

Food Fraud Advisory Unit

The Food Fraud Advisory Unit (FFAU) was established by the Food Standards Agency in February 2009. The aim of the Unit is to provide a source of advice and expertise for local authorities investigating illegal activity at any stage of the food or feed chain. The Unit currently consists of 17 members with a range of experience and skills in relation to food law enforcement and includes environmental health officers, trading standards officers and port health officers (this may change over time depending on fraud issues arising). Each member is informally contracted to provide 10 working days per year in support of their membership of the FFAU.

Administration of the Unit is the responsibility of officials within the Food Fraud and Emergency Planning Branch of the Agency's Incidents Unit.

References to 'food' within these Terms of Reference apply equally to feed. References to 'food fraud' incorporate any deliberately illegal activity relating to food throughout the food chain.

Terms of Reference

The members of the Food Fraud Advisory Unit (listed in Annex A) will, as requested by the administrators:

- provide advice/support to local authorities involved in investigations into food fraud. The nature of the advice/support provided will vary, but in all cases lead responsibility for the investigation will be retained by the local authority concerned. Also, members of the Advisory Unit will not ordinarily participate in any on-site activities at individual premises, although, in exceptional circumstances and with the prior agreement of the Agency, this may be arranged.
- as part of the above advisory work, make the authorities concerned aware of the resources available from the Agency and, particularly, encourage them to submit relevant intelligence to the Agency's National Food Fraud Database;
- attend regional events to help disseminate key messages on tackling food fraud to the local enforcement community;

- attend relevant training courses, either as a delegate or in an advisory role;
- attend meetings of the Unit. This will usually be an annual meeting, although in-year meetings may be called where necessary.

The members will also proactively:

- with support from the Agency, identify opportunities for raising the profile with the local authority food law enforcement community of the Agency's programme of work, including available resources, to combat food fraud;
- provide regular feedback to the administrators and other members on any work undertaken in relation their membership of the Unit via an on-line discussion forum.

The administrators of the Unit will:

- act as the central coordinators of the Unit's activities;
- provide members with the resources (such as an information pack and a mechanism for exchanging experiences) needed to help them fulfil their responsibilities for the Unit;
- provide links with other relevant sources of expertise within the Agency, such as the Legal Investigators;
- identify opportunities for publicising the work of the Unit;
- arrange an annual meeting of the Unit and produce an annual report of activities to form the basis of discussion at this meeting;
- make arrangements for members of the Unit to receive appropriate continuing professional development (CPD) hours for their involvement.

Members of the Food Fraud Advisory Unit

Nick Lowe	Birmingham City Council
Rob Phillips	Ceredigion County Council / Welsh Food Fraud Coordination Unit
Beverley Edmonson	Crawley Borough Council (Gatwick Airport)
Rita McGinlay	Dacorum Borough Council
Derek Oliver	Falkirk Council
David Barclay Rhodes	Leicester City Council
Ian Newell	Lincolnshire Council
Rob Bartlett	London Borough of Enfield
Tendy Lindsay	London Borough of Haringey
Glyn Cavell	Mersey Port Health Authority
James McLennan	Moray Council
Peter Hardman	North Somerset Council
Rob Blacklock	North Yorkshire Council
Paul Maylunn	Northamptonshire County Council
Larry Dargan	Omagh District Council / Western Group EH Committee
Iain Ferris	South Gloucestershire Council
Sue Nixon	South Norfolk District Council