



To: Directors of Public Protection

15 July 2008

Reference: ENF/W/08/041

Dear Director

**CHANGES TO LOCAL AUTHORITY ENFORCEMENT (CLAE)
REVIEW OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The Agency is currently completing its work to introduce the New Vision for food law enforcement – as was set out in paper PRO 06/10/02, agreed by the FSA Board in its meeting on 12 October 2006, and available on the Agency's website (<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/pro061002a.pdf>).

This work has been carried out in co-operation with local authorities, the LA associations and the professional bodies, under the overall Changes to Local Authority Enforcement, or CLAE, project. CLAE is in four parts: reviews of enforcement policy, of monitoring, of LA audit and of the Framework Agreement. The first three parts have been progressed as follows:

- the new Code of Practice, introducing the amended enforcement policy, has been published for England, and is planned to be published shortly for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland;
- the new monitoring system has been introduced for the current financial year onwards; and
- the consultation on the proposed new arrangements for LA audit was completed earlier this year, and the issues raised are now being considered by the Agency.

This letter is to update you on the plans for the Framework Agreement on food law enforcement. The Agency believes that the current Agreement is essentially sound, and is therefore only proposing an updating of the Agreement, to take account of the changes arising from the other CLAE reviews, rather than a complete revision. In taking this work forward we wish to engage with LAs and at this stage we would welcome your comments on our proposed approach.

The proposed approach and timing for the updating is as follows:



- to aim for a slimmer document, focussing essentially on the current chapters 1 and 2, on Service Planning Guidance and the Standard, with cross-references to documents elsewhere on legislation, the National Control Plan, monitoring and audit. This will avoid duplication, and ensure that any subsequent changes to those linked areas will not automatically make the Framework Agreement out of date;
- for Agency officials to redraft the text during the summer;
- leading to the circulation of the draft updated text in September, for comment, to all LAs, the LA associations, the professional bodies, and the members of the Enforcement Liaison Group (ELG); [This timing is dependent on the new Code of Practice having been published in all parts of the UK].
- sign-off of the final text by a re-constituted ELG Framework Agreement sub-group, in the New Year, with the new Agreement operational from 1 April 2009.

This approach was put to the ELG on 25 June, and agreed. The ELG Framework Agreement sub-group will need re-forming, as it has not met for four years, and many of its previous members have moved on. The new membership will include one LA colleague from each of the four parts of the UK, plus one representative each from consumer groups and industry.

If you have any comments at this stage, on the planned approach, please send them by August 1st, by e-mail, to Adrian.preece@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk.

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

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. D. Bassett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'M' and 'B'.

Mike Bassett
Head of Imported Food Branch