

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

**Information Paper**

**Update on outbreak of *E. coli* O157 in South Wales and subsequent developments**

The report of the Public Inquiry into the *E. Coli* O157 outbreak in South Wales was issued at a press conference in Cardiff on 19 March. The format of the press conference was a half-hour press statement by Professor Pennington after which the report and a separate bilingual summary document were made available to the press.

The report is available on the Public Inquiry website at:  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/ecoliinquiry/report/?lang=en>

**Background**

September 2005 saw the largest ever outbreak of *E. coli* O157 in Wales and the second largest in the UK. The outbreak affected more than 150 people, most of whom were children in 44 schools across four local authority areas. Thirty one people were admitted to hospital and tragically, five year old Mason Jones died.

The National Assembly for Wales set up the *E.coli* Public Inquiry to undertake a thorough investigation into the Outbreak.

The Inquiry's terms of reference were:

"To inquire into the circumstances that led to the Outbreak of *E.coli* O157 infection in South Wales in September 2005, and into the handling of the outbreak; and to consider the implications for the future and make recommendations accordingly"

The Chairman of the Inquiry is Professor Hugh Pennington.

The Inquiry held an extensive programme of public hearings, starting on 12 February 2008 and ending on 19 March 2008. Closing submissions from participants in the Inquiry were made in another hearing, which was held on 14 May 2008. All participants submitted notes of Emerging Issues during Phase 2 of the Inquiry which detailed changes in procedures since the outbreak.

**Secretariat  
March 2009**