



FOOD
STANDARDS
AGENCY

Report on the Food Law Enforcement Service

Rochdale Metropolitan Borough
Council

24 - 27 September 2002

Foreword

Audits of local authorities' food law enforcement services are part of the Food Standards Agency's arrangements to improve consumer protection and confidence in relation to food. These arrangements recognise that the enforcement of UK food law relating to food safety, hygiene, composition, labelling, imported food and feeding stuffs is largely the responsibility of local authorities. These local authority regulatory functions are principally delivered through their Environmental Health and Trading Standards Services.

The attached audit report examines the Local Authority's Food Law Enforcement Service. The assessment includes the local arrangements in place for inspections of food businesses and foodstuffs, sampling and analysis, internal management, food safety promotion and educational activities. It should be acknowledged that there will be considerable diversity in the way and manner in which local authorities may provide their food enforcement services reflecting local needs and priorities.

Agency audits assess local authorities' conformance against the Food Law Enforcement Standard "The Standard", which was published by the Agency as part of the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement and is available on the Agency's website at:

www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/role/framework/.

The main aim of the audit scheme is to maintain and improve consumer protection and confidence by ensuring that local authorities are providing an effective food law enforcement service. The scheme also provides the opportunity to identify and disseminate good practice and provide information to inform Agency policy on food safety.

The report contains some statistical data, for example on the number of food premises inspections carried out. The Authority's activity data for 2000 has also been reproduced at Annex A. The Agency's website contains enforcement activity data for all UK local authorities and can be found at:

www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/role/39188.

The report also contains an action plan, prepared by the Authority, to address the audit findings.

For assistance, a glossary of technical terms used within the audit report can be found at Annex B.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report records the results of the audit under the headings of the Food Standards Agency Food Law Enforcement Standard and has been made publicly available on the Agency's website at www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/audits/48066. Hard copies are available from the Food Standards Agency Library at Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH, Tel: 020 7276 8181. These are subject to a reproduction and handling fee of £7.50 plus £1.50 postage and packing.

Reason for the Audit

- 1.2 The power to set standards, monitor and audit local authority food law enforcement services was conferred on the Food Standards Agency by the Food Standards Act 1999. The audit of the food service at Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council was undertaken under section 12(4) of the Act as part of the Food Standards Agency's annual audit programme.
- 1.3 The Authority was included within the audit programme on the basis of a low level of food standards inspections of high risk premises, as indicated by 1999 monitoring information provided to the Agency under section 13 of the Food Standards Act 1999. Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council was subsequently named in a paper presented to the Food Standards Agency Board in December 2000. The original date for audit was postponed from 2001 due to a Best Value Inspection of Trading Standards. Further details of monitoring statistics can be found at www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/role/39188.

Scope of the Audit

- 1.4 The audit covered Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council's food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs law enforcement service. The on-site element of the audit took place at the Authority's offices at Telegraph House, Baillie Street, Rochdale on 24 - 27 September 2002.
- 1.5 The audit assessed the Authority's conformance against the Standard, using audit protocols FSA/AP3/1 – FSA/AP21/1. The Standard was adopted by the Food Standards Agency Board on 21 September 2000, (amended March 2002), and forms part of the Agency's Framework Agreement with local authorities. The Framework Agreement and the audit protocols can be found on the Agency's website at: www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/role/framework/ and www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/auditprotocol respectively.

Background

- 1.6 Rochdale has the second largest geographical area of the 10 metropolitan boroughs that make up Greater Manchester, and the second smallest population. Rochdale Metropolitan Borough was formed in 1974 from the 3 former Boroughs of Rochdale, Middleton and Heywood, and the 3 former Urban Districts of Littleborough, Milnrow and Wardle.
- 1.7 Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council has the lowest population density in Greater Manchester, covering an area of 62 square miles with a resident population of approximately 211,000. This is predicted to grow slightly over the next 20 years. The largest ethnic minority is South Asian, which currently forms 10% of the total population and which is predicted to increase to about 16% by 2021. The South Asian community has traditionally included a significant proportion of the local food business proprietors.
- 1.8 Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions figures for 2000 indicate that the Borough is one of the most deprived areas in England, with high levels of unemployment, poor health and low incomes.
- 1.9 The Food Service was provided by 3 sections of the Environment Department. A specialist Food Safety Team, within the Environmental Health Commercial Team, was responsible for food hygiene enforcement. This Team also carried out enforcement of health and safety and animal health legislation. Officers of the Environmental Protection Team dealt with infectious disease work in liaison with Food Safety Team officers for food related cases. The Trading Standards Service was responsible for food standards and feeding stuffs enforcement, in addition to the full range of trading standards work such as fair trading, product safety and metrology.
- 1.10 The main Council offices were situated at Telegraph House, Baillie Street, Rochdale. There were also 4 Information Points located in the main towns within the Borough where food related complaints and enquiries could be registered and forwarded to the Department. All these offices were open from 08:30–16:45 Monday to Friday. An emergency call-out service was available to deal with serious incidents arising outside normal office hours.

- 1.11 The Authority's monitoring returns made to the Agency for the 4 quarters making up the financial year 2001/2002 indicated that the food service was responsible for enforcing food hygiene legislation in 1,790 premises, predominantly within the catering (64%) and retail (30%) sectors. This differed from the comparable monitoring returns for food standards, which indicated that the Service was responsible for a total of 1,515 premises. The auditors were informed that this was largely due to a number of catering premises, such as schools, not being rated for food standards purposes.
- 1.12 Figures for feeding stuffs premises were not provided with these returns, but from information obtained during the audit it was understood that the Authority had identified 2 intermediary premises and 4 feeding stuffs establishments within the Borough.
- 1.13 The official returns indicated that the Authority carried out:

Sampling activity	No.
Formal samples	131
Informal samples	180
Food hygiene enforcement activity	
Inspections	840
Other visits	192
Revisits	367
Advisory/sampling visits	98
Food standards enforcement activity	
Inspections	329
Other visits	22
Revisits	13
Advisory/sampling visits	67
Feeding stuffs enforcement activity	
Inspections	8

2. Executive Summary

2.1 The Authority was providing an effective food service across most areas of activity. The Service had recently begun to implement a comprehensive framework of policies and procedural guidance. Although the audit was undertaken at a relatively early stage in this process, there was well documented evidence that a good standard of service delivery was being achieved, particularly in relation to investigative work, butchers' shop licensing and most areas of formal enforcement action.

2.2 The Authority needs to ensure that food premises inspections are carried out at the required minimum frequencies, according to risk, and that effective follow-up action is taken on unsatisfactory food standards sampling results.

2.3 The Authority's Strengths:

Investigative work – Investigations of food and food premises complaints, food poisoning and follow-up actions to unsatisfactory food hygiene samples were appropriate, thorough and well documented.

Butchers' shop licensing – Licensing had been carried out in accordance with the Service's procedures and was well documented using standardised record forms. The records confirmed that comprehensive licensing assessments had been carried out in all cases examined.

2.4 Key Areas for Improvement:

Frequency of food premises inspections – Food hygiene and food standards inspections were not being carried out at the minimum frequencies, according to risk, required by the relevant Food Safety Act Codes of Practice. These included premises identified as 'high risk' by the Authority. The minimum inspection frequencies, as determined by the Codes of Practice, seek to ensure that enforcement authorities inspect food businesses at a sufficient frequency to enable timely checks and interventions to be made.

Follow-up actions to food standards sampling – There was insufficient evidence to show that all unsatisfactory food standards sampling results received adequate and effective follow-up action.

3. Audit Findings

3.1 Organisation and Management

- 3.1.1 The Authority's new political management structure comprised a Council Leader and a Cabinet of 9 councillors responsible for day-to-day decisions. The Cabinet was supported and monitored by 5 Overview and Scrutiny Committees, a Standards Committee, 4 local Township Committees, and 4 Ordinary Committees that dealt with regulatory and quasi-judicial issues. Food law enforcement fell under the terms of reference of the Cabinet Member with the portfolio for 'Environment and Sustainability'.
- 3.1.2 The Council was in the process of major organisational change at the time of audit. A new corporate structure was due to be implemented from 1 October 2002, with Service Groups replacing traditional departments. Environmental Health and Trading Standards were to be part of the new Planning and Regulation Services Group. Preparatory changes to the internal Departmental structure and senior management posts had already begun. The new Chief Environmental Health Officer and the existing Chief Trading Standards Officer posts carried joint responsibility for the Food Service.
- 3.1.3 The corporate planning framework included the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) and the Council's 5 year strategic plan: '*Aiming High*'. The BVPP 2002/2003 set out the Council's 7 key corporate objectives ('*Corporate Challenges*'). Of these, the corporate objective to '*create a cleaner, safer and healthier environment*' was of particular relevance to the Food Service. The BVPP also contained information about the Service, details of performance in previous years, and set out proposals for key objectives, actions and local performance indicators.
- 3.1.4 The BVPP 2001/2002 stated that the Authority would '*improve the standard and effectiveness of food standards enforcement*'. The BVPP 2002/2003 commented that the Council was '*improving management procedures to satisfy the requirements of the Food Standards Agency, increasing staff resources during 2002/2003 and [had] also improved on the number of food standards inspections carried out from 159 in 2000/2001 to 340 in 2001/2002*'.

3.1.5 Authority's performance indicators used for food hygiene inspections are shown below, together with the reported levels of achievement:

Performance indicator	2001/ 2002	2000/ 2001	1999/ 2000	1998/ 1999
The percentage of food premises inspections that should have been carried out that were carried out for high risk premises.	81.43%	88%	99%	72%
The percentage of food premises inspections that should have been carried out that were carried out for other premises.	37.63%	69%	54%	64%

3.1.6 Performance was also being assessed against National Performance Indicator BV166; a score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health and trading standards.

3.1.7 The Authority had drawn up a Food Service Plan for 2002/2003 that closely followed the Service Planning Guidance in the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement. Cabinet Members approved the Plan in May 2002. Some further clarification will be necessary in future Plans to confirm that the available staffing resources are sufficient to meet the Service's enforcement programme for food standards.

3.1.8 A review of performance against the preceding year's food enforcement programme had been carried out, and this had also been submitted to Members together with the current year's Service Plan.

3.1.9 The Service Plan set out the staffing allocation for food enforcement during 2002/2003. The Authority's pre-audit submission contained recent figures that reflected the actual staffing provision at the time of audit. The figures for the available staff resource for food hygiene enforcement are shown in the following table, together with the staff resource for food related infectious disease investigations:

Food hygiene enforcement officers:	*FTE
Environmental Health Officers	5.7
Food Control Officers (all qualified to inspect higher risk premises)	1.9
Additional officers involved in food related infectious disease (ID) investigations	0.7
Total food hygiene/ID staff resource	8.3

*Full Time Equivalent

3.1.10 The auditors were advised that 2 additional Environmental Health Officer (EHO) posts were due to be filled from October 2002, and an additional Food Control Officer was also being recruited. One of the EHO posts would be a specialist position to promote food safety and provide advice to businesses.

3.1.11 The comparable figures for food standards enforcement were as shown below:

Food standards enforcement officers:	*FTE
Trading Standards Officers	1.1
Fair Trading Officers	0.6
Trainee Trading Standards Officer	0.1
Total food standards staff resource	1.8

*Full Time Equivalent

3.1.12 One additional Fair Trading Officer and the Trainee Trading Standards Officer were undergoing food enforcement training to enable them to complement the existing food standards enforcement staff.

3.1.13 The food safety and standards/feeding stuffs financial costs were contained within the total costs for the Environmental Control Business Unit and Trading Standards Service budgets respectively. Estimated figures for the financial allocation to food hygiene and food standards/feeding stuffs for 2002/2003 had been disaggregated from the total budgets and were set out in the Service Plan. The data for food standards/feeding stuffs is based on an estimation that 20% of the overall Trading Standards budget is dedicated to food standards enforcement.

Expenditure	Food safety	Food standards/ feeding stuffs
Salaries & associated costs	£260,000	£69,960
Travel	9,370	2,000
Supplies & services	6,840	1,440
Sampling	7,500	15,200
Departmental recharges (per capita)	130,680	20,360
Total expenditure	£414,390	£108,960
Income		
Legal costs	£2,180	
Licence fees	1,100	
Charges for services	1,000	
Total income	£4,280	0

3.1.14 A Best Value Fundamental Service Review of Environmental Health commenced in May 2002 and was due to be completed by March 2003. The Trading Standards Service was subject to a Best Value Inspection in 2001 when the service was assessed as *'likely to improve'*. A 5 year improvement plan had subsequently been developed and was being implemented.

Recommendation

3.1.15 The Authority should:

Ensure that the Service Plan 2003/2004 provides a clear indication of the staff resources required and those available to meet the estimated food standards enforcement demand. [The Standard – 3.1]

3.2 Review and Updating of Documented Policies and Procedures

- 3.2.1 Documented policies and procedures had been developed and implemented for all areas of Service activity. Although some additional details could be usefully incorporated to ensure that all relevant issues were covered, the Authority's work instructions were, in general, concise and practical.
- 3.2.2 A documented procedure for the control of internal policies and procedures and external reference texts had been implemented, based on quality assurance principles. The document control procedure designated responsibility for reviewing the Authority's policies and procedures to the Team Leaders. All relevant officers were issued with controlled copies of the Authority's Food Service Operations Manual.
- 3.2.3 Officers had access to reference texts through an on-line food law encyclopaedia and official websites. Some hardcopies of official guidance documents were maintained in a central filing system.

3.3 Authorised Officers

- 3.3.1 A documented procedure for the authorisation of officers had been implemented that was in line with the Authority's scheme of delegations and which conferred officer authorisations in accordance with the requirements of Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 19: Qualifications and Experience of Authorised Officers. The procedure needed some further development to reflect the arrangements for assessing the competency of temporary contractors and officers returning to food law enforcement.
- 3.3.2 In practice, all officers were carrying out duties in accordance with the requirements of Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 19, and their authorisations were consistent with their individual levels of qualification, training and experience.
- 3.3.3 Officers with the necessary specialist knowledge had been appointed to have lead responsibility for food hygiene and food standards enforcement. The Authority had recognised that the Trading Standards Service did not currently have sufficient expertise to undertake feeding stuffs enforcement. Consequently, this function was in the process of being delegated to another enforcement authority that was deemed competent by Rochdale to undertake this work on its behalf.
- 3.3.4 The Authority had achieved and retained Investors in People (IIP) accreditation. This scheme requires annual staff training and development appraisals with interim progress reviews. The Service set out a process for assessing officers' individual training needs in its Authorised Officer procedure. However, it was evident that these assessments had lapsed over several years and that training needs appraisals had not been carried out for all staff, particularly food hygiene enforcement officers.
- 3.3.5 Notwithstanding this, documented officer training programmes had been developed that also included team training needs. The auditors were informed that the limited training budget restricted external training, and some identified training needs had been carried over from the previous year. A system of cascade training helped to ensure that all officers benefited from such courses that were attended. It was evident that a considerable number of internal training and briefing sessions had been carried out and that appropriate update training was being provided.

- 3.3.6 Food Service training was financed from the general Environmental Health and Trading Standards training budgets of £1,400 for each. Auditors were advised that an extra £1,000 had been transferred to the training budget from other parts of the existing Trading Standards Service's budget for 2002/2003. A total training budget of £3,800 was therefore provided to cover officer training needs for the full range of Environmental Health and Trading Standards work, including food enforcement.
- 3.3.7 Qualification and training records were maintained for all food law enforcement officers. The records of external training for food hygiene required more detail to show the objectives and content of each course.

Recommendations

3.3.8 The Authority should:

- (i) Extend the documented food hygiene officer authorisation procedure to incorporate the assessment arrangements for contractors and officers returning to food law enforcement.
[The Standard – 5.1]
- (ii) Ensure that the external food hygiene training course records show the objectives and content of each course.
[The Standard – 5.4]

3.4 Facilities and Equipment

- 3.4.1 The equipment and facilities necessary to carry out all activities associated with the Service had been provided. Although the cold storage facilities used for holding food standards evidence was being used for general office storage and was not secure, the designated and secure food hygiene facilities could be utilised for this purpose.
- 3.4.2 A documented equipment calibration procedure was being implemented and appropriate records of routine checks were maintained. The procedure needed further development to reflect all the measures undertaken in practice. These related to the monitoring arrangements for the cold storage facilities and the officer thermometer calibration checks, before and after formal temperature monitoring, required by Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 10: Enforcement of the Temperature Control Requirements of Food Hygiene Regulations.
- 3.4.3 The computer software operated by the Service was capable of providing any information reasonably requested by the Food Standards Agency. However, the Trading Standards Service recognised that the data set for food standards premises was incomplete in respect of the total number of food businesses deemed to be of 'no inspectable risk'. This could be simply rectified through a convergence of the 2 sets of data, but in the meantime it rendered the Authority's official monitoring returns to the Agency inaccurate.
- 3.4.4 Appropriate security, back-up systems and related documented procedures were in place to minimise the risk of corruption or loss of information held on the database.

Recommendations

- 3.4.5 The Authority should:
- (i) Extend the documented calibration procedure to include formal enforcement calibration checks and to reflect the cold storage temperature monitoring arrangements. [The Standard – 6.2]
 - (ii) Ensure that the food standards information entered onto the database includes all food businesses and that accurate official returns are made to the Agency. [The Standard – 6.4]

3.5 Food and Feeding Stuffs Premises Inspections

General

- 3.5.1 The Authority's Food Service Plan 2002/2003 confirmed that there were 1,800 premises on its database subject to food hygiene inspections at that time, 1,478 premises subject to food standards inspections and 6 feeding stuffs premises. These had the following risk rating profiles:

Food hygiene risk category	No.	%*
Higher risk categories (A-C)	1,067	59
Lower risk categories (D-F)	673	37
Unrated	60	3
Total no. premises	1,800	
Food standards risk category		
High risk	52	4
Medium risk	567	38
Low risk	620	42
No inspectable risk	**30	2
Unrated	209	14
Total no. premises	1,478	
Feeding stuffs premises		
Intermediaries (medium risk)	2	33
Establishments (medium risk)	4	67
Total no. premises	6	

*Figures rounded to nearest %

**Not all 'no inspectable risk' premises included on database.

Food Hygiene

- 3.5.2 At the time of audit, the number of unrated food hygiene premises had been reduced from 60 to 6, 5 of which were new businesses.

3.5.3 The Service Plan confirmed that a backlog of overdue inspections had accumulated. Database reports run as part of the audit indicated the following numbers of inspections overdue at that time:

Risk category	Number of premises overdue inspection	Period by which oldest inspection overdue (months)
A	1	2.5
B	22	6.5
C	180	23.0
D-F	306	*n/a

*n/a = not available

3.5.4 The auditors were advised that this backlog was partially due to a diversion of staff resources into developing the Service's quality systems and in documenting its new procedural framework. Officers had also been involved in a number of complex, time consuming legal enforcement cases, and the Service had been required to deal with a significant volume of work relating to the recent foot and mouth outbreak.

3.5.5 It was anticipated that the outstanding high risk inspections would be cleared once new officers took up their posts and through overtime work by existing staff. Inspections of the lower risk category premises were to be sub-contracted to temporary staff.

3.5.6 Documented inspection procedures for general premises, Approved Premises, butchers' shop licensing assessments and the full range of follow-up formal enforcement actions had been implemented.

3.5.7 The preceding 2 years' inspection records were examined for 12 general premises, 10 butchers' shops and 8 Approved Premises. None of the Approved Premises and only 1 of the general premises had been inspected at the minimum frequencies, according to risk, required by Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 9: Food Hygiene Inspections. Of these 19 premises that had received late inspections, the Authority had identified 6 general premises and 5 Approved Premises as high risk.

3.5.8 All premises examined had been inspected by officers with appropriate levels of qualification, training and experience and the correct level of authorisation.

- 3.5.9 Comprehensive records of the content of general premises inspections were maintained. These indicated that officers' assessments of compliance with legally prescribed standards and risk assessment ratings were in accordance with the relevant official guidance. Follow-up actions had been taken when appropriate.
- 3.5.10 All of the inspection follow-up letters examined were issued within the Authority's target time of 10 days.
- 3.5.11 Not all of the Authority's Approved Premises appeared to have been inspected in full accordance with the appropriate product specific regulations and current official guidance. However, this had been recognised and was being addressed through the use of detailed inspection and business record forms to ensure that all relevant issues were assessed and recorded. In addition, an officer had received additional training and had been appointed to a senior post with primary responsibility for dealing with Approved Premises. The details of Approved Premises held by the Authority concurred with those notified to the Agency.
- 3.5.12 Butchers' shops licensing assessments were clearly documented and these had generally been carried out in accordance with the Regulations and official guidance. The standard licence format issued by the Authority contained all relevant details and was in line with the official guidance.

Food Standards and Feeding Stuffs

- 3.5.13 A report run from the food standards database at the time of the audit confirmed that 23% of all high risk rated and 38% of medium risk rated premises were overdue an inspection. The Service Plan for 2002/2003 stated the Authority's intention to give priority to inspecting all its high risk premises and 50% of medium risk rated premises. Auditors were advised that it was anticipated that all high risk rated premises and 50% of medium risk rated premises would be inspected by the end of March 2003. Priority would be given to medium risk rated premises most overdue an inspection.
- 3.5.14 The Authority anticipated that this approach would enable it to carry out the remaining medium risk rated premises inspections during 2003/2004, and thereafter achieve the minimum inspection frequencies for both high and medium risk premises set out in Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 8: Food Standards Inspections.

- 3.5.15 The Authority had 6 registered feeding stuffs premises, which were all on-farm mixers. No pro-active work had been carried out in respect of these premises although arrangements had been put in place, at the time of audit, to sub contract this work to a neighbouring authority following a review of this work in terms of Best Value. This agreement indicated that all 6 registered feeding stuffs premises would be inspected by the end of February 2003.
- 3.5.16 The Service had developed a work instruction relating to food standards inspections which had recently been implemented. The work instruction also included reference to the follow-up action to be taken in the event of non-compliance being identified.
- 3.5.17 Twelve premises files, including 5 rated as high risk, were examined in relation to food standards inspections. Six of the premises examined (4 rated high risk) had not been inspected at the minimum frequency set out in Food Safety Act Code of Practice No.8: Food Standards Inspections.
- 3.5.18 In 2 cases, the records left at the time of the inspections and those on the database appeared to indicate that unqualified officers had carried out these inspections. However, the Service was able to show that these were part of a training exercise and had been carried out by appropriately qualified officers, as had all other inspections examined.
- 3.5.19 Comprehensive records of the content of food standards inspections were maintained. These indicated that officers were assessing compliance of food premises to legally prescribed standards and were taking appropriate action on any non-compliance found.

Recommendation

3.5.20 The Authority should:

Ensure that food standards and food hygiene inspections are carried out at the minimum frequencies, according to risk, required by Food Safety Act Code of Practice No.8: Food Standards Inspections and Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 9: Food Hygiene Inspections. [The Standard – 7.1]

3.6 Food, Feeding Stuffs and Food Premises Complaints

General

- 3.6.1 The Service had implemented a policy and documented procedures on the investigation of complaints.

Food Hygiene

- 3.6.2 The records of 12 food hygiene and food premises complaints received by the Service were examined. In all cases, appropriate investigations had been carried out and there was evidence that all involved parties had been notified and kept informed of the outcomes.

Food Standards and Feeding Stuffs

- 3.6.3 The records of 12 food standards complaints received by the Service were examined. It could not be confirmed that appropriate investigations had been carried out in 3 cases. In 1 case, there was no evidence that adequate follow-up action had been taken to ensure the matter was properly resolved by the trader. In a second case, the complaint was closed before sufficient evidence had been obtained to establish whether an offence had been committed. In a third case, no immediate action had been taken despite the premises being considerably overdue an inspection. However, this was in accordance with the Authority's Food Standards Complaints Policy, which gave the option of delaying enforcement action until the next routine visit. In all other respects, the complaints examined were investigated in accordance with centrally issued guidance.

Recommendation

- 3.6.4 The Authority should:

Ensure that appropriate action is taken in response to food standard complaints, in accordance with official guidance and the Authority's own policies and procedures. [The Standard – 8.3]

3.7 Home Authority Principle

- 3.7.1 The Authority's endorsement of the Home Authority Principle was set out in the Service Plan and a related policy document.
- 3.7.2 The Service did not have any formal Home Authority arrangements, but there was evidence that officers were providing advice to businesses based in the Borough and in response to referrals from other enforcement authorities.
- 3.7.3 There was evidence from the files for various activities examined that the Service initiated Home Authority contact when appropriate.

3.8 Advice to Business

3.8.1 The Authority's Service Plan stated that there had been insufficient resources to undertake proactive initiatives to assist businesses comply with food law. However, additional funds had since been made available and a new post, due to be filled from October 2002, had been established for a specialist education and promotions officer. The auditors were advised that this officer would spend approximately 75% of their time carrying out advisory and educational work, and that several promotional projects were being planned.

3.8.2 In addition to advice provided during the course of inspections and in response to specific enquiries, the Authority was able to demonstrate that a limited range of advisory activities had been carried out:

- Three training courses over 3 years for operatives of on-farm dairies;
- A range of Local Authority Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) award winning information materials, developed within the Greater Manchester Food Liaison Group, were made available to businesses. The guidance leaflets available from the Authority included the following:
 - Hazard analysis (in a range of Asian languages):
 - for Asian cuisine
 - for cafes
 - for sandwich makers
 - for small grocers shops
 - for fish and chip shops
 - Guide to drawing up a cleaning schedule
 - Due diligence
 - Temperature control
 - Safe use of shell eggs
 - Food safety inspections
 - Food safety training.
- Lists of useful contacts and suppliers for food businesses;
- Provision of a dedicated business advice line that included advice on standards issues;
- A range of advice leaflets on food standards matters;
- The Service was preparing to send advice leaflets to all traders who might be affected by the Feeding Stuffs (Establishments and Intermediaries) Regulations 1996.

3.9 Food and Feeding Stuffs Premises Database

- 3.9.1 The Department had established a database of the businesses in the Borough. This was used for recording food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs data. A range of checks carried out during the audit indicated that the system was generally accurate and up to date.
- 3.9.2 A documented procedure for maintaining the accuracy of the database had been developed. This was largely confined to the accuracy of data input and did not provide for cross-referencing with other sources of business details. Updates appeared to be largely reliant upon observations made by officers.
- 3.9.3 Various security systems were operated to prevent access and amendment by unauthorised persons. These included user restrictions through password control and designated levels of access.

3.10 Food and Feeding Stuffs Inspection and Sampling

General

- 3.10.1 A documented food sampling policy, sampling procedures and separate food hygiene and food standards sampling programmes had been developed. The policy covered national, regional and local sampling considerations and the sampling programmes were being implemented.
- 3.10.2 The laboratories used by the Authority were properly accredited and appointed.

Food Hygiene

- 3.10.3 The actions taken following 10 unsatisfactory food sampling results were examined. In all cases, appropriate follow-up action had been taken.

Food Standards and Feeding Stuffs

- 3.10.4 The Authority's Service Plan for 2002/2003 estimated the budget available for food sampling to be £15,200.
- 3.10.5 The records of 6 food and feeding stuffs samples that had received unsatisfactory results were examined. Appropriate follow-up action appeared not to have been taken in 5 of the cases. In particular there was little evidence that traders were advised of the results of samples before further samples were taken, and in 3 cases the follow-up actions were not timely.

Recommendation

- 3.10.6 The Authority should:

Ensure that appropriate follow-up action is taken with regard to any unsatisfactory food standards sample results, in line with its enforcement policy. [The Standard – 12.2]

3.11 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

- 3.11.1 The Authority had participated in the development of the regional Health Authority's joint action plans for outbreaks and individual cases of food poisoning. The Service had also developed related internal procedures.
- 3.11.2 The investigation of food related infectious disease was primarily the responsibility of the Environmental Protection Team. Investigations relating directly to food businesses were referred to and dealt with by the Food Safety Team. There was evidence of effective communication and liaison between the 2 teams.
- 3.11.3 The records of 4 outbreak investigations and 6 individual notifications were examined. The outbreaks had been thoroughly investigated and documented. Similarly, isolated cases had received appropriate follow-up actions and investigation when necessary.

3.12 Food Safety Incidents

- 3.12.1 The Authority had a computer system capable of receiving food hazard warnings (FHWs) issued by the Food Standards Agency. A documented procedure had been implemented for responding to FHWs and for recording any actions taken.
- 3.12.2 The Authority's responses to 13 FHWs and updates issued by the Agency were examined. Records of the measures taken were maintained and these showed that each had received prompt and appropriate follow-up action. This included issuing informative press releases to alert local food businesses.

3.13 Enforcement

General

3.13.1 The Authority had adopted the local authority Enforcement Concordat in October 2000. This is a Cabinet Office and Local Government Association scheme that sets out the principles of good enforcement practice, based on the following criteria:

- Standards of service and performance
- Openness and clarity
- Helpfulness
- Effective complaints procedures
- Proportionality of enforcement actions
- Consistency.

3.13.2 Separate enforcement policies for food safety and food standards had been developed and approved by Members. The auditors were advised that businesses would be sent the relevant policies if formal action was being considered. Copies were also available on demand and from the Authority's website.

3.13.3 The Authority's documented procedures for formal enforcement actions included guidance on implementing the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996.

Food Hygiene

3.13.4 The Authority had carried out the following formal enforcement actions in the 2 years preceding the audit:

- 6 prosecutions
- 9 formal cautions
- 1 emergency prohibition notice
- 3 voluntary closures of premises
- 29 improvement notices (served on 19 premises)
- 4 food seizure notices (served on 2 premises)
- 4 food detention notices (served on 2 premises)
- 10 voluntary surrenders of food.

- 3.13.5 The records of 4 prosecutions and 8 formal cautions were examined. All of these cases appeared to be appropriate, in line with the Enforcement Policy and were well compiled and documented. The Service's procedure for formal cautions enabled the investigating officer to offer a formal caution prior to a final decision by the properly delegated officer (the Chief Environmental Health Officer). This appeared to be in conflict with the Authority's scheme of delegation, however, authorisation by the appropriate officer had been given before the formal cautions were finally issued.
- 3.13.6 There was no evidence that the provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 had been fully observed, although there had been subsequent amendments to the relevant internal procedures which should ensure that these requirements are followed and documented in future.
- 3.13.7 The records of the emergency prohibition notice and the 3 voluntary closures, 10 improvement notices, 4 food seizures, 4 detention notices and 9 voluntary surrenders were examined. There were 3 instances where the name of the recipient had not been stated in full on improvement notices, and confirmation of service was not formally recorded as a matter of routine. Improvement notices served in relation to formal training and hazard analysis were not fully in accordance with central guidance and problems could have arisen with their enforcement.
- 3.13.8 All notices were served by appropriately authorised officers, accurately quoted the relevant legal references and provided clear confirmation of the contraventions and the necessary remedial works. All included appropriate time limits, and timely checks on compliance had generally been carried out.
- 3.13.9 With the exception of the defects noted in respect of a minority of improvement notices, formal actions had been carried out in accordance with the relevant Food Safety Act Codes of Practice and notices were generally well drafted. It was evident that the Authority was prepared to tackle difficult enforcement issues, including those arising in national companies, by using the full range of powers available.

Food Standards and Feeding Stuffs

- 3.13.10 Files relating to 3 prosecutions and 1 formal caution carried out by the Service during the 2 years preceding the audit were examined. The reports were comprehensive and showed compliance with both the provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996. All the formal action appeared to have been taken in accordance with the Authority's Enforcement Policy and were properly authorised.

Recommendation

- 3.13.11 The Authority should:

Ensure that improvement notices are drafted and served in full accordance with Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 5: The Use of Improvement Notices, and official guidance. [The Standard – 15.2]

3.14 Records and Inspection Reports

General

- 3.14.1 The Service's records were generally well ordered and provided retrievable, complete and reliable records of each business's enforcement history. The paper file records were consistent with the information held on the electronic database.

Food Hygiene

- 3.14.2 The standardised formats for recording details of butchers' shop licensing assessments and food complaints and related investigations were particularly clear and appropriately detailed.
- 3.14.3 There were however, 2 areas where improved records of business activities and enforcement actions needed to be maintained. The nature and scale of businesses' food operations were not routinely recorded, as required by Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 9: Food Hygiene Inspections. The historical records of Approved Premises inspections and their food operations had been incomplete, but these were subject to reassessment and comprehensive details had begun to be gathered and recorded using standardised forms.
- 3.14.4 The records of inspections confirmed that officers were consistent in providing proprietors with letters confirming the findings of each inspection. In general, inspection letters were clearly worded and helpful to business owners.

Food Standards and Feeding Stuffs

- 3.14.5 The Authority had separate standard report of inspection forms for both manufacturing and non-manufacturing food premises. These forms had provision for the information required by Food Safety Act Code of Practice No.8: Food Standards Inspections. However, reports had not been left on site following 2 of the 10 food standards inspections examined.
- 3.14.6 The boxes provided in the standard inspection reports to indicate what had been examined had not been completed in full by some officers. Details of non-compliances found by officers were generally clear, although in 2 reports this was not the case. Computer text records gave a good indication of what officers had examined during their inspection. Two of the inspection reports related to manufacturing premises but in both cases the report form for non-manufacturing premises had been used.

Recommendations

3.14.7 The Authority should:

- (i) Ensure that the food hygiene inspection records include details of the size and scale of businesses and the nature of food activities carried out. [The Standard – 16.1].
- (ii) Ensure that proprietors are provided with reports of food standards inspections following each inspection and that these give a clear indication of the matters examined, as required by Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 8: Food Standards Inspections. [The Standard – 16.1]

3.15 Complaints about the Service

- 3.15.1 A corporate procedure and a documented service procedure for dealing with complaints made against the Authority had been implemented. A summary leaflet was available from public reception points.
- 3.15.2 The auditors were advised that no formal complaints had been raised against the Food Service.

3.16 Liaison with Other Organisations

3.16.1 Appropriate liaison arrangements were in place with neighbouring authorities and other relevant bodies aimed at facilitating consistent enforcement. These included regular attendance at the following groups:

- Greater Manchester Public Protection Managers' Group;
- Association of Greater Manchester Authorities;
- Greater Manchester Food Liaison Group;
- Greater Manchester Food Standards Group;
- Greater Manchester Health Protection Unit.

3.16.2 The Authority held copies of the minutes for recent meetings of the Food Liaison Groups and these confirmed regular participation by representatives of the Service. The Authority's lead officer for food hygiene had been Chair of the Food Liaison Group in 2001.

3.17 Internal Monitoring

3.17.1 The Service had begun to implement comprehensive internal monitoring arrangements in line with the Service's new documented monitoring procedures. These covered all areas of the Standard and were based on, and extended, existing quantitative and qualitative monitoring practices.

3.17.2 These included the following:

- Accompanied inspections;
- Monthly officer 'caseload' meetings;
- Checks on outstanding cases;
- Database anomaly checks;
- Monthly checks on response times against the Service's performance indicators (quarterly reports to the Chief Executive);
- Regular Team Meetings;
- Customer satisfaction surveys.

3.17.3 Some details of the measures undertaken, any problems identified and related corrective actions had been recorded. Additional records were being maintained as the new procedures were implemented.

3.18 Third Party or Peer Review

- 3.18.1 The Authority was participating in a regional inter-authority auditing (IAA) scheme organised within the Greater Manchester liaison groups for food safety and food standards.
- 3.18.2 The Service had been audited against the Standard by a neighbouring authority in June 2002. This had resulted in the development and implementation of a detailed action plan. Many of the areas identified for improvement by the internal audit had been addressed, and it was clear that effective action was being taken.
- 3.18.3 The Authority was due to carry out a reciprocal IAA at a neighbouring authority following this audit.

3.19 Food and Feeding Stuffs Safety and Standards Promotion

- 3.19.1 The Authority's Service Plan stated that there had been insufficient resources to undertake proactive initiatives to promote food and feeding stuffs safety and standards.
- 3.19.2 However, the Authority recognised the importance of promotional work in providing a balanced service and additional resources had since been allocated. Promotional activities would be included within the remit of the new specialist officer shortly to be recruited.
- 3.19.3 In addition, the auditors were informed that a publicity campaign dealing with food labelling and composition was planned for early 2003.

Auditors: **John Questier**
 Ron Cheesman
 Peter Burke
 Kate Holme

Food Standards Agency

Local Authority Enforcement Division

Action Plan for: Rochdale Metropolitan Council

Audit date: 24 – 27 September 2002

IMPROVEMENTS PLANNED	BY (DATE)	TO ADDRESS (RECOMMENDATION INCLUDING STANDARD PARAGRAPH)	COMMENTS
1. Prepare a Service Plan for 2003/2004 providing a clear indication of the staff resources required and those available to meet the estimated food standards enforcement demand.	31/3/03	3.1.15 Ensure that the Service Plan 2003/2004 provides a clear indication of the staff resources required and those available to meet the estimated food standards enforcement demand. [The Standard – 3.1]	Plan and review of previous year to be submitted for member approval April/May 2003. The existing time recording system is to be further developed. This will assist in providing this information in future years.
2. Amend the documented food hygiene officer authorisation procedure to incorporate the assessment arrangements for contractors and officers returning to food law enforcement.	31/1/03	3.3.8 (i) Extend the documented food hygiene officer authorisation procedure to incorporate the assessment arrangements for contractors and officers returning to food law enforcement. [The Standard – 5.1]	
3. Maintain records of the objectives and content of external food hygiene training courses.	31/3/03	3.3.8 (ii) Ensure that the external food hygiene training course records show the objectives and content of each course. [The Standard – 5.4]	
4. Amend the documented calibration procedure to include formal enforcement calibration checks and to reflect the cold storage temperature monitoring arrangements.	31/1/03	3.4.5 (i) Extend the documented calibration procedure to include formal enforcement calibration checks and to reflect the cold storage temperature monitoring arrangements. [The Standard – 6.2]	Review to include revision of documented procedures and monitoring arrangements.

5. Review the food standards database to ensure that it includes all food businesses and that accurate official returns are made to the Agency.	31/3/03	3.4.5 (ii) Ensure that the food standards information entered onto the database includes all food businesses and that accurate official returns are made to the Agency. [The Standard – 6.4]	
6. Carry out food standards and food hygiene inspections at the minimum frequencies, according to risk, required by Food Safety Act Code of Practice No.8: Food Standards Inspections and Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 9: Food Hygiene Inspections.	31/3/04	3.5.20 Ensure that food standards and food hygiene inspections are carried out at the minimum frequencies, according to risk, required by Food Safety Act Code of Practice No.8: Food Standards Inspections and Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 9: Food Hygiene Inspections. [The Standard – 7.1]	Additional EHO recruited from 28/10/02. Additional Food Control Officer recruited with effect from 1/03. Consultants carrying out 360 food safety inspections (Cats D – F) to be completed by 31/3/03. Additional Fair Trading Officer expected to complete Food Standards Training April 2003
7. Review procedures for food standard complaints to ensure that an appropriate response is made.	31/1/03	3.6.4 Ensure that appropriate action is taken in response to food standard complaints, in accordance with official guidance and the Authority's own policies and procedures. [The Standard – 8.3]	Review to include revision of documented procedures and monitoring arrangements.
8. Review procedures for unsatisfactory food standards sample results to ensure that appropriate follow-up action is taken.	31/1/03	3.10.6 Ensure that appropriate follow-up action is taken with regard to any unsatisfactory food standards sample results, in line with its enforcement policy. [The Standard – 12.2]	Review to include revision of documented procedures and monitoring arrangements.
9. Review procedures for improvement notices to ensure that they are correctly drafted and served.	31/1/03	3.13.11 Ensure that improvement notices are drafted and served in full accordance with Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 5: The Use of Improvement Notices, and official guidance. [The Standard – 15.2]	Review to include revision of documented procedures and monitoring arrangements.

<p>10. Review the records kept following food hygiene inspection to include details of the size and scale of businesses and the nature of food activities carried out.</p>	<p>31/1/03</p>	<p>3.14.7 (i) Ensure that the food hygiene inspection records include details of the size and scale of businesses and the nature of food activities carried out. [The Standard – 16.1].</p>	<p>Review to include revision of documented procedures and monitoring arrangements.</p>
<p>11. Review procedures for food standards inspections to ensure that proprietors are provided with reports of following each inspection and that these give a clear indication of the matters examined</p>	<p>31/1/03</p>	<p>3.14.7 (ii) Ensure that proprietors are provided with reports of food standards inspections following each inspection and that these give a clear indication of the matters examined, as required by Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 8: Food Standards Inspections. [The Standard – 16.1]</p>	<p>Review to include revision of documented procedures and monitoring arrangements.</p>

**ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY
OFFICIAL RETURN 2000**

The UK enforcement data is reported to the European Commission on a calendar year basis. Therefore the information in this Annex, and on the Agency website at www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/role/39188, will not match the data in the main body of the report which is based on the local authority reporting year (1 April-31 March).

ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL – OCD NO 419

	Primary Producers	Manufacturers and Packers	Importers and Exporters	Distributors and Transporters	Retailers	Restaurant and other Caterers	Total
Number of establishments	16	33	0	46	733	1,018	1,846
Number of establishments inspected	17	15	0	16	378	667	1,093
Number of inspections	16	13	0	12	350	583	974
Number of establishments committing infringements*	15	5	0	11	232	555	818
Hygiene general (handling procedures, equipment and condition of premises)	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Hygiene of personnel (in conformity with article 8 of the Control Directive)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Composition (including raw materials and additives)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contamination (other than microbiological)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Labelling and presentation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

* Only the ones which have led to formal action by the competent authorities

LABORATORY RESULTS

Product	Samples with infringements*				Total number of samples	
	Number of samples#	Microbiological contamination	Other contaminants	Composition		Labelling and presentation
Dairy products	0	0	0	0	0	11
Eggs and egg products	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meat and meat products, game and poultry	0	0	0	0	0	25
Fish, crustacea and molluscs	0	0	0	0	0	4
Fats and oils	0	0	0	0	0	2
Soups, broths and sauces	0	0	0	0	0	3
Cereals and bakery products	0	0	0	0	0	8
Fruit and vegetables	0	0	0	0	0	14
Herbs and spices	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-alcoholic drinks	0	0	0	0	0	5
Wine	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alcoholic drinks (other than wine)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ices and desserts	0	0	0	0	0	3
Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea	0	0	0	0	0	0
Confectionery	0	0	0	0	0	9
Nuts, nut products and snacks	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prepared dishes	0	0	0	0	0	19
Foodstuffs intended for special nutritional uses	0	0	0	0	0	0
Additives	0	0	0	0	0	0
Materials and articles intended to come into contact with foodstuffs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	3

* Only the ones which have led to formal action by the competent authorities

A few samples had more than one type of infringement on which formal action was taken

Product from which Informal Samples were taken during 2000	Number of Informal Samples which were Unsatisfactory				Total No. of Informal Samples
	Microbiological contamination	Other contamination	Composition	Labelling and Presentation	
Dairy products	17	1	0	0	110
Eggs and egg products	0	0	0	0	0
Meat and meat products, game and poultry	2	0	3	7	74
Fish, crustacea and molluscs	0	0	0	0	19
Fats and oils	0	0	0	0	0
Soups, broths and sauces	1	0	0	0	5
Cereals and bakery products	0	0	0	0	2
Fruit and vegetables	1	0	0	0	24
Herbs and spices	0	0	0	0	0
Non-alcoholic drinks	0	0	3	0	3
Wine	0	0	0	0	0
Alcoholic drinks (other than wine)	0	0	0	0	0
Ices and desserts	0	0	0	0	11
Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea	0	0	0	0	0
Confectionery	10	0	0	1	35
Nuts, nut products and snacks	0	0	0	0	2
Prepared dishes	2	0	0	0	17
Foodstuffs intended for special nutritional uses	0	0	0	0	11
Additives	0	0	0	0	0
Materials and articles intended to come into contact with foodstuffs	0	0	0	0	0
Others	3	4	1	1	39

Glossary

Agricultural Analyst	A person, holding the prescribed qualifications, who is formally appointed by a local authority to analyse feeding stuffs samples.
Approved premises	Food manufacturing premises that has been approved by the local authority, within the context of specific legislation, and issued a unique identification code relevant in national and/or international trade.
Authorised officer	A suitably qualified officer who is authorised by the local authority to act on its behalf in, for example, the enforcement of legislation.
Best Value	<p>A Government policy which seeks to improve local government performance in the delivery of services to local communities – from education and care for the elderly through to environmental health and road maintenance. Best Value aims to ensure that the cost and quality of these services are of a level acceptable to local people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing the role of local people in deciding the priorities for local government services • improving the way authorities manage and review their business • building on the experience and expertise of staff.
Border Inspection Post	Point of entry into the UK from non-EU countries for products of animal origin.
Codes of Practice	Government Codes of Practice issued under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990 as guidance to local authorities on the enforcement of food legislation.
County Council	A local authority whose geographical area corresponds to the county and whose responsibilities include food standards and feeding stuffs enforcement.
District Council	A local authority of a smaller geographic area and situated within a County Council whose responsibilities include food hygiene enforcement.
Enforcement Concordat	Government guidance setting out principles and procedures of good enforcement which local authorities may adopt. Developed in consultation with businesses, local and central government, consumer groups and other interested parties. It sets out what businesses and others being regulated can expect from enforcement officers.
Environmental Health Officer (EHO)	Officer employed by the local authority to enforce food safety legislation.
Feeding stuffs	Term used in legislation on feed mixes for farm animals and pet food.

Food Examiner	A person holding the prescribed qualifications who undertakes microbiological analysis on behalf of the local authority.
Food Hazard Warnings	This is a system operated by the Food Standards Agency to alert the public and local authorities to national or regional problems concerning the safety of food.
Food hygiene	The legal requirements covering the safety and wholesomeness of food.
Food standards	The legal requirements covering the quality, composition, labelling, presentation and advertising of food, and materials in contact with food.
Framework Agreement	<p>The Framework Agreement consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Law Enforcement Standard • Service Planning Guidance • Monitoring Scheme • Audit Scheme <p>The Standard and the Service Planning Guidance set out the Agency's expectations on the planning and delivery of food law enforcement.</p> <p>The Monitoring Scheme requires local authorities to submit quarterly returns to the Agency on their food enforcement activities i.e. numbers of inspections, samples and prosecutions.</p> <p>Under the Audit Scheme the Food Standards Agency will be conducting audits of the food law enforcement services of local authorities against the criteria set out in the Standard.</p>
Full Time Equivalents (FTE)	A figure which represents that part of an individual officer's time available to a particular role or set of duties. It reflects the fact that individuals may work part-time, or may have other responsibilities within the organisation not related to food enforcement.
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point – a food safety management system used within food businesses to identify points in the production process where it is critical for food safety that the control measure is carried out correctly, thereby eliminating or reducing the hazard to a safe level.
Home Authority	An authority where the relevant decision making base of an enterprise is located and which has taken on the responsibility of advising that business on food safety/food standards issues. Acts as the central contact point for other enforcing authorities' enquiries with regard to that company's food related policies and procedures.

Improvement notice	A notice served by an Authorised Officer of the local authority under Section 10 of the Food Safety Act 1990, requiring the proprietor of a food business to carry out suitable works to ensure that the business complies with the requirements of food hygiene or food processing legislation.
Inter Authority Auditing	A system whereby local authorities might audit each others' food law enforcement services against an agreed quality standard.
Member forum	A local authority forum at which Council Members discuss and make decisions on food law enforcement services.
Metropolitan Authority	A local authority normally associated with a large urban conurbation in which the County and District Council functions are combined.
Minded to notice	A notice served by an Authorised Officer of the local authority under the Derogulation (Improvement and Enforcement Procedures) (Food Safety Act 1990) Order 1996. This notice is served prior to an 'improvement notice' and gives food business proprietors a specified period to make either a written or oral representation to the enforcement authority about the enforcement action. A repeal to the above Order means that from 10 April 2001 'minded to notices' no longer need to be issued prior to the issue of an 'improvement notice'.
OCD returns	Returns on local food law enforcement activities required to be made to the European Union under the Official Control of Foodstuffs Directive.
Originating Authority	An authority in whose area a business produces or packages goods or services and for which the Authority acts as a central contact point for other enforcing authorities' enquiries in relation to the those products
Port Health Authority	A local authority within whose boundaries there is a point of entry into the UK for imported foods.
Public Analyst	An officer, holding the prescribed qualifications, who is formally appointed by the local authority to carry out chemical analysis of food samples.
Risk rating	A system that rates food premises according to risk and determines how frequently those premises should be inspected. For example, high risk premises should be inspected at least every 6 months.
Service Plan	A document produced by a local authority setting out their plans on providing and delivering a food service to the local community.

Trading Standards	The Department within a local authority which carries out, amongst other responsibilities, the enforcement of food standards and feeding stuffs legislation.
Trading Standards Officer (TSO)	Officer employed by the local authority who, amongst other responsibilities, may enforce food standards and feeding stuffs legislation.
Unitary Authority	A local authority in which the County and District Council functions are combined, examples being Metropolitan District/Borough Councils, and London Boroughs. A Unitary Authority's responsibilities will include food hygiene, food standards and feeding stuffs enforcement.