

Food Standards Agency: Information released under the Freedom of Information Act

Date released: 21 December 2018

Reported incidents of bullying and harassment at food business premises 24 August 2017 to 31 October 2018

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has released, as a result of a Freedom of Information request (FOI), details of incidents of bullying and harassment reported by FSA staff and contractors.

FSA staff and contractors carry out official hygiene and other inspection controls in slaughterhouses, cutting plants and wild game facilities to ensure that the meat industry safeguards the health of the public and the welfare of animals at slaughter.

The FOI request was for reported incidents only, including the name, location of the food business and the outcome relating to incidents of bullying and harassment, acts of intimidation, and/or acts of violence perpetrated against employees of the Food Standards Agency and contractors, including any acts of malicious damage to the property of any person working for or on behalf of the Food Standards Agency.

The statistics were drawn from incident report forms submitted by FSA and contractor staff to the FSA's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team. The reported incidents cover different types of alleged conduct. The data details reported cases only. It should not be assumed that any formal findings have been made as to the liability for reported incidents and no food business should be assumed to be at fault in respect of any reported incident.

The definitions used follow the Food Standards Agency's internal categorisation for reported incidents of bullying and harassment. These are as follows:

- Aggression – an incident where the individual was subject to an episode of aggression (verbal or non-verbal).
- Physical assault – unwelcome physical contact, including an actual physical attack or where a person genuinely believed they were going to be attacked.
- Verbal abuse – all other incidents including those that relate to the use of sexist or racist remarks.
- Intimidation – an incident where a behaviour or language resulted in an individual feeling threatened, including use of a potential weapon.
- Malicious damage to property – where the property of a member of a FSA team was deliberately or intentionally harmed.

Most incidents were resolved informally by food business managers addressing with their staff the issues raised by FSA managers.

The names of some food business premises have been withheld to comply with Data Protection Act rules (in accordance with the section 40(2) exemption under the FOI Act). As a result, the published information gives a slightly distorted picture of the type and size of food businesses where incidents have been reported, as the names that have been withheld are predominantly of smaller businesses, where it may be easier to identify individuals.

The data published here shows food businesses where bullying and harassment incidents were reported between 24 August 2017 to 31 October 2018 (with the exception of those names that have been excluded as explained above – the statistics for excluded plants have been aggregated and are shown in Annex B 'Other food business operators'). A link has also been provided to assist in establishing the type of food business identified in the data – i.e. whether it is white or red meat.

Annex A

Request

1, The number of recorded incidents of harassment, bullying, obstruction, violence, intimidation, criminal damage* (however recorded by FSA) reported by FSA or contracted staff, eg OV or MHI, working at slaughterhouses / meat processing plants between 24th August 2017 and the present date.**

***Criminal damage to FSA staff property.**

**** In all regions data is held by FSA eg England, Wales, NI etc - Scotland if held**

2. The names / locations of the plants in question & details of each incident as held, what action was taken and the consequences that followed e.g. verbal advice, written warning, legal proceedings.

Response

Food Business Operator (FBO)	Location	Year	Type of Incident	Action Taken
John Penny and Sons	West Yorkshire	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO
Cranswick Country Foods PLC	North Humberside	2017	Aggressive Behaviour	Informal Meeting with FBO
Medina Pure Halal UK Ltd	West Midlands	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Informal Meeting with FBO
C Humphreys & Sons	Essex	2017	Verbal Abuse	Withdrawal of Service
Cranswick Country Foods PLC	North Humberside	2017	Malicious Damage to Property	Letter sent to FBO
Cranswick Country Foods PLC	North Humberside	2017	Malicious Damage to Property	Informal Meeting with FBO
Springfield Poultry	Herefordshire	2017	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting with FBO
St Merryn Foods Bodmin	Cornwall	2017	Physical Assault	Formal investigation
Dunbia Sawley	Lancashire	2017	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting with FBO
Dunbia Sawley	Lancashire	2017	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting, Mediation

Food Business Operator (FBO)	Location	Year	Type of Incident	Action Taken
Bakers of Nailsea Limited	Somerset	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO
Style Farm Butchers Limited	Wiltshire	2017	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO
Romford Halal Meats Ltd	Essex	2017	Aggressive Behaviour	Formal Investigation
Romford Halal Meats Ltd	Essex	2017	Verbal Abuse	Formal Investigation
George Bolam (Foods) Ltd	Cleveland	2017	Verbal Abuse	Formal meeting, Mediation, Withdrawal of Service
Bakers of Nailsea Limited	Somerset	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO
Bakers of Nailsea Limited	Somerset	2017	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting
Bakers of Nailsea Limited	Somerset	2017	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting
F M & P Limited	West Midlands	2017	Malicious damage to property	No further action
H.P. Westwood Limited	Staffordshire	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Informal meeting
Worcester Meats Polska Limited	Tewkesbury	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO
AJ Meats Ltd	West Midlands	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO
Birmingham Halal Abattoir Limited	West Midlands	2017	Intimidation	Letter sent to FBO
Andrew James Butchery	Devon	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Withdrawal of Service
Bakers of Nailsea Limited	Somerset	2017	Intimidation	Formal Meeting
Janan Meat Limited	West Midlands	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO
ABP York	North Yorkshire	2017	Aggressive Behaviour	Disciplinary Action
Milford Farm Limited	West Yorkshire	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Formal meeting
Ahmed Jeewa & Sons	West Midlands	2017	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO
A C Hopkins (Taunton) Ltd	Somerset	2017	Verbal Abuse	No further action
M Najib & Sons Limited	Derbyshire	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO, Formal meeting
A Traves & Son Ltd	North Yorkshire	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO

Food Business Operator (FBO)	Location	Year	Type of Incident	Action Taken
Medina Pure Halal UK Ltd	West Midlands	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Informal meeting
Pickstock Telford Limited	Shropshire	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Informal Meeting
A.S. Audhali Farm Gate Fresh Poultry Limited	Warwickshire	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Formal investigation, Formal meeting
A J Meats Limited	West Midlands	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO
A Traves & Son Ltd	North Yorkshire	2018	Malicious damage to property	Formal Meeting
Bakers of Nailsea Limited	Somerset	2018	Verbal Abuse	Informal Meeting
Romford Halal Meats Ltd	Essex	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Formal Investigation, Letter sent to FBO, Relocation
Romford Halal Meats Ltd	Essex	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Formal Investigation, Letter sent to FBO
Bakers of Nailsea Limited	Somerset	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Informal Meeting
Bakers of Nailsea Limited	Somerset	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Formal Meeting, Withdrawal of Service
Romford Halal Meats Ltd	Essex	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Formal Investigation, Letter sent to FBO
A Traves & Son Ltd	North Yorkshire	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO, Formal meeting
A Traves & Son Ltd	North Yorkshire	2018	Intimidation	Formal Meeting
A Traves & Son Ltd	North Yorkshire	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO, Formal meeting
Romford Halal Meats Ltd	Essex	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Formal Investigation, Letter sent to FBO
Romford Halal Meats Ltd	Essex	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Formal Investigation, Letter sent to FBO
Cranswick Country Foods PLC	Norfolk	2018	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting, Relocation
Spensorough Abattoir Limited	West Yorkshire	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Informal meeting, Formal meeting
A Traves & Son Ltd	North Yorkshire	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO, Withdrawal of Service
C Snell Wholesale	Somerset	2018	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting

Food Business Operator (FBO)	Location	Year	Type of Incident	Action Taken
A J Meats Limited	West Midlands	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO, Formal meeting
Bates Wholesale Butchers	West Midlands	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO
A J Meats Limited	West Midlands	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Informal meeting
A J Meats Limited	West Midlands	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Informal meeting
Bakers of Nailsea Limited	Somerset	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Informal meeting
Foyle Melton Mowbray	Leicestershire	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO, Formal meeting
Dunbia Carnaby	Humberside	2018	Verbal Abuse	Formal Investigation, Formal Meeting
Dunbia Preston	Lancashire	2018	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting, Relocation
Blacklidge Bros	Lancashire	2018	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting
S J Norman & Sons	Dorset	2018	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting
Birmingham Halal Abattoir Limited	West Midlands	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO, Informal meeting
Birmingham Halal Abattoir Limited	West Midlands	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Informal meeting
A J Meats Limited	West Midlands	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO
A J Meats Limited	West Midlands	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO
A J Meats Limited	West Midlands	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Informal meeting
2 Sisters Food Group Limited	North Lincolnshire	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Formal Investigation, Disciplinary action
A C Hopkins (Taunton) Ltd	Somerset	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO, Informal meeting
John Penny and Sons	West Yorkshire	2018	Verbal Abuse	Withdrawal of Service, Formal Meeting
P J King & Son	Gloucestershire	2018	Verbal Abuse	Formal meeting
John Penny and Sons	West Yorkshire	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Withdrawal of Service, Formal Meeting
N V Gagen & Son	Cambridgeshire	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Informal Meeting

Annex B

Other Food Business Operators (names withheld)	Year	Type of Incident	Action Taken
1	2017	Verbal Abuse	Withdrawal of Service
1	2017	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO, Formal meeting.
1	2017	Aggressive Behaviour	Informal meeting
1	2017	Verbal Abuse	Informal meeting
1	2018	Verbal Abuse	Letter sent to FBO
1	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Informal meeting
1	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Informal Meeting
1	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Informal Meeting
1	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	No further action
1	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO
1	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	No further action
1	2018	Aggressive Behaviour	Letter sent to FBO
1	2018	Verbal Abuse	Withdrawal of Service, Formal Investigation, Letter sent to FBO, Formal Meeting