available on request. Continuing this policy, in 1999 the Committee approved the development of a dedicated website (address, [www.foodstandards.gov.uk/committees/acmsf/summary.htm](http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk/committees/acmsf/summary.htm)) to provide background on the ACMSF and its subject-specific and annual reports (from 2001 the latter will also be available on the website), and to carry agendas, minutes, papers and press releases.
13. The Committee has also decided that one of its quarterly meetings each year should be held in public. The first open meeting was held in

December 2000. Around 30 members of the public attended. An opportunity was afforded them at the end of the day's business to make statements and ask questions about the Committee and its work. A summary of points made was appended to the minutes of the meeting (ACM/MIN/39(final)).

## **THE MEMBERS**

### **Basis of appointments**

14. Members are appointed to the Committee in order to provide it with the range of skills and expertise it needs (see paragraph 7). However, members are not expected to represent a particular interest. Rather, they are appointed on a personal basis, for their expertise and experience. Appointments are made by the Food Standards Agency. Before appointments are made, the Agency is required, under Paragraph 3(1) of Schedule 2 to the Food Standards Act 1999, to consult "the appropriate authorities" (defined in Section 36(1) of the Act). To ensure continuity, it is normal practice for appointments to the Committee to be staggered so that a proportion of members are re-appointed and retire each year.

### **Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA)**

15. Although the FSA is not, strictly speaking, bound to follow OCPA guidance in making appointments to the ACMSF – because these are not Ministerial appointments – the Agency has decided that it is nevertheless right to do so. On that basis, the FSA carries out a detailed review of the performance and length of service of the members reaching the end of their current terms of appointment. The Chairman of the ACMSF is involved in the review process. Vacancies are advertised and applications are sifted with the aim of establishing a short-list of candidates for interview.

### **Nolan principles**

16. As part of the Government's commitment to improving standards in public life, advisory non-departmental public bodies are required to adopt codes of practice covering issues such as public service values, standards in public life, the role of committee members and the chair, handling conflicts of interest, and personal liability of members. The ACMSF's own code of practice embodies the Seven Principles of Public Life set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (the Nolan Committee). A copy is at Annex A.

### **Declarations of interest**

17. To a great extent, members have been appointed to the ACMSF because they possess expertise derived from personal involvement in matters relating to food and food safety. It is thus important that they should be protected as far as possible against accusations that their contributions to

the work of the Committee are in some way partial. Commonly, the mechanism used in expert advisory committees for this purpose is the formal declaration by members of an interest – either in a general sense or in relation to particular aspects of the committee's work. Guidance on the declaration of interests, and the implications that they may have for members' participation in meetings, is included in the code of practice at Annex A. Appendix 2 of that Annex also contains guidance on the different types of interest. Declarations of interest are recorded in the minutes of ACMSF meetings. A register of members' interests is routinely included in ACMSF Annual Reports and is thus open to public scrutiny.

### **Personal liability of ACMSF members**

18. As the ACMSF's code of practice makes clear, the Government has undertaken to indemnify members of the ACMSF and its Groups against all liability arising from the carrying out of their ACMSF functions. This assumes that members have acted honestly, reasonably, in good faith and without negligence. However, an ACMSF member may be held personally liable if he or she makes a fraudulent or negligent statement which results in a loss to a third party. A Member may commit a breach of confidence under common law, or a criminal offence under insider dealing legislation, if he or she misuses information gained through his or her position.

### **Allowances and expenses**

19. ACMSF members are paid an attendance fee, currently set at £109 per full day meeting, £54.50 per half day. The rates paid to the Chairman are £135 per full day, £67.50 per half day.
20. Members are also entitled to claim travel and related expenses. Claims should be submitted promptly. Members may be reimbursed reasonable actual expenditure necessarily incurred on such items as overnight accommodation, main meals and travel. Details of the mode of travel must be provided on the claim form. Receipts and tickets, or other proofs of purchase, are also required for all claims for travelling expenses. If for any reason tickets etc are not available, an explanatory note should accompany the claim form. Members are entitled to first class rail travel. Where travelling by air will avoid an overnight stay, the cost of economy class air travel is reimbursable. Tickets must be provided with claim forms.
21. Taxi fares are admissible where heavy luggage has to be transported to or from terminal stations, where there is no other suitable method of public transport, or where a saving of time is of paramount importance. An appropriate note explaining the use of taxis should be attached to the claim form.
22. Gratuities to porters, stewards, taxi drivers etc are not reimbursable from public funds.



23. Members who use a private motor car on ACMSF business may claim a mileage allowance. The following standard rates currently apply :-

Engine capacity	Rate (p per mile)
Up to 1,500 cc	36
1,501-2,000	45
Over 2,000	48

24. Permission for car journeys exceeding 120 miles in any one day should be sought from the Secretariat. Members will normally be expected to travel by public transport if that is cheaper.

25. Other incidental expenses necessarily incurred (eg. postage, telephone calls in pursuance of Committee business) are reimbursable. These items should be separately detailed in claims and should be supported by receipts wherever possible.

### Handling of papers

26. Main Committee papers are normally publicly-available through the ACMSF website and may be freely discussed outside the Committee.

27. Some papers for the main Committee, or for its Working or *Ad Hoc* Groups particularly, may contain commercially or otherwise sensitive information, or information that has been provided for exclusive use by the Committee or its Groups and on the strict understanding that it will not be made publicly-available. The Committee may also from time-to-time see drafts of reports by other bodies which will be published in final form at a later date. Papers for the exclusive use of members which should not be discussed or shown outside of the ACMSF or its Groups will be marked "For Members' Use Only". Alternatively, they may carry a "Restricted : Commercial" privacy marking. Members should not discuss these or make them available outside the Committee and its Groups. The Secretariat will always rigorously test the need for particular papers to be given restricted markings.

28. If Members have any concerns about the status afforded to papers, they should seek advice from the Secretariat.

### Relations with the media

29. Members may from time to time be asked by the media to comment on the work of the ACMSF. ***The Committee's spokesperson is the Chairman*** or his nominee. Members should report media requests for information about the Committee's business to the Chairman or the Secretariat, to enable the Chairman to decide on how such requests should be handled. Members are not precluded from representing their field of expertise in a personal capacity but, in these circumstances, they must make clear that they are speaking in a personal capacity and are neither representing the views of the ACMSF nor speaking as ACMSF members.

## **DEPARTMENTAL ASSESSORS AND THE SECRETARIAT**

### **Departmental assessors**

30. Meetings of the ACMSF and its Groups are attended by Departmental Assessors. The Assessors are currently nominated by, and are drawn from, those with relevant policy interests and responsibilities in the Food Standards Agency, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and the Agriculture and Health Departments in the UK devolved administrations. Assessors are not members of the ACMSF and do not participate in Committee business in the manner of members. The role of the Assessors includes keeping their parent Departments informed about the Committee's work and acting as a conduit for the exchange of information; advising the Committee on relevant policy developments and the implications of ACMSF proposals; informing ACMSF work through the provision of information; and being informed by the Committee on matters of mutual interest. Assessors are charged with ensuring that their parent Departments are promptly informed of any matters which may require a response from Government.

### **The Secretariat**

31. The primary function of the Secretariat is to facilitate the business of the Committee. This includes supporting the Committee by arranging its meetings, assembling and analysing information, and recording conclusions. An important task is ensuring that proceedings of the Committee are properly documented and recorded. The Secretariat is also a source of advice and guidance to members on procedures and processes.

32. The ACMSF Secretariat is drawn from staff of the Food Standards Agency. However, it is the responsibility of the Secretariat to be an impartial and disinterested reporter and at all times to respect the Committee's independent role. The Secretariat is required to guard against introducing bias during the preparation of papers, during meetings, or in the reporting of the Committee's deliberations.

33. Current contact details for the ACMSF Secretariat are shown in Annex B.

## CODE OF PRACTICE FOR MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD

### Public service values

The members of the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food must at all times

- observe the highest standards of **impartiality, integrity and objectivity** in relation to the advice they provide and the management of this Committee;
- be accountable, through Ministers, to Parliament and the public for its activities and for the standard of advice it provides.

The Ministers of the sponsoring departments are answerable to Parliament for the policies and performance of this Committee, including the policy framework within which it operates.

### Standards in public life

All Committee members must :

- follow the Seven Principles of Public Life set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (Appendix 1);
- comply with this Code, and ensure they understand their duties, rights and responsibilities, and that they are familiar with the functions and role of this Committee and any relevant statements of Government policy. If necessary, members should consider undertaking relevant training to assist them in carrying out their role;
- not misuse information gained in the course of their public service for personal gain or for political purpose, nor seek to use the opportunity of public service to promote their private interests or those of connected persons, firms, businesses or other organisations; and
- not hold any paid or high-profile unpaid posts in a political party, and not engage in specific political activities on matters directly affecting the work of this Committee. When engaging in other political activities, Committee members should be conscious of their public role and exercise proper discretion. These restrictions do not apply to MPs (in those cases where MPs are eligible to be appointed), to local councillors, or to Peers in relation to their conduct in the House of Lords.

### Role of Committee members

Members have collective responsibility for the operation of this Committee. They must:

- engage fully in collective consideration of the issues, taking account of the full range of relevant factors, including any guidance issued by the sponsor department or the responsible Minister;

- in accordance with Government policy on openness, ensure that they adhere to the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (including prompt responses to public requests for information); agree an Annual Report; and, where practicable and appropriate, provide suitable opportunities to open up the work of the Committee to public scrutiny;
- not divulge any information which is provided to the Committee in confidence;
- ensure that an appropriate response is provided to complaints and other correspondence, if necessary with reference to the sponsor department; and
- ensure that the Committee does not exceed its powers or functions.

Individual members should inform the Chair (or the Secretariat on his behalf) if they are invited to speak in public in their capacity as a Committee member.

Communications between the Committee and the Minister will generally be through the Chair except where the Committee has agreed that an individual member should act on its behalf. Nevertheless, any member has the right of access to Ministers on any matter which he or she believes raises important issues relating to his or her duties as a Committee member. In such cases, the agreement of the rest of the Committee should normally be sought.

Individual members can be removed from office by the Minister if they fail to perform the duties required of them in line with the standards expected in public office.

### **The role of the Chair**

The Chair has particular responsibility for providing effective leadership on the issues above. In addition, the Chair is responsible for :

- ensuring that the Committee meets at appropriate intervals, and that the minutes of meetings and any reports to Ministers accurately record the decisions taken and, where appropriate, the views of individual members;
- representing the views of the Committee to the general public; and
- ensuring that new members are briefed on appointment (and their training needs considered), and providing an assessment of their performance, on request, when members are considered for re-appointment to the Committee or for appointment to the board of some other public body.

### **Handling conflicts of interest**

The purpose of these provisions is to avoid any danger of Committee members being influenced, or appearing to be influenced, by their private interests in the exercise of their public duties. All members should declare any personal or business interest which may, or may be *perceived* (by a reasonable member of the public) to, influence their judgement. A guide to the types of interest which should be declared is at Appendix 2.

(i) Declaration of Interests to the Secretariat

Members of the Committee should inform the Secretariat in writing of their current **personal** and **non-personal** interests, when they are appointed, including the principal position(s) held. Only the name of the company and the nature of the interest is required; the amount of any salary etc need not be disclosed. Members are asked to inform the Secretariat at any time of any change of their **personal** interests and will be invited to complete a declaration form once a year. It is sufficient if changes in **non-personal** interests are reported in the annual declaration form following the change. (Non-personal interests involving less than £1,000 from a particular company in the previous year need not be declared to the Secretariat).

The register of interests should be kept up-to-date and be open to the public.

(ii) Declaration of Interest and Participation at Meetings

Members of the Committee are required to declare any direct commercial interests, or those of close family members,\* in matters under discussion at each meeting. Having fully explained the nature of their interest, the Chair may, having consulted the other members present, decide whether and to what extent the member should participate in the discussion and determination of the issue. If it is decided that the member should leave the meeting, the Chair may first allow them to make a statement on the item under discussion.

**Personal liability of Committee members**

A Committee member may be personally liable if he or she makes a fraudulent or negligent statement which results in a loss to a third party; or may commit a breach of confidence under common law or a criminal offence under insider dealing legislation, if he or she misuses information gained through their position. However, the Government has indicated that individual members who have acted honestly, reasonably, in good faith and without negligence will not have to meet out of their own personal resources any personal civil liability which is incurred in execution or purported execution of their Committee functions.

November 1998

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\* Close family members include personal partners, parents, children, brothers, sisters and the personal partners of any of these.

## **THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE**

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interests.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

### DIFFERENT TYPES OF INTEREST

The following is intended as a guide to the kinds of interest which should be declared. Where members are uncertain as to whether an interest should be declared, they should seek guidance from the Secretariat or, where it may concern a particular product which is to be considered at a meeting, from the Chair at that meeting. **If members have interests not specified in these notes, but which they believe could be regarded as influencing their advice, they should declare them.** However, neither the members nor the Secretariat are under any obligation to search out links of which they might *reasonably* not be aware - for example, either through not being aware of all the interests of family members, or of not being aware of links between one company and another.

#### Personal Interests

A personal interest involves the member personally. The main examples are :

- **Consultancies** : any consultancy, directorship, position in or work for the industry, which attracts regular or occasional payments in cash or kind;
- **Fee-Paid Work** : any work commissioned by industry for which the member is paid in cash or kind;
- **Shareholdings** : any shareholding or other beneficial interest in shares of industry. This does not include shareholdings through unit trusts or similar arrangements where the member has no influence on financial management;
- **Membership or Affiliation** to clubs or organisations with interests relevant to the work of the Committee.

#### Non-Personal Interests

A non-personal interest involves payment which benefits a department for which a member is responsible, but is not received by the member personally. The main examples are :

- **Fellowships** : the holding of a fellowship endowed by the industry;
- **Support by Industry** : any payment, other support or sponsorship by industry which does not convey any pecuniary or material benefit to a member personally, but which does benefit their position or department eg. :
  - (i) a grant from a company for the running of a unit or department for which a member is responsible;
  - (ii) a grant or fellowship or other payment to sponsor a post or a member of staff in the unit for which a member is responsible (this does not include financial assistance to students);
  - (iii) the commissioning of research or other work by, or advice from, staff who work in a unit for which a member is responsible.

Members are under no obligation to seek out knowledge of work done for, or on behalf of, industry by departments for which they are responsible if they would not normally expect to be informed. Where members are responsible for organisations which receive funds from a large number of companies involved in that industry, the Secretariat can agree with them a summary of non-personal interests rather than draw up a long list of companies.

- **Trusteeships** : any investment in industry held by a charity for which a member is a trustee.

Where a member is a trustee of a charity with investments in industry, the Secretariat can agree with the member a general declaration to cover this interest rather than draw up a detailed portfolio.

## **DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food, 'industry' means :

- Companies, partnerships or individuals who are involved with the production, manufacture, packaging, sale, advertising, or supply of food or food processes, subject to the Food Safety Act 1990;
- Trade associations representing companies involved with such products;
- Companies, partnerships or individuals who are directly concerned with research, development or marketing of a food product which is being considered by the Committee.

In this Code, 'the Secretariat' means the Secretariat of the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food.



## ACMSF SECRETARIAT CONTACT DETAILS

ACMSF Secretariat  
 Food Standards Agency  
 Aviation House  
 125 Kingsway  
 London  
WC2B 6NH

Tel : 0207 276 plus extension  
 Fax : 0207 276 8907

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Room No.</b>	<b>Tel extension</b>	<b>E-mail address</b>
Medical Secretary	Dr Judith Hilton	823B	8983	judith.hilton@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk
Administrative Secretary	Mr Colin Mylchreest	813C	8951	colin.mylchreest@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk
Secretariat member	Mrs Liz Stretton	808C	8946	liz.stretton@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk
Secretariat member	Miss Janice Kerr	808C	8947	janice.kerr@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk
Secretariat member	Mr Saliqur Rahman	808C	8948	saliqur.rahman@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

**FOR MEMBERS' USE ONLY**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY CONTAMINATION OF UK CHICKEN  
TARGET : RESULTS OF BASELINE SURVEY**

1. The Food Standards Agency set itself a target of reducing levels of *Salmonella* in UK-produced chicken on retail sale by 50% by 2005. In order to be able to measure progress against its target, the FSA carried out a survey of contamination of UK-produced chicken on retail sale, for the purposes of establishing a baseline. Although the focus of the survey was *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter* was also included.
2. The survey was conducted between April and June 2001 and key findings, particularly for *Salmonella*, are presented in the attached paper. Further work is being undertaken to characterise the *Campylobacter* isolates collected in the survey. More detailed information will be included in the report of the survey which is expected to be published in two parts, the first part covering *Salmonella* and the second covering the *Campylobacter* findings.
3. Dr Paul Cook (FSA Microbiological Safety Division) will introduce the paper and will respond to any questions Members may have.

**Secretariat  
October 2001**

**UK-WIDE SURVEY OF SALMONELLA AND CAMPYLOBACTER  
CONTAMINATION OF FRESH AND FROZEN CHICKEN ON RETAIL SALE**

The Food Standards Agency expects to publish the results of this survey in two parts, the first part, covering *Salmonella*, by the end of 2001; and the second part, covering *Campylobacter*, in the first half of 2002.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD

### ACMSF WORKING GROUP ON *CAMPYLOBACTER*

1. As recorded in the ACMSF's Annual Reports for 1999 (paragraph 30) and 2000 (paragraphs 34 and 71), *Campylobacter* has been identified as an important topic for the Committee's future work.
2. *Campylobacter* has become the single biggest identified cause of bacterial food poisoning in the UK. As part of its work programme for the immediate future, the ACMSF therefore decided to establish a Working Group to examine all current information about this pathogen and its role in foodborne disease. The aim will be to enable the Committee to advise the Food Standards Agency on possible options for reducing the human health risk arising from *Campylobacter*.
3. It is therefore proposed that a Working Group should be constituted with the following terms of reference :-
  - to identify any important gaps and omissions in action taken to reduce *Campylobacter* in food and food sources and in the knowledge base; and
  - to develop advice which will assist the Food Standards Agency in evolving its strategy for reducing the incidence of foodborne *Campylobacter* infection in humans.
4. To help inform the Working Group's deliberations, an early assessment should be made of the results of relevant surveillance and research carried out both in the UK and abroad, including that arising from recommendations in the Committee's Interim Report on *Campylobacter*. It is proposed that a workshop should be held for this purpose (see ACM/544).
5. Members' views are invited on the proposals :-
  - to set up a *Campylobacter* Working Group;
  - for terms of reference for such a Group; and
  - for a *Campylobacter* workshop to help inform the ACMSF's deliberations.

6. If the above proposals are agreed, the Chairman will consult possible Working Group members bilaterally and will report back in due course.

**Secretariat**  
**September 2001**

**FOR MEMBERS' USE ONLY**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**REPORT ON *MYCOBACTERIUM BOVIS***

1. The ACMSF has been asked by the Food Standards Agency to advise on the possible health risks to consumers of meat from animals with evidence of *Mycobacterium bovis* infection. The Committee set up a Working Group under the Chairmanship of Professor A M Johnston to review the position.
2. The draft Report of the Working Group is attached and will be introduced by Professor Johnston. Members are invited to comment, and to approve the submission of the Report to the Food Standards Agency for consideration and publication.

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

The ACMSF's Report on *Mycobacterium bovis* is expected to be published by the Food Standards Agency in December 2001.

**FOR MEMBERS' USE ONLY**

**SUMMARY OF RESULTS FROM A FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY-FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECT TO ESTIMATE THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF ADHERENCE TO GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE ON SAFE EGG USE IN THE CATERING INDUSTRY**

1. Both the first and second ACMSF reports on '*Salmonella* in Eggs' make recommendations relating to the safe use of eggs in the catering industry.
2. The attached paper reports on a Food Standards Agency-funded pilot project, carried out by the University of Salford, on the level of knowledge and adherence to Government advice relevant to the catering industry.
3. The purpose of this paper is to seek the Committee's views on the findings and their recommendations regarding the need for further work in this area.
4. This paper will be presented by Professor Eunice Taylor (University of Salford).

**Microbiological Safety Division  
Food Standards Agency  
September 2001**

cm6485



A report on this research project will be published by the Food Standards Agency in due course.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**FOODBORNE ILLNESS IN THE UK**

The Food Standards Agency has announced a strategy aimed at cutting foodborne illness by 20% by 2006. In this connection, the Agency announced on 23 August 2001 the benchmark against which it will measure the trend in foodborne illness. A copy of the relevant press release is attached for the information of Members.

**Secretariat**  
**September 2001**  
cm6476

Food Standards Agency Press Release dated Thursday 23 August 2001 :  
Food Standards Agency Announces UK Benchmark for Food Poisoning  
Reduction Target.

See :-

<[http://192.168.10.12/food\\_agency\\_site/press\\_releases/uk\\_press/2001/pr010823.htm](http://192.168.10.12/food_agency_site/press_releases/uk_press/2001/pr010823.htm)>

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**PAPER FOR INFORMATION**

**FOODBORNE DISEASE STRATEGY CONSULTATIVE GROUP : A  
REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING**

1. In March 2001, the Advisory Committee considered and commented upon the Agency's draft Foodborne Disease Strategy. The Board approved the strategy, subject to minor amendments, at its meeting in May 2001. A final version of the strategy was published on the Agency's website in July.
2. Implementation of the strategy is now in hand. As part of the management of the implementation phase, an external Consultative Group, representative of the main stakeholders, has been convened. The purpose of the group is to provide feedback on the strategy as it develops, commenting on the practicalities of proposed measures and perhaps suggesting other approaches that could be considered. Members will also feed information on the strategy back to the wider stakeholder community and the aim will be to maintain involvement across all sectors.
3. The group held its first meeting on 21 September. The membership, which includes two nominated ACMSF members, and draft Terms of Reference are appended at A. An update on the implementation of the strategy presented to the meeting is appended at B. A note of the meeting will be tabled.

**Secretariat**  
**October 2001**  
cm6508

## FOODBORNE DISEASE STRATEGY CONSULTATIVE GROUP

### Introduction

The Food Standards Agency has established a Consultative Group involving a cross-section of stakeholders to help it in the implementation of the strategy to meet its target of reducing foodborne disease by 20 % by April 2006. The Group will hold its first meeting on 21 September 2001.

The Agency Board agreed a strategy to meet the target in May 2001 and the current version of the strategy, revised in the light of Board comments, was published on the web-site in July. Recognising that it is impossible to determine the actual number of cases of foodborne disease, the Board agreed that the appropriate way of monitoring success in achieving the target was to use laboratory reports of the major foodborne bacteria – *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *E. coli* O157, *Clostridium perfringens* and *Listeria monocytogenes* – excluding those cases reported to have been acquired abroad. The total number of reports for the year ending 31 December 2000 was 62,209.

The strategy is based on a farm-to-fork approach, with the aim of reducing contamination of foods during production and processing and of promoting good food hygiene practice in the kitchen, whether commercially or in the home. It will involve both sector-specific measures and measures that will have impact across all food sectors, including training and education of food handlers, promotion of HACCP and a media food hygiene campaign.

### Membership

The Food Standards Agency has invited stakeholder organisations to nominate representatives on the group. The membership currently consists of:

Judith Hilton

FSA (Chair)

#### Members

Martin Adams

Jill Brand

John Cowden

Beth Hogben

Jane James

Patricia Jefford

Peter Jenkins

Roy Kirby

Tom Miller

Sarah O'Brien

#### Nominated by

SFAM

NFWI

PHMEG

NFU

NFU

ACMSF

Consumer's Association

Food & Drink Federation

Joint Hospitality Industry Congress

PHLS

Pamela Pollock	Townswomen's Guilds
Bill Reilly	BVA
Ron Sherwood	CIEH
Mike Stringer	Food and Drink Federation
Mark du Val	LACOTS
Stella Walsh	National Federation of Consumers' Groups
Tim Wyatt	ACMSF

### **Observers**

Paul Gayford	DEFRA
Jim Thomson/Jeffery Moon	FSA Scotland
Joy Whinney	FSA Wales
Gerry McCurdy/Trevor Williamson	FSA Northern Ireland

### **Secretariat**

Claire Boville	Strategy Director (from 8 October)
Ken Durdy	
David Gray	

Nominations are still awaited from the British Retail Consortium and for a Department of Health observer.

### **Terms of Reference**

To assist the Food Standards Agency develop and implement strategies for the reduction of foodborne illness.

It is planned that the Group will meet formally twice a year to:

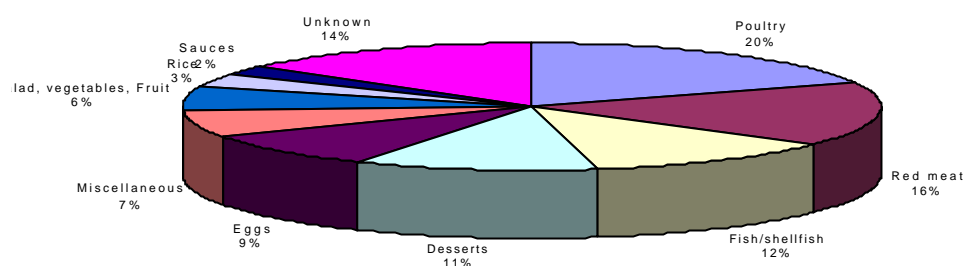
- discuss development of, and approaches taken in implementing the strategy;
- help monitor and assess progress of the work put in place;
- advise the Agency on the practicability of proposed measures;
- advise the Agency on additional measures that should be considered;
- provide information to assist the development and monitoring of the strategy;
- act as a link between the Agency and the wider stakeholder community.

The Group will have an important role in helping the Agency to formulate action plans that are both practical and effective. It will have a key role in securing the involvement of stakeholder groups in developing and implementing the strategy. It will not provide formal advice to the Agency or have a decision-making role.

## **IMPLEMENTING THE FOODBORNE DISEASE STRATEGY**

1. The foodborne disease strategy is a farm to fork strategy, ranging across many food sectors and including both sector-specific and cross-cutting components. Since it involves a very wide range of activities, each individual topic is being considered and managed as a project in its own right within the overall programme of the strategy.
2. A strategy director has been appointed (and will take up her post on 8 October), with the responsibility of co-ordinating the whole programme and securing its delivery. Each component has an identified lead individual within the Agency, who is responsible for drawing up a project plan, with budgets, timetables and measures of progress. A Consultative Group has already been convened to assist developing and monitoring the strategy in relation to poultry meat. It is likely that similar groups will be set up in other sectors.
3. The topics within the programme are:
  - poultry meat
  - red meat
  - meat products
  - milk and dairy products
  - eggs
  - fruit and vegetable
  - fish and shellfish
  - catering and hospitality
  - food hygiene in the home
  - the food hygiene campaign
  - HACCP
  - training and education
4. The contribution that each topic area should make to the strategy as a whole can be presented in two ways. Table 1 identifies the main organisms contributing to foodborne disease and the parts of the strategy directed towards the control of those organisms. The pie chart at figure 1 shows the main food types associated with outbreaks.
5. A summary of proposed actions in each topic area is appended. Each section includes the relevant action plan from the strategy and, where appropriate, objectives from the current business plan. For most sectors, a more specific list of proposed measures is included. These more detailed measures are currently being developed into project plans.
6. Members are invited to note current progress and comment on what is proposed in individual sectors.

**Figure 1: Outbreaks 1992-1999: Main food vehicles**



**Table 1: Main foodborne pathogens and measures aimed at their control**

	<i>Campylobacter</i>	<i>Salmonella</i>	<i>Clostridium perfringens</i>	<i>E. coli</i> O157	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	NLVs
Number of laboratory reports in 2000	50,773	13,122	166	1,035	113	
Contribution to the target	78%	20%	0.3%	2%	0.2%	
Catering/domestic messages						
- cooking	+	+	+	+		
- cross-contamination	+	+		+		
- cooling		+	+			
- hand washing etc	+	+		+		+
Poultry meat	+	+				
Red meat	(+)	(+)		+		
Meat products				+	+	
Milk and dairy products	+	+		+	+	
Eggs		+				
Shellfish						+
Fruit and vegetables		+		+		



# **FOODBORNE DISEASE STRATEGY**

## **CONSULTATIVE GROUP**

### **(FDS CG)**

**Minutes of the meeting held**

**on 21 September 2001**

**in Aviation House**

**Next meeting [XX] March 2002**

## Foodborne Disease Strategy Consultative Group - Membership List

Judith Hilton Food Standards Agency (FSA) (Chair)

### Members

Martin Adams  
Jill Brand  
John Cowden

Beth Hogben  
Jane James  
Patricia Jefford

Peter Jenkins  
Roy Kirby  
Tom Miller  
Sarah O'Brien

Pamela Pollock  
Bill Reilly  
Ron Sherwood  
Mike Stringer  
Mark du Val

Stella Walsh  
Tim Wyatt

Not yet appointed

### Observers

Paul Gayford

Jim Thomson  
Jeffery Moon  
Joy Whinney  
Gerry McCurdy  
Trevor Williamson  
Not yet appointed

### Secretariat

Claire Boville  
Ken Durdy  
David Gray

### Nominated by

Society for Applied Microbiology  
National Federation of Women's Institutes  
Public Health, Medicine and Environmental Group  
National Farmers' Union  
National Farmers' Union  
Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food  
Consumer's Association  
Food & Drink Federation  
Joint Hospitality Industry Congress  
Public Health Laboratory Service - Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre  
Townswomen's Guilds  
British Veterinary Association  
Chartered Institute for Environmental Health  
Food and Drink Federation  
Local Authority Co-ordinating Body on Food and Trading Standards  
National Federation of Consumers' Groups  
Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food  
Department of Health

Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

FSA Scotland

FSA Wales

FSA Northern Ireland

Department of Health

FSA - Strategy Director

FSA

FSA

## **FOODBORNE DISEASE STRATEGY CONSULTATIVE GROUP (FDS CG)**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2001 in Aviation House**

**Present:** Claire Boville, Judith Hilton, Ken Durdy, Stella Walsh, Beth Hogben, Ron Sherwood, Trevor Williamson, Jill Brand, Pamela Pollock, Mark du Val, Roy Kirby, Martin Adams, Jim Thompson, David Gray, John Cowden, Paul Gayford, Sarah O'Brien, Tim Wyatt, Tom Miller, Mike Stringer, Joy Whinney.

**Apologies:** Jane James, Patricia Jefford, Gerry McCurdy and Bill Reilly.

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

1. Judith Hilton welcomed members to the first meeting of the Foodborne Disease Strategy Consultative Group. Members introduced themselves stating the organisations or groups they represented.

#### **Purpose and terms of reference of the consultative group**

2. Referring to the Terms of Reference Paper (FBDSCG/01/04) Claire Boville (FSA) interpreted the role of the group as: to act as a "sounding board", and a source of ideas to help ensure the Agency delivers the Strategy effectively. She thought it had a key role; ensuring that proposals are practical and realistic. It would provide a mechanism for checking whether the Agency was delivering results rather than a group offering formal advice.
3. Members discussed the terms of reference as suggested. Some members raised concerns about the reference to "not giving "formal advice"" in the paper. Judith Hilton (FSA) explained that although any advice given would be taken seriously, the Group was not formally constituted as an "Advisory Committee". It was agreed to remove the line about formal advice from the terms of reference, and include the words practical and realistic.
4. Members asked whether the Group's remit covered all of the UK. Judith replied that the remit covered the whole UK, since the target of 20% reduction of foodborne illness was for the UK. FSA Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales might need to consider sources of advice and information to support any local initiatives and action plans.

**Action Point:** *Claire Boville to redraft the Terms of Reference for the Consultative Group to address the points raised, and to re-circulate.*

5. Members sought clarification of the relationship between the 'topic groups' and the Consultative Group for Foodborne Disease Strategy. Judith described the chicken group as more industry-based, explaining that the FSA was seeking more involvement from stakeholders from different areas and at different levels. She did not anticipate the individual groups feeding

into the Group as a standing item but recognised that it would be important that members are kept up to date on the outputs of the other groups.

6. Members were asked to consider the membership of the Group and to offer suggestions for inclusion. Members suggested representation from teachers' organisations and the Institute of Food Science and Technology and DfES with observer status. Members also asked about representation from small businesses, noting that there are 370, 000 catering businesses in the UK, 80% of which are independently operated. Representatives for the Agency in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales suggested that a representative from each of their advisory committees could be asked to become members of the group. It might be possible for three to be selected so as to provide a small business and educational input.

**Action Point: Judith Hilton/Claire Boville to investigate the possibilities of representation from the above organisations.**

7. Members discussed the Agency policy on openness, how it applied to the Group and how information from the group would be made available. Members recognised that there would be times when views from the group would vary because of the group's composition. Members felt that being open could be a positive driving force and would require the FSA to give good reasons for its position if advice from the group was not followed. Judith Hilton stated that papers would be available to members to circulate to their organisations. She would see whether the new web site had a suitable slot for the Group's papers and generally favoured the idea of their being placed on the web site.

### **The baseline for measuring the target**

8. Judith Hilton introduced paper FBDSOG/01/02 which sets out the agreed method for calculating the baseline for the FSA's targets and the rationale behind this. Sarah O'Brien (PHLS) explained the methodology behind the estimates of foodborne disease in the UK.
9. Members discussed the problems involved with trying to produce accurate figures for actual incidence of foodborne disease and asked how the method adopted compared with estimation methods used in other countries. Sarah O'Brien explained that the system compared favourably with what is currently used, whilst emphasising the need to stay abreast of new systems of data collection as they emerge.
10. Members asked whether an improvement in detection may distort progress being made towards the target figure. Sarah O'Brien and Judith Hilton agreed that presentation of the figures would be of crucial importance. Focussed questions would need to be asked to ensure that figures did not represent a worse situation than actually existed.

**Action Point:** *John Cowden and Sarah O'Brien to give a brief presentation to the Group on the approach used to generate the baseline data.*

**Action point:** *Judith Hilton to explore the possibility of putting a simple explanation on the FSA web site and material for dissemination to the wider public.*

## **The Strategy**

11. Judith Hilton introduced the strategy paper FBDSCG/01/03, the implementation paper FBDSCG/01/05 and comments paper FBDSCG/01/06.
12. Members discussed the strategy and asked if they would have input into the translation of strategy into project plans. Judith identified routes for input through the Group and through consultation with respective organisations. Input of the Group will be fed through to project leaders.
13. Members highlighted the importance and scale of the implementation of the strategy for reaching the ambitious targets the Agency have set and asked Claire Boville if adequate resources were available to the implementation team. She reminded members that she had not yet started in her new post, but that when she had become more familiar with the work programmes and had assessed the resourcing needs, she would be in a better position to consider the issue with senior officers.
14. Members discussed possible avenues for meeting the target of reducing foodborne disease by 20%. The group highlighted the need to identify the areas where the available resources will make the greatest contribution to achieving the goal set and to target accordingly. The extent to which improved home hygiene could contribute to a reduction in illness was debated. There was no clear consensus regarding the value of targeting this area although cooking was recognised as a critical control point for *Campylobacter*. Members also identified the need for communication materials to be carefully tailored to specific audiences. Addressing foodborne illness caused by *Campylobacter* was highlighted as being fundamental to achieving the target. The need for advice on effective cleaning was also recognised as being critical.

**Action point:** *It was agreed that PHLS would re-draw the pie chart and split the category for desserts down according to the food source vehicle.*

## **After Lunch**

15. Judith Hilton summed up the pre-lunch discussion and described activity in each of the 'specific' sectors. She explained that catering and hospitality did not currently have a specific action plan. However, the main planks of the Strategy for this sector would focus on HACCP and the Food Hygiene Campaign (due to be launched in the new year, 2002) as well as production of material for small caterers and the general public.

16. Poultry – The results of the UK Wide Survey of Chicken on Retail Sale are being finalised and analysed. The Consultative Group established to help the Agency implement its strategy on Salmonella in chickens has extended its remit to include Campylobacter in light of the findings of the survey.
17. Red meat – policy in this area will be dominated over next 2 years by the implementation of European Commission requirements for the implementation of HACCP in slaughterhouses. The stakeholder group met for the first time in July and again in September.
18. Meat products – research is currently being commissioned to evaluate the efficacy of the Butchers' Licensing initiative.
19. Milk / dairy products – progress is being restricted because dairy hygiene inspectors' visits have ceased in areas affected by foot and mouth disease. The epidemic had also delayed the launch of an initiative for specialist cheese makers.
20. Eggs – Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF) Salmonella in eggs report has been produced. The survey of eggs is projected to start in November/December 2001.
21. Fruit / vegetables - there is a programme of research on organic wastes and a code of practice is being drafted.
22. Fish / shellfish – a new system for classifying shellfish beds is being developed.
23. In the Home – most current activity focussed on the Food Hygiene Campaign.
24. HACCP – a paper on the proposed HACCP strategy is going to the FSA Board in November. The FSA is also looking at training and the framework in which it is being delivered.
25. The group discussed the topic areas highlighting the need to identify the costs of each campaign to help ensure that expenditure is targeted where it will contribute most to the objective of reducing foodborne disease. Members felt that there should be simplified guidance for the implementation of HACCP with understandable rules/templates to follow. It was suggested that the HSE template on risk assessment could be used as a model to help guide business through the process. The role for training and auditing was also recognised. Judith Hilton indicated that research was being commissioned to determine what constituted effective training and led to changes in behaviour.
26. Members suggested that food imports be made a topic area on its own to ensure 'Sector specific' regulation and checking was carried out.

27. It was agreed that members would be kept informed of food hygiene and education campaigns.

### **Communications with other stakeholders**

28. The group was asked for ideas to improve contact with other stakeholders. A discussion followed for and against a variety of ideas about communication. Changes in cooking patterns were highlighted as an area to note and the importance of piloting any idea to check the suitability of the message with different target audiences was stressed. The need to reach the young, vulnerable and minority ethnic groups was highlighted.

**Action Point:** *Member to provide a list of their constituent groups and to identify methods for communicating the Strategy's message.*

**Action Point:** *Judith Hilton/Claire Boville to make the National Federation of Women's Institutes aware in advance of the publicity campaign to enable them to co-ordinate their resources.*

**Action Point:** *Members to identify any issues that were specific to individual sectors, with which the FSA should co-ordinate and inform of any initiatives.*

**Action Point:** *Roy Kirby to report on the FDF sheet for children at the next meeting.*

**Action Point:** *Jill Brand to provide information to the group on changes in cooking patterns.*

### **AOB**

29. Nothing to report

### **Next meeting**

30. The next meeting of the group would be March 2002, preferably in the middle of the week.

**ACM/530**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

***SALMONELLA* IN RETAIL CHICKEN**

Attached is a copy of a Food Standards Agency press release on *Salmonella* in Retail Chicken.

**Secretariat**  
**September 2001**  
cm6460



Food Standards Agency press release 2001/0140 of Thursday 16 August 2001 : *Salmonella* in Retail Chicken Drops to All Time Low but the Battle with *Campylobacter* Continues.

See :-

<[http://192.168.10.12/food\\_agency\\_site/press\\_releases/uk\\_press/2001/pr010816.htm](http://192.168.10.12/food_agency_site/press_releases/uk_press/2001/pr010816.htm)>

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON THE  
REDUCTION OF *SALMONELLA* IN CHICKENS**

The FSA established a Consultative Group on the Reduction of *Salmonella* in Chickens as part of its strategy to reduce *Salmonella* in UK-produced chicken by at least 50% by 2005. A report on the inaugural meeting of the Group is attached.

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

## **CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON THE REDUCTION OF *SALMONELLA* IN CHICKENS – REPORT OF INAUGURAL MEETING**

1. The Consultative Group on the Reduction of *Salmonella* in Chickens (CGRSC) has been established as part of the Food Standards Agency strategy to reduce *Salmonella* in UK-produced chicken by at least 50% by 2005. The Group has around 30 members (including the Secretariat) who were nominated by the major stakeholders in the area. The first meeting of the Group was held at the Radisson Edwardian Kenilworth Hotel, Great Russell St, London on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

2. The main aim of the first meeting was to ensure members were aware of the background to the Group, its proposed role and to allow initial discussions on the Food Standards Agency strategy for the reduction of *Salmonella* in chicken. While the Group will not provide formal advice to the Agency, or have a decision making role, it will have an important role in contributing to technical discussions and providing support to the Agency as it works towards meeting the target.

3. Members discussed the following issues:

- Membership and Terms of Reference of the CGRSC;
- CGRSC's guidelines on openness;
- FSA Board Paper providing the strategy for reducing *Salmonella* in chicken;
- Work plan for implementing strategy;
- Update on baseline survey of retail chicken;
- Improving information transfer within stakeholder groups and between stakeholders;
- Research identified by the strategy;
- DEFRA Code of Practice on prevention and control of *Salmonella* in broilers.

4. Discussions largely focused on the work plan for implementing the strategy and members provided valuable comments and useful information which will help the Agency take the work forward. The Agency will consider all the comments and prepare detailed work plans for each area outlined in the strategy. Members identified the need for Sub Groups to discuss several areas in more detail. These Sub Groups will be established as soon as possible as the Agency considers such detailed discussions are essential if it is to develop and implement the strategy effectively.

5. The strategy identifies several areas where further information is required. The initial research requirements are therefore mainly reviews and situation reports, rather than laboratory work. The Agency has identified suitable contractors and hopes to commission this work shortly. The Sub Groups will be actively involved in the research commissioned, to help ensure all the relevant issues are addressed by the researchers.

6. Further information on the Group can be obtained from

Linden Jack  
Room 808c  
Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6NH  
Phone: 020 7276 8941  
**email:** Linden.Jack@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

June Lock  
Room 816c  
Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6NH  
Phone: 020 7276 8959  
**email:** June.Lock@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

**Microbiological Safety Division  
Food Standards Agency  
September 2001**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON *CAMPYLOBACTER* AND *SALMONELLA* IN CHICKEN**

Following the results of the recent Food Standards Agency survey of chicken on retail sale in the UK, the Agency has adjusted its previously announced priorities and amended the remit originally given to the Consultative Group on the Reduction of *Salmonella* in Chickens. The attached paper explains these developments.

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

# CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON *CAMPYLOBACTER* AND *SALMONELLA* IN CHICKEN

## Introduction

1. The Food Standards Agency established a Consultative Group involving all the major stakeholders from the chicken production chain to help it implement the strategy to meet its target to reduce levels of *Salmonella* in UK-produced chickens on retail sale by at least 50% by 2005. The Group met for the first time in July 2001.

2. The Agency has since announced the results of a survey of chicken on retail sale in the UK showing 5.8% of chickens are contaminated with *Salmonella*. The levels of *Salmonella* have dropped, meeting the Agency's target and falling within the range thought to be possible by the ACMSF (Poultry Meat Report 1996). However the survey also showed 50% of retail chickens are contaminated with *Campylobacter*. While the work on *Salmonella* will continue, the Agency now considers the reduction of *Campylobacter* in chickens to be a higher priority. The remit of the Consultative Group has been extended so it covers both *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* as one of the first steps in developing a strategy for the reduction of *Campylobacter* in chickens.

## Membership

3. The Food Standards Agency has invited the major stakeholders in the chicken production sector to participate in the Consultative Group. A full membership list is attached at Annex A. In summary Membership comprises:

- 10 FSA officials (including Chairman)
- 5 officials from other Government Departments
- ACMSF representative
- 8 Industry representatives
- British Veterinary Association representative
- 2 Consumer representatives

## Terms of Reference

4. The Group's terms of reference are to assist the Food Standards Agency develop and implement strategies for the reduction of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* in chickens.

5. The Group is likely to meet formally twice a year to:

- discuss development of, and approaches taken in implementing the strategies;
- help monitor and assess progress of the work put in place; and
- provide information which will help the FSA in its work.

6. The Group will have an important role in contributing to technical discussions and providing support to the Agency in its work on the reduction of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* in chickens. It will not provide formal advice to the Agency or have a decision making role. Consultative Group meetings are likely to focus on general issues concerning the work; however, there will also be a need for detailed discussions on specific issues. The Agency therefore intends to establish Sub Groups in several areas which will draw together smaller groups of members and additional experts who are able to contribute to such discussions.

**Microbiological Safety Division  
Food Standards Agency  
September 2001**

**Annex A**

**CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON REDUCTION OF SALMONELLA IN CHICKENS – MEMBERSHIP**

<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Roger Skinner (Chairman)	FSA Microbiological Safety Division
Jonathan Back	FSA Microbiological Safety Division
Keith Millar	FSA, Animal Feedingstuffs Division
Geoff Deville	FSA, Meat Hygiene Division
Peter Hewson	FSA, Meat Hygiene Division
Jane Downes	FSA, MHS
Susan Pryde	FSA Scotland
William Gilmore	FSA NI
Joy Whinney	FSA Wales
Richard Meldrum	FSA Wales
Harry Bailie	DEFRA, Animal Health and Zoonoses Team
Tony Hitching	DEFRA, Animal Health and Zoonoses Team
Diana Linskey	DEFRA, MPEP
Kate Kerr	Scottish Executive
Colin Hart	DARD
Douglas Georgala	Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food
Tony Miles	British Poultry Meat Federation
Howard Hellig	British Poultry Meat Federation
Alan Speight	British Retail Consortium
Diane Osborne	British Retail Consortium
Keith Baker	British Veterinary Association
Beti Wyn Thomas	Consumer representative



Diane McCrea	Consumer representative
Charles Bourns	National Farmers Union
Angela Booth	UKASTA
Mike Alcorn	NI Poultry Federation
Andrew Lewins	Grampian Country Chickens
<u>Secretariat</u> Linden Jack June Lock Marion Castle	FSA Microbiological Safety Division FSA Microbiological Safety Division FSA Microbiological Safety Division

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**REPORT OF THE JOINT FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY  
(SCOTLAND)/SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE TASK FORCE ON *E. COLI* O157**

The Report of the Scottish *E. coli* Task Force was issued in June 2001. A press release announcing completion of the Task Force's work is attached for the information of Members, together with a copy of the Report's Executive Summary. The full Report is available on the Food Standards Agency (Scotland)'s website at :-

<[http://192.168.10.12/food\\_agency\\_site/scotland/ecoli.htm](http://192.168.10.12/food_agency_site/scotland/ecoli.htm)>

**Secretariat**  
**September 2001**  
cm6466

Food Standards Agency Scotland press release : Joint Food Standards Agency Scotland and Scottish Executive Task Force on *E. coli* O157.

See :-

<[http://192.168.10.12/food\\_agency\\_site/scotland/ecoli.htm](http://192.168.10.12/food_agency_site/scotland/ecoli.htm)>

The full Report of the Group is also available from this site.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**VEROCYTOTOXIN-PRODUCING *ESCHERICHIA COLI***

Attached for the information of Members is a copy of International VTEC-  
STEC Club Notiziario ISS Vol. 14 No. 3, March 2001 Supplement 1.

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

International VTEC-STEC Club. IVC news 15. Notiziario ISS Vol. 14 – n.3 –  
March 2001 Supplement 1.

To receive IVC news, contact Alberto E. Tozzi, Laboratorio di Epidemiologia e  
Biostatistica, Istituto Superiore di Sanita, Viale Regina Elena 299, 00161 Rome,  
Italy. Tel: +39 06 49387215; Fax: +39 06 49387292; e-mail <vtec@iss.it>

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**MICROBIOLOGICAL FOOD SURVEILLANCE GROUP**

A note is attached for the information of Members on the Microbiological Food Surveillance Group.

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

## **MICROBIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE GROUP**

### **Introduction**

1. In February 2001, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) decided to discontinue the Microbiological Food Surveillance Group.

### **Genesis of MFSG**

2. The Government announced in May 1995 that the Steering Group on the Microbiological Safety of Food (SGMSF) was to be merged with the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF), to ensure more efficient and streamlined consideration of food safety issues.<sup>5</sup> The announcement made clear that, for the future, the ACMSF would be asked to advise on the Government's microbiological food surveillance programme which had hitherto been the main task of the SGMSF.
3. The Government decided at the same time to set up two small Departmental Groups which would pick up some of the tasks previously carried out by the SGMSF which had not been transferred to the ACMSF under the arrangements announced on 3 May 1995. The two groups were the Microbiological Food Surveillance Group (MFSG) and the Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group (EFIG). The ACMSF has received regular reports on the work of both Groups.

### **MFSG terms of reference**

4. The terms of reference given to the MFSG were to :-
  - review surveillance activity in the public and private sectors on the microbiological safety of food during processing, retailing, catering and in the home;
  - consider the adequacy of the available data and identify any gaps;
  - make recommendations for surveillance activities as part of an annual forward strategy;
  - receive regular reports on surveillance activities in order to monitor their progress; and
  - consider advice and observations from the ACMSF on the MFSG's forward strategy and the general direction of the food surveillance programme.

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<sup>5</sup> Department of Health press release 95\217 of 3 May 1995.

## **Decision on MFSG and role of other groups**

5. Two of the objectives published by the FSA in 2000 were to reduce foodborne illness by 20% over the next 5 years and to reduce levels of *Salmonella* in UK-produced chickens on retail sale by at least 50% by 2005. Development of the Agency's future surveillance strategy is intimately linked with the development of the mechanisms required to attain the *Salmonella* and foodborne disease targets.
6. **The FSA therefore decided in February 2001 to wind up the MFSG.** The Agency decided that the possible need for another body to replace it would be considered as part of the strategy needed to enhance FSA surveillance of foodborne illness. The FSA has now set up two consultative groups as part of the mechanism for helping the Agency with its chicken and foodborne disease strategies.
7. The ACMSF itself has set up a standing Surveillance Working Group. The Group's terms of reference are to facilitate the provision of ACMSF advice to government in connection with its microbiological food surveillance programme and other surveillance relevant to foodborne disease, particularly in relation to the design, methodology, sampling and statistical aspects; and to report back regularly to the ACMSF.

## **EFIG**

8. The Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group continues in being, chaired by the FSA. The Secretariat will continue to provide ACMSF with regular progress reports on EFIG's work.



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**LICENSING OF FOOD BUSINESSES**

Attached for the information of Members is a press notice issued by the Local Authorities Co-ordinating Body on Food and Trading Standards (LACOTS) calling for food businesses to be licensed.

**Secretariat**  
**September 2001**  
cm6426

Local Authorities Co-ordinating body on Food and Trading Standards  
(LACOTS) press release : LACOTS Calls for Licensing of Food Businesses.

Contact Vicki Law 0207 840 7207. E-mail <[vicki.law@lacots.org.uk](mailto:vicki.law@lacots.org.uk)>

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**SPECIALIST ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE**

The Government has set up a new independent advisory committee on microbial antibiotic resistance. It is intended that the Committee's advice will enable the Government to review, and where necessary revise, the UK Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy and Action Plan to ensure that the wide-ranging programme of work to tackle antimicrobial resistance maintains its momentum.

A copy of the Department of Health's press release announcing the setting up of the new Committee is attached for the information of Members.

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

Department of Health press release 2001/0338 of 23 July 2001 : Health Minister Lord Philip Hunt Announces New Advisory Committee on Antibiotic Resistance.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S INTERIM RESPONSE  
TO THE BSE INQUIRY**

1. In February 2001 the Government went out to public consultation on its interim response to the Report of the BSE Inquiry chaired by Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers. The ACMSF was one of the bodies consulted.
2. The Committee considered the interim response document briefly at its 40<sup>th</sup> meeting on 21 March 2001 and Members were asked to submit comments to the Secretariat to enable a coordinated ACMSF view to be prepared for submission to the BSE Inquiry Liaison Unit.
3. A copy of the response sent on behalf of the ACMSF on 27 April 2001 is attached for the information of Members.

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

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## **Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food**

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Administrative Secretary, Room 813C, Aviation House  
125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH  
Telephone : 0207-276-8951 Fax : 0207-276-8907  
E. mail : colin.mylchreest@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

**Mark Filley Esq**  
**Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food**  
**BSE Inquiry Liaison Unit**  
**1A Page Street**  
**London**  
**SW1P 4PQ**

27 April 2001

### **PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S INTERIM RESPONSE TO THE BSE INQUIRY**

Jenny Bacon's letter of 9 February invited comments on the proposals contained in the Government's Interim Response to the Report of the BSE Inquiry chaired by Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers. I have been asked by the Chairman of the ACMSF to let you know the Committee's stance on these matters.

Clearly, responsibility for advising Government on the food safety implications of BSE does not rest with the ACMSF. However, there are aspects of the Phillips Report and, consequently, the Government's response, which are of relevance to the Committee. The parts of the response document which are particularly relevant to the ACMSF are :-

- Chapter 4 on science and Government;
- Chapter 5 on openness;
- Chapter 6 on risk; and
- Chapter 7 on good government.

The comments annexed to this letter concentrate on these aspects of the Government's response.

**Advises the Food Standards Agency on the Microbiological Safety of Food**  
**Chairman : Professor Douglas L Georgala CBE, PhD, FIFST**

I am copying this letter to Professor Georgala, the ACMSF's Chairman, and to its Medical Secretary, Dr Judith Hilton.

**C R MYLCHREEST**  
**Administrative Secretary**

**GOVERNMENT'S INTERIM RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE BSE  
INQUIRY**

**COMMENTS BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE  
MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD (ACMSF)**

**Chapter 4 : Science and Government**

1. The ACMSF fully recognises the need for Departments to ensure that appropriate members are appointed to the scientific advisory committees. Whilst appointments to the ACMSF fall outside the ambit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, the Committee supports the decision of its parent body (the Food Standards Agency (FSA)) that such appointments should be made in accordance with Nolan principles and in compliance with the guidance issued by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. In practice, this means that vacancies are publicly advertised and a formal panel is constituted to sift applications, prepare short lists of the most suitable candidates, and interview those short listed. Before final decisions on appointments are taken, the Secretary of State for Health and those Ministers with responsibility for health in the devolved administrations are consulted on the FSA's proposals (as required under the Food Standards Act 1999).

2. The ACMSF also supports the view that Departments should identify clearly and precisely the role of Committee members and the scope of their advice, and should ensure that they properly and fully understand advice proffered by the committees. In the case of the ACMSF, the Committee's terms of reference have recently been reviewed and revised by the FSA, in order to clarify the Committee's role. Relevant guidance is provided to members through the Chair and the Secretariat. Members are encouraged to participate fully in the Committee's business (often through "tours de table"). The proposal by Government to provide appropriate training to members is welcome.

3. In reporting to Government, the ACMSF seeks to ensure that its advice is properly and fully understood. This process is assisted by the attendance at its meetings of Departmental Assessors (routinely), and Departmental officials (where this is appropriate for particular issues). Where there is a need for the ACMSF to undertake in-depth studies of microbiological food safety issues (the ACMSF has published detailed reports on vacuum packaging and associated processes; *Salmonella* in eggs; *Campylobacter*; VTEC; poultry meat; foodborne viral infections; and microbial antibiotic resistance), the comprehensive reports produced are so structured as to be intelligible on three different levels (ie. to the lay, informed and expert readers). The Committee recognises the potential advantages which might flow from the adoption of a more formal structure for the process of risk assessment. Members already have some experience of using risk assessment in the Committee's work and will be carefully exploring additional options. The



ACMSF's Second Report on *Salmonella* in eggs, which will be published shortly, contains a detailed risk assessment supplement. The ACMSF is also fully committed to being as open as possible at all stages of the risk assessment process. It is already made clear to authors of papers being considered by the Committee that it operates on the presumption that papers it considers will be made publicly-available. The Committee also publishes detailed minutes of its proceedings and, subject to the FSA (to whom it reports) being content, always looks to publish its advice and other outputs.

4. The ACMSF fully recognises the need to declare potential conflicts of interest. The Committee operates under a code of practice reflecting the Seven Principles of Public Life. Declarations of interest in any items to be discussed are called for at the beginning of all of the Committee's meetings. Individuals declaring particularly important interests may, if deemed appropriate, be required to leave the room during discussion of relevant issues, such interests and actions being recorded in the minutes of the meeting concerned. The Committee publishes annual reports on its work. The code of practice is publicly-available through the annual reports, each of which contains a Register of Members' Interests.

5. The ACMSF supports the Government's proposal to draw up a Code of Practice for the scientific advisory committees and participated fully in the first round of consultations. The Committee also intends to participate in the second round. The Committee is content with the proposal that the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser should adopt the practice of writing to Permanent Secretaries setting out good practice on handling scientific advice, managing research within their Departments, and addressing other issues such as ways of identifying emerging issues, coordination and communication within Government, and evaluation and review of research proposals. A number of points occur to the ACMSF in this connection, namely :-

- the Government spends many millions of pounds annually on research. If full value is to be achieved from this, it is essential that research projects commence quickly and that the outputs from such research are made publicly-available fully and expeditiously;
- foodborne infections do not respect geographical boundaries. It is thus essential that the Government has in place arrangements to enable necessary action to be taken and essential advice to be provided rapidly and consistently across the UK. This has become particularly important in view of devolution initiatives;
- CSA guidance should stress the importance of Departments defining unequivocally the respective roles of Government and the scientific advisory committees. The ACMSF's essential role is to provide advice on the microbiological safety of food to the FSA. It's responsibilities are thus essentially in the area of risk assessment. CSA should be clear that responsibility for risk management lies principally with Government, although the scientific advisory committees may legitimately endeavour to provide a suite of risk management options for Government consideration.

Risk communication may fall to be shared more equally between Government and its advisory committees in future, so clear guidance is needed on the "senior partner" status of Government, and the way in which the committees will operate in support of Government.

6. The ACMSF recognises the value of policy makers within Government having access to the widest possible range of scientific opinion. The Committee already publishes its agenda and papers, and its subject-specific reports, in addition to being fully argued, contain extensive references to supporting literature. ACMSF membership is drawn from a wide range of relevant disciplines and interests, and there are two lay members. In addition, external expertise is co-opted as and when necessary to supplement "in house" expertise. When undertaking in-depth studies of specific issues, it is the Committee's practice to trawl widely for written evidence and to hold oral evidence sessions too. There would be benefits were the Government to encourage other scientific advisory committees who do not yet follow these practices to do so in the future.
7. The Committee's comments on certain aspects of the Government's policy for research are given above. The ACMSF considers that a workshop approach, involving key stakeholders with a direct interest and relevant expertise in the subjects concerned, will often be advantageous in developing research strategies, auditing the extent to which research meets the objectives set, identifying gaps and avoiding overlaps, and in horizon scanning.

## **Chapter 5 : Openness**

8. The ACMSF is fully committed to the principle of openness. It publishes its agendas, papers, minutes and press releases, all of which are available on the Committee's website. It's annual reports, which are also published, will in future be posted on its website. ACMSF subject-specific reports are also published, and a media briefing session is held to launch new reports. The Committee has also introduced arrangements for public access to one of its routine quarterly meetings each year.
9. The ACMSF supports the Government's initiatives to extend the boundaries of openness and is keen to reflect this commitment in its own practices. However, it is important to recognise that a proportion of the information which the Committee needs to obtain in order to be able to frame its advice to Government may be subject to commercial or other sensitivities and may be made available to the ACMSF subject to this confidentiality being respected. The ACMSF fully accepts that, before information is withheld on grounds of confidentiality, the need for such protection should be rigorously tested. By the same token, it needs to be recognised that, in certain circumstances, particular information has to be protected in order to avoid compromising the quality of the advice the Government receives.

## **Chapter 6 : Risk and uncertainty**

10. The ACMSF's views on some aspects of risk analysis are given above. The Committee supports the principle that the consumer should receive clear advice on risk, making clear any limitations on current knowledge, so that they can make informed choices. The Committee also believes that Government should stand ready to protect consumers through interdiction, to the extent that consumers are unable to protect themselves. In judging when and where to intervene, Government should operate in accordance with the precautionary principle, affording the benefit of any doubt to the consumer.

## **Chapter 7 : Good government**

11. As already noted, it is extremely difficult to contain microbiological illness and foodborne disease within geographical boundaries. The current foot and mouth disease crisis provides clear evidence of the way in which viral infection can spread and the speed with which the spread can take place. Coordination across boundaries, be they geographical, Departmental or inter-Departmental, is essential. Clear arrangements need to be made to ensure that the Government's external sources of advice, like the ACMSF and the other scientific advisory committees, are fully integrated into the emergency response machinery. Horizon scanning, and early gearing up of response machinery on a contingency basis are likely to enhance the Government's ability to mount effective countermeasures when these are required.
12. The effectiveness of any measures aimed at protecting the food chain will depend in large measure on the public's confidence in available sources of advice. The perception of a political dimension may detract from the public's confidence in the way a particular event is being handled. In this context, the independence of the CMOs and CVOs is an important asset in securing, maintaining or restoring public confidence. The contribution that the ACMSF and the other scientific advisory committees can make, in terms of public confidence, through the provision of independent expert advice should not be overlooked.

**ACM/539**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**ZOONOSES DIRECTIVE**

DEFRA have produced the attached note reporting on developments in the European Union in relation to the Zoonoses Directive.

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

cm6459

## Zoonoses Directive : Note by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

1. A European Commission (EC) report has concluded that changes are needed to control zoonoses (animal diseases which are transmissible to man), with improvements to the way Member States are required to monitor and reduce levels of certain common pathogens. The EC report examines the experience gained since the mid-1990s in combating zoonoses and concludes that, although certain progress has been observed in monitoring and controlling them, these measures need to be intensified.
2. The EC Report to the European Parliament and Council on the control and prevention of zoonoses is accompanied by proposals for a revised Directive on the monitoring of zoonoses and zoonotic agents and a Regulation on the control of *Salmonella* and other foodborne zoonotic agents.
3. Together with the monitoring of food poisoning outbreaks, the proposed Directive envisages monitoring primarily in animal populations and, where necessary, at other stages of the food chain. This includes the production of feedingstuffs and the further preparation and production of products of animal origin. Food businesses would be required to keep results of testing and to pass these on to the competent authority. In turn, Member States would have to continue providing the Commission (and the European Food Authority, once established) with annual reports on trends and sources of zoonoses. The Directive would also introduce a requirement to record cases of antibiotic resistance.
4. The proposed Regulation would create a framework for reducing pathogens, in the form of targets for specific zoonotic agents in selected farm animal populations, in particular *Salmonella* in poultry and pigs. National control programmes (which should cover at least feedingstuff production, primary production of animals, and the processing and preparation of foodstuffs of animal origin) would have to be approved by the Commission. Such programmes would primarily be the responsibility of the competent authority, although private sector initiatives would also be encouraged. The Commission would determine what were acceptable and unacceptable control methods, and would set out additional conditions for trade in live animals and hatching eggs. After a transitional period, the Regulation would impose various restrictions on marketing. From 2008 onwards, table eggs will not be permitted to be marketed for human consumption unless they originate from a flock subject to relevant testing and subsequently found to be free from *Salmonella enteritidis* and *S. typhimurium*. From 2009 onwards, poultry meat would have to meet certain microbiological criteria or be subject to some form of heat treatment to eliminate *Salmonella*.
5. The Directive and Regulation would also set out a framework for Community and National Reference Laboratories, and their respective responsibilities.

6. The Report and proposals have been adopted by the European Commission but at present there is no indication of when formal negotiations will begin. However, DEFRA intends to circulate the proposals to interested parties for comment shortly, with a view to developing a UK negotiating position.

**DEFRA**  
**6 September 2001**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS**

1. The attached extract, provided by the Food Standards Agency, contains details of research requirements likely to be of interest to ACMSF Members from the Food Standards Agency (Microbiological Safety Division and Meat Science and Strategy Division) and the Food Standards Agency (Scotland).
2. The full Research Requirements Document (Issue 6) is available on the FSA's website at :

<[http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk/research.htm#scientific research](http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk/research.htm#scientific_research)>

**Secretariat  
September 2001**



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# **Research Requirements Document**

**Issue 6**

**September 2001**



# MICROBIOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT (B12)

## Research requirements

**Assess the validity of coliform measurement as an indicator of raw milk quality**

### Background

50. Coliforms exist in many environments on a dairy farm such as polluted water supplies, soil, the general surroundings or around livestock. Contamination of raw milk with coliforms is not uncommon, but can be intermittent and levels may vary, often for no obvious reason, making results of such testing difficult to interpret. Sequential sampling may indicate contamination points but it is usually necessary to identify potential sources by the 'process of elimination'.
51. The use of coliform testing is widespread in the dairy industry as a general indicator of hygiene 'from farm to fork' and its use should not be underestimated as a management tool. However, the presence or absence of coliforms does not necessarily indicate the presence or absence of pathogens. Further, consistently satisfactory results over a long period (e.g. 12 months) are needed to generate the desired confidence about the hygiene quality of the production chain.
52. The requirements aim is to seek better and more reliable indicators for the hygienic quality of raw milk samples than coliforms, and to determine whether they could be used as an assessment of the hygienic conditions of the primary production environment.

Research proposals are invited to:

**A. Review and assess the research to date on the development of indicators other than coliforms for assessing the hygienic quality of raw milk. Evaluate the most promising methods through a feasibility study and determine whether any could be used in an extrapolation to indicate conditions in production holdings.**

### Further information

59. For advice and information on specific scientific issues relating to these requirements please contact Dr Kevin Hargin, Microbiological Safety Division (Tel: 020 7276 8953) e-mail: [kevin.hargin@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.hargin@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)
60. Completed proposals to **arrive by 5pm on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2001** to Miss Marion Castle Food Standards Agency, Microbiological Safety Division, Room 816C, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH.

## **Microbial Risk Management (B13)**

### **Evaluation of food hygiene and safety training (including HACCP training)**

#### **Background**

61. The Food Standards Agency believes that a well trained food industry workforce is an important factor in helping to raise food safety standards and reduce the burden of food borne disease. Legal requirements for hygiene training are contained in existing food hygiene legislation. A significant amount of training is carried out in the UK on food hygiene and safety management, including HACCP. A range of Government and food industry guidance has been produced to help businesses assess their training needs.
62. The Agency now wishes to take stock of the impact that training has had on food safety practices and standards within the UK food industry and consider the need and scope for further developments and enhancements in training provision to support efforts to reduce food borne disease. The Agency therefore wishes to commission research into this important area to help inform future policy. In particular, the Agency considers that a better understanding is needed of:
  - current levels of industry take up of formal food hygiene and safety training and the drivers for, and barriers against, food businesses accessing such training;
  - the extent to which food safety knowledge acquired on training courses is retained and applied in practice, and the factors affecting this; and
  - the value of non-formal, workplace training in raising food safety standards in food businesses.
63. The study should discuss the current range of food hygiene and safety training provision in the UK and consider whether any gaps exist. It would also be helpful if the study could reflect any sector-specific issues relevant to the above aspects.
64. This work should discuss practical actions that could be undertaken by the Agency and/or other relevant stakeholders, including industry, training/awarding bodies and enforcers, to address any difficulties that are identified. The deadline for completion of the study is 31 March 2003.

Proposals are invited to:

**A. Review and evaluate the impact of current food hygiene and safety training provision (including HACCP training) on food safety practices and standards in the UK food industry. Identify practical action to address any shortcomings identified indicating how such action would lead to enhanced consumer protection.**

### **Further Information**

65. For further advice and information please contact Karen Pratt, Microbiological Safety Division (Tel: 020 7276 8964). E-mail: karen.pratt@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk
66. Completed proposals to arrive by **5pm on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2001** to Miss Marion Castle Food Standards Agency, Microbiological Safety Division, Room 816C, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH.

# FOODBORNE DISEASE (B14)

## Introduction

67. The objective of the Microbiological Food Safety research theme is to provide robust information on the presence, growth, survival and elimination of micro-organisms throughout the food chain; and the extent, distribution, causes and costs of foodborne disease. Within this theme, research will be commissioned in support of the Agency's strategy to achieve a reduction in the incidence of food-borne disease by 20% over a five-year period. *Campylobacter* is the most important cause of bacterial food poisoning in the UK and reducing these infections will be important if the target is to be achieved. Work is needed to improve our understanding of this organism and the sources and routes of transmission. This will help in focussing control measures in the most appropriate way. Work is also needed to address some gaps in our knowledge relating to *Clostridium perfringens*, one of the five organisms that form the baseline for monitoring the Agency's progress towards the target.

## Research requirements

**Establish the contribution of the food chain to *campylobacter* infection**

## Background

68. *Campylobacter* is the most frequently isolated bacterium associated with gastroenteritis in humans. It usually causes sporadic cases of infection, although in recent years an increasing number of outbreaks have been described. Epidemiological studies suggest that poultry meat is an important vehicle of infection and surveys, including the recent one by the Agency (see website), have shown that a significant proportion of raw poultry meat for human consumption is contaminated with these bacteria. However, poultry meat only explains a proportion of *Campylobacter* cases and the role of other animal products, other foods, water and non-foodborne exposures is still unclear. A pattern is beginning to emerge from recent studies suggesting that routes of transmission other than food may account for a significant proportion of cases. However, firm evidence that this is the case has not yet been established. The Agency would like to commission research to further our understanding of the epidemiology of *Campylobacter*. Collaborative applications are encouraged to promote well balanced proposals that offer value for money and make use of the best available technology and research approaches.

Research proposals are invited to:

**A. Conduct epidemiological studies to assess the contribution made by the food chain, relative to other pathways, to the problem of *Campylobacter* infection in humans.**

## **Clostridium perfringens food poisoning**

### **Background**

69. *C.perfringens* is frequently associated with gastroenteritis in humans and between 1992 and 1999, 13% of foodborne outbreaks in England and Wales were attributed to this organism, although this is known to be an underestimate of the true burden of illness. The Infectious Intestinal Disease (IID) Study in England<sup>1</sup> confirmed that that *C.perfringens* toxin is an important cause of IID in the community and more commonly in cases presenting to GPs. The highest rate of cases presenting to a GP occurred in the under 2 years age group. The Agency's 5-year strategy for delivering its target to reduce the incidence of foodborne disease by 20% identifies *C.perfringens* as one of the five organisms for which action is required to reduce the number of cases.

<sup>1</sup> The Report of the Study of Infectious Intestinal Disease in England, ISBN 0-11-322308-0, has been published by The Stationery Office and is available from The Publications Centre, PO Box 29, Norwich NR3 1GN (Tel: 0870 600 5522). A Summary and Executive Summary of the study can be found on the Food Standards Agency website at the following address:  
<http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk/research/iid.htm>.

70. The organism is commonly found in low numbers in many foods, especially in meat and poultry. It is known to be associated with foods prepared in bulk where there are inadequate cooling facilities for cooked foods. Slow cooling may allow germination of spores that have survived cooking and rapid multiplication of the organism to an infectious dose. It has been suggested that only strains of *C.perfringens* that have been subjected to repeated heating are able to cause food poisoning and that strains freshly isolated from the environment do not. The Agency would like to commission research to further our understanding of the physiology and behaviour of *C.perfringens*. Collaborative applications are encouraged to promote well balanced proposals that offer value for

money and make use of the best available technology and research approaches. For research requirement B, applications should also take account of previously funded research in the area of cooling large bulk meats.

**Research proposals are invited to:**

**B. Investigate whether some strains of *C.perfringens* are more toxigenic than others and determine the role of heat treatment on toxin production.**

**C. B. Conduct a study of the behaviour of *C.perfringens* and other microorganisms during cooling of large bulk meats.**

## **Physiology of Clostridia**

### **Background**

71. The main species of Clostridia that are of concern in the context of food safety are *C.botulinum* and *C.perfringens*. *C.perfringens* is the cause of a much less severe but more common type of food poisoning. The physiology of these clostridia is well documented, but much less is known about other species of clostridia that may contaminate foods, e.g. *C.tertium*, *C.bifermentans* or *C.butyricum*. There is a lack of recent information on the basic physiology of these organisms, e.g. information on their minimum temperature, pH and water activity for growth or potential to form toxins that might lead to illness.

Research proposals are invited to:

**D. Investigate the physiology of selected, lesser-known clostridia that may contaminate foodstuffs.**

### **Further information**

72. For advice and information on specific scientific issues relating to these requirements please contact Dr Kathryn Callaghan, Microbiological Safety Division (Tel: 020 7276 8968 E-mail: [kathryn.callaghan@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:kathryn.callaghan@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)).

73. Applications should be sent to: Miss Marion Castle Food Standards Agency, Microbiological Safety Division, Room 816C, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH. The closing date for receipt of proposals is **Tuesday 20 November 2001**.

## **MICROBIOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE (B08) (Late inclusion)**

### **Food Standards Agency Surveillance Programme for toxic phytoplankton in Scottish coastal waters.**

#### **Introduction**

180. Marine Biotoxins produced by phytoplankton can be accumulated in the tissues of shellfish (scallops, mussels, oysters, cockles, etc.) If humans then consume these species, toxin related illness could occur. In order to ensure that the public do not consume contaminated shellfish, and to meet its obligations under EU directive 91-492-EEC as the competent authority, the Food Standards Agency Scotland runs a surveillance programme to monitor algal toxins in shellfish flesh. Under the same directive, the Agency is also required to have a programme to monitor toxic phytoplankton in Scottish coastal waters. The results also assist in the choice of shellfish samples collected for the shellfish toxin monitoring programme.

#### **Research Requirement**

181. Water samples should be collected from Scottish coastal waters throughout the year, although more intensively during the spring and summer months (April to October). All samples should be analysed by light microscopy and in some instances by electron microscopy. During the season, it is estimated that in the region of 700 samples will be analysed for phytoplankton but this may vary depending on the prevailing conditions. The results of the light and electron microscopy should be conveyed to the Agency on a weekly basis to assist in the choice of shellfish samples collected as part of the monitoring programme. The work of the monitoring programme is expected to commence in April 2002.

182. This call is for the collection and analysis of samples collected in Scotland. The collection and analyses will be paid for by the Food Standards Agency, Scotland. An invitation to bid for the work will be sent to those organisations that express an interest in conducting the analyses and have the technical capacity to undertake the work involved from the geographical region.

Expressions of interest are therefore invited to:

A. Provide a toxic phytoplankton monitoring programme in Scottish coastal waters
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183. Expressions of interest (**max. 2 pages**) with details of relevant **experience to arrive by 5.00pm on Friday 26 October**, to Dr Susan Pryde, Food Standards Agency Scotland, 6th Floor, St Magnus House, 25 Guild Street, Aberdeen, AB11 6NJ. Please note that full requirements will be sent out by the end of November.

#### **Further Information**

184. For further advice and information on specific scientific issues, or making expressions of interest, please contact Dr Susan Pryde, scientific advisor, Food Standards Agency Scotland (Tel: 01224 285171) E-mail: [susan.pryde@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:susan.pryde@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)



# MEAT HYGIENE RESEARCH (M01)

## Introduction

115. The meat hygiene research programme is aimed at establishing how meat may become contaminated by pathogens during the slaughter, dressing and cutting of carcasses. An important factor determining the microbiological safety of the finished carcass is the health and physical condition of livestock arriving at the abattoir.
116. Ante-mortem scoring of animal cleanliness controls the level of physical contamination on animals in the slaughterhouse lairage (MHS Clean livestock policy). These checks alone are unable to provide assurances regarding the microbiological load of livestock entering a slaughterhouse. It is therefore important to ensure that best practice is adopted at all stages in the production chain to reduce the level of microbiological contaminants, in particular human pathogens, from entering the food chain.

## Background

118. This is a particularly important issue in poultry meat production where birds are placed into crates, which are loaded on to trailers then transported from the poultry production unit to the poultry slaughterhouse. The poultry transport crates are then recycled following washing. However despite this, studies have shown that a major source of cross contamination, between flocks of birds is from the poultry crate, which strongly suggests that current techniques for crate washing are relatively ineffective.
119. There is a requirement for research to investigate current UK poultry slaughterhouse practice for the cleaning and disinfection of poultry transport crates. The study should draw on available information and aim to provide an assessment of the effectiveness in reducing the physical contamination and the microbiological load of poultry crates, of current poultry crate washing and disinfection processes. The study should also explore the effectiveness of possible alternative methods for crate washing and disinfection. The output from the study will be the provision of recommendations for best practice (Code of practice) of current techniques and/or possibly an alternative practical and economic technique for the cleaning and disinfection of poultry transport crates.

Research proposals are invited to:

- A.** Evaluate the effectiveness of current poultry slaughterhouse methods for the cleaning, washing and disinfection of poultry transport crates Investigate alternative economical and practical techniques and provide recommendations for best practice for the cleaning and disinfection of poultry transport crates.

### **Further information**

120. For further information on these proposals please contact Dr Stephen Dixon, Meat Science and Strategy Division (Tel: 020 7276 8342, Email: [stephen.dixon@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.dixon@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)).
121. Completed proposals should be submitted by **20 November 2001** to Dr Stephen Dixon, Meat Science and Strategy Division ,Room 319C, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**ASSESSMENT OF SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL OF JOHNE'S  
DISEASE IN FARM ANIMALS IN GREAT BRITAIN**

Attached for the information of Members is a copy of the Executive Summary from this Report by the Scottish Agriculture College.

The full Report is available on the DEFRA website at :-

<<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/sac2.pdf>>

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

This is obtainable on <<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/sac2.pdf>>

**ACM/542**  
**(Tabled information paper)**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE**

The attached paper on developments in relation to Foot and Mouth Disease has been provided by Mr Gayford (DEFRA/State Veterinary Service assessor) for the information of Members.

**Secretariat**  
**September 2001**  
cm6524

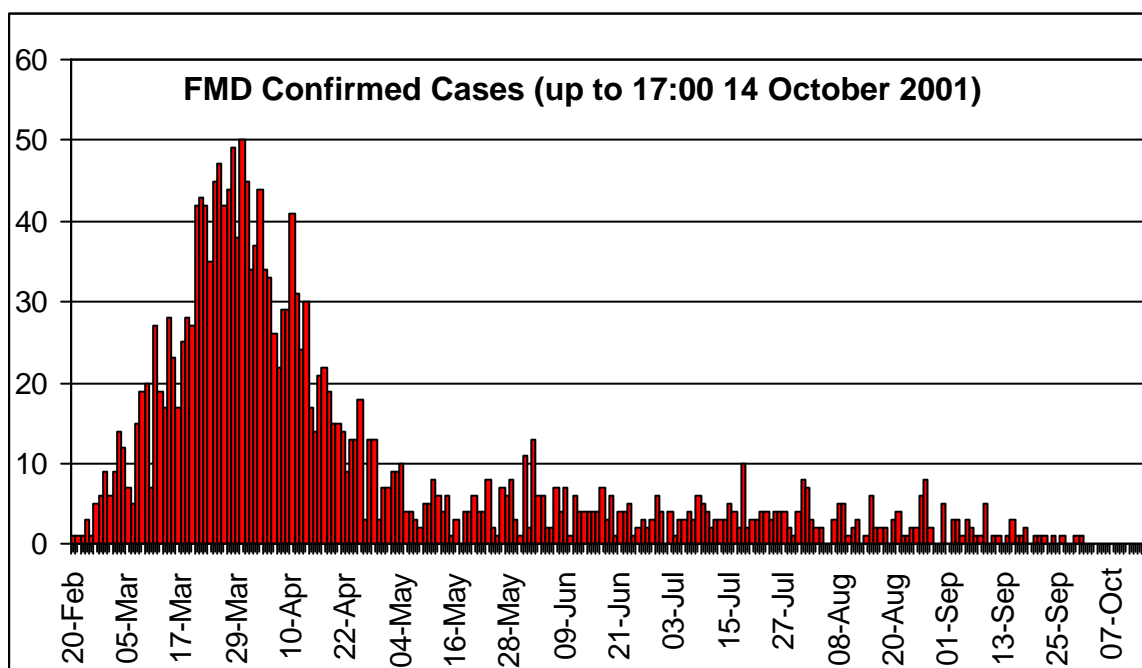
## LIVESTOCK DISEASE AND INFECTION SURVEILLANCE IN 2001

1. The year has been dominated by the foot and mouth disease outbreak which commenced in February 2001 and details are shown below. No cases of human infection by foot and mouth disease virus have been identified during this outbreak. Procedures associated with the measures implemented to control foot and mouth disease have had significant implications on surveillance for zoonotic animal diseases and infections.

### FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

#### Summary Statistics

2. At 17:00 on 14 October: There were no new cases since last report; total remains 2,030 cases.



#### Number of cases per week

Week ending	07 Oct	30 Sep	23 Sep	16 Sep	9 Sep	2 Sep	26 Aug
Cases/week	0	4	6	7	16	18	19

### TUBERCULOSIS

3. Early in the FMD outbreak DEFRA halted all routine TB testing. Currently some 1,000 tests in annual testing parishes are overdue and the number of overdue herd tests is increasing at the rate of 150-200 herds per month. There are greater numbers of overdue tests in 2, 3 and 4 yearly testing

parishes but these herds are generally at a lower risk of bovine tuberculosis. Limited testing and associated work has restarted at different levels around the country; e.g. dealing with the backlog of reactors, short interval tests and testing of herds contiguous to new incidents.

4. As the FMD epidemic diminishes and the proportion of counties declared as "FMD-free" increases, restocking is gathering pace. The risk of TB spread during restocking of farms affected by foot and mouth and replenishment of other farms is being addressed.

5. Resumption of normal TB testing, including routine herd testing, dealing with the backlog of testing and responding to incidents is dependant on:

- Availability of veterinary resources much of which have been diverted to deal with continuing FMD suspect incidents, movement licenses, cleansing and disinfection, and restocking;
- Availability of administrative support staff in the local Animal Health Offices, to arrange the TB tests, the disposal of reactors and to process the results.

## **BRUCELLOSIS**

6. Early in the FMD outbreak brucella blood testing of beef herds was also halted; however testing of milk from dairy herds for brucella has continued. Livestock in Great Britain are free of all brucellas including *Brucella abortus* and early in the FMD outbreak importation of livestock from other countries was halted, so the risk of introduction of new disease was very much reduced.

7. Health certification of livestock with respect to *Brucella* prior to import to try to ensure that they are free of infection is part of the regulations associated with international trade of animals. In addition contingency plans are in place and being strengthened to ensure that infection would be picked up early if it was introduced when international trade resumes.

## **SALMONELLA**

8. The number of salmonella reports in January/June 2001 fell by 25% compared to the same period in 2000. This decline has been seen in reports from both statutory and voluntary sampling. In particular the proportion of reports from voluntary poultry monitoring has decreased by 31% compared to January/June 2000. Somewhat surprisingly, considering the foot and mouth disease outbreak, incidents in cattle, sheep and pigs have shown a slight increase during the period.

9. The foot and mouth disease outbreak has had an impact in the examination of samples for salmonella. March to May saw the biggest decline in salmonella reports with a 45% decline in March, 15% decline in April and 31% decline in May. Statutory monitoring of chicken breeding flocks has continued. A single investigation into a suspect *Salmonella enteritidis*

infection in a broiler breeder flock has been carried out; infection was not confirmed on investigation.

10. The restrictions associated with the FMD outbreak have substantially reduced the number of advisory visits carried out to premises with livestock known to be infected.

**Verocytotoxin-producing *Escherichia Coli* O157**

11. Veterinary Laboratories Agency staff have assisted in on-farm investigations following human outbreaks of VTEC O157 when this has been requested by the outbreak control teams.

**Paul Gayford**

16 October 2001



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

**SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

5 December 2001 : open meeting

21 March 2002 : closed meeting

27 June 2002 : closed meeting

19 September 2002 : closed meeting

5 December 2002 : open meeting

**Secretariat  
September 2001**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD**

***CAMPYLOBACTER* WORKSHOP**

Paper ACM/525 seeks Members' views on proposals to hold a *Campylobacter* workshop to help inform the ACMSF's deliberations on *Campylobacter*. This paper outlines the possible form such a workshop would take. It is presented:

- (a) to inform Members' discussion of paper ACM/525;
- (b) to seek Members' views about the proposed format.

**Secretariat**

**October 2001**

## **ACMSF Workshop to Review the *Campylobacter* Research Programme in Relation to Food**

### **Purpose**

- to review the results of recent research on *Campylobacter* in relation to food, including work commissioned as a result of the ACMSF Interim Report on *Campylobacter*, in the context of the current problems and uncertainties;
- to advise on any further research that should immediately be put in hand to assist the Food Standards Agency in achieving its 5-year foodborne disease target;
- to seek views on practical steps that might be taken now to combat exposure to *Campylobacter* in the food chain.

### **Format and timing**

This is essentially an internal ACMSF workshop with invited speakers. Since it will be the first opportunity for the new Committee to meet outside formal committee meetings, members of the Committee will also have an opportunity to get to know each other. Moreover, the workshop is seen as the first stage in constituting an ACMSF working group. It is thus suggested that it should not be on the scale of the 1996 seminar, that it should be by invitation only and that attendance by non-members of ACMSF should be limited.

For the same reasons, a residential workshop lasting 1½ days is proposed.

Since the purpose of the workshop is to tease out the extent to which research has helped answer the fundamental questions, an interactive approach is suggested (see programme), rather than having a series of speakers and then break-out sessions. The aim would be for experts to summarise briefly the current state of knowledge (including outputs from their research) in each area and for this to be followed by plenary discussion in which both members and experts would participate.

The Microbiological Safety of Food Funders Group paper on *Campylobacter* research will provide background information.

Given the time taken to agree the new Committee membership, it is not feasible to arrange the workshop this side of Christmas. However, it is desirable that the workshop should be held as early as possible in the new year and the Secretariat will be seeking to arrange it in January.

## **Attendance**

ACMSF      members  
              observers  
              Secretariat

Panel of 8-10 experts

FSA officials from Microbiological Safety Division and the Veterinary Public Health Directorate

Total number about 36.

## **Outline programme**

### **Day 1**

Chairman : Professor Georgala

14.00 – 14.15      Welcome: Professor Georgala

### **I. Basic microbiology and pathology**

#### **The infective agent**

14.15 – 14.30      Introduction to detection and typing research

14.30 – 15.00      Discussion

#### **Questions to answer**

- Do we have adequate methods for routine use?
- Do we have adequate methods for epidemiological studies (a) in the whole food chain, and (b) in humans?
- Can we draw a line under VNCs (at least for the present)?

#### **The disease and the immune response**

15.00 – 15.15      Summary of commissioned work  
                          Kath Callaghan

15.15 – 15.30      Summary of other relevant research  
                          Olivia Doyle

15.30 – 16.00      Discussion

## Questions to answer

Most of the commissioned work to date has been methodological. Do we need further work to identify which types of *Campylobacter* are pathogenic in man and characterise the immune response further to make significant advances in our ability to control *Campylobacter* infection in humans? In particular:

- do we need to investigate strain variations in *C. jejuni* and *C. coli*?
- do we need to investigate the disease causing potential of other species, such as *C. lari*, *C. hyointestinalis* and *C. upsaliensis*?
- do we need to investigate current levels of immunity to *Campylobacter*?

16.00 – 16.30      Tea

## II. What are the main sources and vehicles for human infection?

### Human epidemiology

16.30 – 16.45      *Campylobacter* in the IID study

16.45 – 17.00      Other epidemiological studies (incl. case control study)  
Sentinel surveillance results  
Sarah O'Brien

17.00 – 18.00      Discussion

### Questions to answer

- What is our current understanding of human epidemiology?
- Do we need further studies and, if so, what? e.g.
  - following up hypotheses generated by PHLS work
  - new case control studies
  - investigating seasonality
- Do we have adequate methods for these studies? If not, what do we still need?

### Animal reservoirs

18.00 – 18.30      Studies of pathogenesis in animals and man.  
Presentations on animal models and genomics.

18.30 – 19.00 Discussion

**Questions to answer**

- Why do some campylobacters cause disease in humans but not in food animals?
- Are there any gaps in the work being funded in the areas of pathogenesis and genomics that will help us to understand the epidemiology in humans or provide insights into methods of controlling *Campylobacter* in animal reservoirs?
- Are genomic studies likely to suggest mechanisms of control and, if so, on what timescale?

**Day 2**

**Animal reservoirs (cont)**

9.00 – 9.15 Animal prevalence studies

9.15 – 9.45 Discussion

**Questions to answer**

- We have data on poultry meat contamination. Will studies of flock contamination levels be useful?
- What do we know about the origin of infection and routes of transmission in poultry? What further work is required on this?
- Are further studies on other animal reservoirs required at this time?

**Relationship between animal reservoirs and human illness**

9.45 – 10.00 Studies of epidemiology in Iceland

10.00 – 10.15 Seasonality in animals and humans

10.15 – 10.30 Risk assessment work

10.30 – 11.00 Discussion

### Questions to answer

- Is the work currently in hand likely to establish the relative importance of animal reservoirs (particularly poultry)? If not, what other work would help answer this?

11.00 – 11.30      Coffee

### III.    What do we know about controlling infection in animal reservoirs?

11.30 – 11.45      Origins of infection, routes of transmission and mechanisms for control  
Tom Humphrey

11.45 – 12.30      Discussion

### Questions to answer

- Do we now have practical solutions for reducing *Campylobacter* in the food chain that need to be tested?

12.30 – 14.00      Lunch

14.00 – 14.45      Continuation of discussion on practical solutions.

14.45 – 15.30      Consensus discussion

- how many of the questions can we now answer?
- what are the main areas of uncertainty that prevent us initiating effective measures to control *Campylobacter* in the food chain?

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD

### ACMSF MEMBERSHIP : PEN PORTRAITS

#### **Professor Douglas Georgala**

Professor Douglas Georgala was appointed to the ACMSF in 1990 and became Chairman in 1996. He trained as a microbiologist and followed a 26 year career in Unilever, first in microbiology research and then in various senior management roles. He was Head of the Unilever Colworth Laboratory for 9 years. He subsequently became Director of the Institute of Food Research. Since retirement in 1994, he has been an independent scientific consultant.

#### **Dr Geoffrey Andrews**

Dr Geoffrey Andrews was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. He is currently Head of Technical Services at Northern Foods plc. He has wide experience of food manufacturing, with knowledge of technical, procurement and engineering practices. He began his career as a Scientific Officer with the National Institute for Research in Dairying and also held managerial positions with Express Foods Group, Mars Confectionery and Pepsi Cola International before joining Northern Foods in 1998.

#### **Dr David Brown**

Dr David Brown was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. He is currently Director of the Enteric, Respiratory and Neurological Virus Laboratory, Central Public Health Laboratory. He is a trained medical virologist with some 20 years experience in diagnostic and public health virology. He has specific expertise in human gastroenteritis infections, focusing on human epidemiology and the population biology of viruses.

#### **Ms Susan Davies**

Susan Davies was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. She is Principal Policy Adviser at the Consumers' Association. She began her career as an Environmental Health Technical Officer (Food and Safety) with Milton Keynes Environmental Health Department in 1992, and joined the Consumers' Association as a Senior Policy Researcher in 1997. She has been a member of the Advisory Panel on Industry Guides, the Working Party on Chemical Contaminants in Food, and the EU-US Consultative Forum on Biotechnology.



She is a member of the Working Party on Food Authenticity and an observer to the Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals.

### **Professor Michael Gasson**

Professor Michael Gasson was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. He is Head of Food Safety Science Division at the Institute of Food Research (IFR). Professor Gasson held posts at the John Innes Institute and the National Institute for Research in Dairying before joining the IFR in 1986. As Head of Food Safety Sciences at IFR, he has had responsibility for the rebuilding of research in the microbiological safety of food following a major rationalisation of the Institute. Professor Gasson has been a member and, latterly, Deputy Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes.

### **Dr Katherine Hadley**

Dr Katherine Hadley was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. She is Senior Lecturer in Immunology and Bacteriology at the University of Glasgow and Honorary Consultant Medical Microbiologist, North Glasgow Hospitals University NHS Trust. She has clinical responsibility for provision of day-to-day emergency and out-of-hours medical microbiology and control of infection services to hospitals and general practices served by the Trust and academic responsibility for the teaching of medical microbiology to medical and science students at the University of Glasgow.

### **Professor Thomas Humphrey**

Professor Tom Humphrey was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. He is recently appointed Professor of Food Safety at the University of Bristol. Following an early career in the food industry and in related research, he joined the Public Health Laboratory Service in 1981 and from 1990 was Head of the Food Microbiology Research Unit at Exeter Public Health Laboratory. Professor Humphrey is a member of the Food Standards Agency's Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group and was a member of the ACMSF's second Working Group on *Salmonella* in Eggs.

### **Professor Paul Hunter**

Professor Paul Hunter was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. He was recently appointed Professor of Environmental Epidemiology at the University of East Anglia Medical School. A Consultant in Medical Microbiology, Communicable Disease Control, and Epidemiology, he was previously Director of the Chester Public Health Laboratory, Consultant in Communicable Disease Control for South Cheshire Health Authority, and Regional Epidemiologist at the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre North West.

### **Mrs Patricia Jefford**

Patricia Jefford was appointed to the ACMSF in 1998. She is currently Environmental Health Services Manager at Gravesham Borough Council. She

qualified as an Environmental Officer in 1966 and has spent her entire career in local government, in Yorkshire, London and Kent. Her specific interests throughout her career have been food safety and infectious disease control. She has served as a Trustee of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, was its Chairman for 1990, and currently serves on the CIEH's Educational and Professional Standards Board. She is also Chairman of the Environmental Health Officers' Registration Board.

### **Professor A MacKenzie Johnston**

Professor Mac Johnston was appointed to the ACMSF in 1995. He is currently Professor of Veterinary Public Health and Head of the Animal and Public Health Division at the Royal Veterinary College, University of London. He is also Visiting Lecturer at Cambridge University Veterinary School. In addition to teaching undergraduate veterinary students, he contributes to the teaching of a number of veterinary and medical postgraduate courses. Mac Johnston is an independent expert on a number of UK and EU committees which advise on food safety and matters relating to public health. He has worked closely with consumer associations and industry. His research has included studies on the use of antibiotics on pig farms, the microbiological assessments of carcasses, and HACCP in the abattoir.

### **Mr Alec Kyriakides**

Alec Kyriakides was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. He is Head of Product Safety at Sainsbury's Supermarkets. His responsibilities cover the microbiological safety assessment of a diverse range of foods, auditing food processes world-wide, the management of food product safety assurance programmes for retail foods, the development and implementation of strategic plans for the management of emerging hazards, and the management of serious microbiological incidents. Before joining Sainsbury's in 1992, he held positions with Grand Metropolitan Brewing, Truman's Brewery, Express Foods Group and Grand Metropolitan Foods.

### **Ms Eva Lewis**

Eva Lewis was appointed as a lay/consumer member of the ACMSF in 1998. She was, for 5 years, a member of the MAFF Consumer Panel. She is currently lecturing part-time on information technology at Kensington and Chelsea College and has written a complete course on Teaching Computers On-Line, for the Internet. For 15 years she was an actress working in films and television and on commercials.

### **Professor Patience Mensah**

Professor Patience Mensah was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. She is Head of the Bacteriology Unit at Ghana's Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research. She has more than 20 years involvement in research on bacterial pathogens associated with fresh and local foods and with water in Ghana, and has acted as a consultant to the World Health Organisation, the

Food and Agriculture Organisation, and the Commonwealth Secretariat. Professor Mensah is currently E P Abraham Research Fellow at St Hilda's College, Oxford.

### **Dr Sarah O'Brien**

Dr Sarah O'Brien was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. A Consultant in Public Health Medicine, she is currently Head of Gastrointestinal Diseases Division at the Public Health Laboratory Service Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (PHLS CDSC). She is responsible for assessing data and generating, through surveillance and research, the evidence base for the origins and spread of gastrointestinal infection. Dr O'Brien held a number of hospital and health authority appointments, and also lectured, in public health medicine, between 1986 and 1995. She was Consultant in Public Health Medicine at the Scottish Centre for infection and Environmental Health between 1995 and 1998 before joining PHLS CDSC. She is a member of the Food Standards Agency's Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group

### **Mr Brian Peirce**

Brian Peirce was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. He has a 40-year background in catering, ranging from service in the Army Catering Corps, through various chef appointments, to lecturing on catering at a number of colleges, and ownership of a small, country hotel.

### **Mr David Piccaver**

David Piccaver was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. He is Managing Director of two farming businesses and holds non-executive Directorships in a number of companies involved in the packing and processing of horticultural produce. He is a non-executive Director of Horticulture Research International and a member of the British Potato Council.

### **Dr Quentin Sandifer**

Dr Quentin Sandifer was appointed to the ACMSF in 2001. He is Executive Director of Public Health with the Iechyd Morgannwg Health Authority. He held a number of appointments in NHS hospitals and general medicine before joining South Glamorgan Health Authority/Bro Taf Health Authority in 1992 as Specialist Registrar in Public Health Medicine. He joined Iechyd Morgannwg Health Authority in 1997 as Consultant in Public Health Medicine. In his current post, he leads a department of 53 staff delivering a public health medicine service to a population of 510,000.

### **Professor W Cairns S Smith**

Professor Cairns Smith was appointed to the ACMSF in 1996. He is currently Professor of Public Health at the University of Aberdeen and Director of the Institute of Applied Health Sciences. He is a clinical epidemiologist with a wide range of experience in the study of acute and chronic disease, both in

the UK and in Asia. He chaired the working group which produced revised Guidelines for the Investigation and Control of Foodborne Disease in Scotland, in connection with the Lanarkshire *E. coli* O157 outbreak, and is currently chairing a working group of the Food Standards Agency, Scotland to produce revised guidance on the management of foodborne disease outbreaks.

### **Dr Tim Wyatt**

Tim Wyatt was appointed to the ACMSF in 1998. He is a Consultant Clinical Scientist (Medical Microbiology) and Acting Head of Laboratory at Mater Hospital Trust in Belfast. He is Chairman of the Conference of Clinical Scientist Organisations, a Council Member of the Association of Clinical Microbiologists, an Examiner in Medical Microbiology at the Royal College of Pathologists, a Team Adviser to the Industrial Society, and a referee for the Journal of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy. His membership of advisory bodies includes the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens(ACDP), and the ACDP/Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee Joint Working Group on Spongiform Encephalopathies.

**Secretariat**  
**September 2001**

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