

ADVICE OF THE ADVISORY BODY ON THE DELIVERY OF OFFICIAL CONTROLS

In respect of the following topics considered at its 3rd meeting on 2 April 2008, the Advisory Body:

- Recommended that MHS and FSA proposals for change include an assessment of their impact on public health, animal health and welfare.

MHS Transformation and Charging System

- Acknowledged MHS's demonstrable progress to date on restructuring and other changes implemented and planned and their engagement with stakeholders in the search for efficiency savings, but noted that maintaining the momentum of progress would become increasing difficult;
- looked forward to the results of the joint MHS /FSA /Industry 'optimisation review' of variations in cost and staffing levels at plants with similar throughputs and identifying best practices that could be disseminated;
- agreed that all stakeholders should continue to work at building trust and respect between them and to support the transformation process;
- noted progress on charging (for discussion by the AB in June); and
- asked for an assessment of the impact of higher charges on primary producers.

Control Body Pilot

- Recommended the Control Body pilot should not be pursued in the light of new information presented on the reluctance of outsourcers to become involved in a pilot and the associated set up costs; and in its place
- recommended:
 - predicating a decision on future delivery of official controls not on MHS success or failure, but rather on changes in EU regulations, industry trends, practices in other Member States and potential cost savings;
 - the continued development of the 'business case' for a 'full' Control Body covering the entire service for 'consideration' at a later date;
 - more effort is put into 'transforming' the meat inspection regime, whether it is delivered by a 'transformed' MHS or by a Control Body;
 - the use of a limited number of key qualitative and quantitative performance indicators to monitor MHS performance and progress of the transformation process;
 - that arrangements are agreed to monitor activity-based financial metrics to identify where money is being spent and where savings can be made without compromising consumer protection;
 - the industry's initial work on resource utilisation should be extended and include contract slaughter plants; and
 - that the MHS and Veterinary Contractors, in partnership with industry, fully explore opportunities for innovative approaches to service delivery, including piloting them in selected clusters, to identify and promote successful practices, to achieve some of the benefits sought in the control body pilot.

Standards:

- Recommended sufficient VMHA resource should be made available by FSA to maintain standards through licensing visits, unannounced checks and, where major non compliances were identified, revocation of approvals.

Members

Name	Organisation	Representing
Professor Patrick Wall (Chair)	College of Life Science, University College of Dublin	
Alan Craig	Scottish Association of Meat Wholesalers	Red Meat Sector
Norman Bagley	Association of Independent Meat Suppliers	Red Meat Sector
Stuart Roberts	British Meat Processors Association	Red Meat Sector
Graham Brand	The Anglian Poultry Processors Action Group (TAPPAG)	White Meat Sector
Peter Bradnock	British Poultry Council	White Meat Sector
Stephen Crouch	Hampshire Game Ltd	Game Sector
Sue Davies	Which?	Consumers
William Lloyd-Williams	National Federation of Meat and Food Traders	Meat Retailers
Anthony Scott	British Retail Consortium (Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd)	BRC/Supermarkets
Nigel Miller	National Farmers' Union of Scotland	Primary Producers
Sandy Duncan	Hall Mark Meat Hygiene Ltd	MHS Contractors
Steve McGrath	Meat Hygiene Service	
Brian Harding	Defra	
Jim Norrie	Welsh Assembly Government	
Martin Morgan	The Scottish Government	
Robert Huey	DARDNI	

Further information on the Advisory Body for the Delivery of Official Controls is available at <http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/industrycommittees/abdoc/>