

To: District Council Monitoring Contact Officers

cc: NIFLG Members

17<sup>th</sup> July 2008

Reference: **ENF/NI/08/033**

Dear Colleagues,

## **TRAINING ON LAEMS, THE NEW MONITORING SYSTEM FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR FOOD LAW REGULATION**

I am writing to seek your council's views and advice on the planned second round of training on LAEMS (the local authority enforcement monitoring system), the new monitoring system for LAs for food law regulation, which takes effect from the current year, 2008/09, onwards.

The key recent developments have been:

1. the first phase of training for district councils in Northern Ireland on LAEMS was delivered in April 2008.
2. the new monitoring system was released to all LAs on 30 April, for LA testing to begin; and
3. the release of xml file applications from IT software suppliers. The Agency is aware that some but not all IT software companies have released the xml file, which enables the link to be made between the LA's database and the central LAEMS system. The Agency is meeting with those IT companies which have not



yet provided the xml file, urging progress. We strongly recommend those LAs which are customers of these companies to continue to ask their suppliers when the xml file application will become available.

As district councils were informed in the first phase of training, a second round of training is planned for January to March 2009, immediately before LAs make their first returns under LAEMS. The Agency will need to plan this phase of training in the autumn.

In order to help us to help you, we are seeking your advice on what your council's further training needs are – given your experience of the first phase of training, and of your familiarisation with and testing of LAEMS since 30 April (whether your council has received the xml file application or not).

Secondly, we are seeking your views as to who in your council needs to attend the second phase. Should this be the manager of food services, who is likely to play a key role in signing off the final return? Or the colleague in charge of the food safety details on the IT system, who may play a central role in confirming the mapping and completeness of the data?

Options for the second phase of training could be:

- a) a further half day seminar for all district councils, based on presentations and question and answer sessions; or
- b) a half day of exercises for smaller groups of district councils at computers, using dummy data; or
- c) anything else which you wish to suggest.

We should be grateful for your views or advice on both questions, to guide our next steps.

Could you please send any comments you have, to

[laems@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:laems@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)

by 31 August at the latest. It would also be helpful if you could indicate whether your council has or has not yet received the xml file application.

Parallel letters are being sent to LAs in England, Scotland and Wales by the FSA offices in those countries.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Jackson', written in a cursive style.

Michael Jackson  
Head of Enforcement  
Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland