

Animal Welfare 2022-2023 Annex 1

Animal Welfare Action Plan report, Annex 1.

The Animal Welfare Steering Group is comprised of representatives from the FSA, Defra, Welsh Government, and Devolved Administrations. The Steering Group monitors outstanding actions and identifies new activities on an ongoing basis as part of its governance and oversight role.

Animal Welfare Action Plan – actions completed 01/04/22 to 01/03/23

Strengthening verification and compliance

Action	Description
Conduct Animal Welfare themed audit.	Between January and March 2023, the FSA animal welfare team conducted an animal welfare themed audit. The audit was carried out at slaughterhouses that were due a full veterinary audit during the period and was broken down into 29 red meat and 12 poultry meat processors (41 or 18% in total). The audit looked at FBO CCTV facilities, CO2 operation and contingency. Standard Operating Procedures, lairage facilities, delivery of animals, slaughter facilities, and access to plants. The audit concluded that FBO systems are broadly implemented in compliance with the legislation and provide a good level of assurance that the animal welfare legislative requirements are fulfilled. The audit did find, in some cases, CCTV loss prevention and maintenance procedures could be improved. It also found that, in some cases, FBOs had no security protocols in place to prevent unauthorised access to the premises. All recommendations have been addressed through an action plan and communicated to industry.
Develop digital evidence repository.	In February 2023 the FSA animal welfare team introduced a new digital evidence repository which enables evidence in support of referrals to APHA and LAs for farm and transport non-compliances, to be immediately uploaded, securely stored, and instantly available for access by APHA and LAs to support their analysis, investigation, and enforcement process.
Demonstration of Life (DoL) survey	In 2022/23 the FSA animal welfare team developed a DoL industry survey. The objective is to gain increased understanding of utilisation of the scheme and any perceived barriers with a view to increasing its use, and consequently reducing the number of animals subject to non-stun slaughter. The survey will run in 2023/24.
Refinements to referrals for investigation (RFI) triage process	In 2022/23 the FSA animal welfare team made refinements to the RFI triage process to account for enforcement delivery in accordance with retained Regulation 2017/625. RFI triage utilises panel of experts to oversee animal welfare cases that could be prosecutable, to ensure proportionality and consistency of approach. Refined to include the new FSA enforcement decision making team into the process.

Clarifying accountability and improving collaboration

Action	Description
Extreme weather animal welfare reporting	In 2022/23 the FSA animal welfare team developed a process whereby Met Office notifications of extreme weather can be used to initiate a set of agreed actions across Government such as issuing of guidance to transporters and slaughterhouse operator representatives, and daily monitoring and reporting of non-compliance data.
Agree 2022/23 Animal Welfare Service Level Agreement (SLA)	We agreed funding of the 2022/23 animal welfare SLA with Defra and Welsh Government and we developed and agreed Key Performance Indicators.
Deliver improvements under the animal welfare referrals joint working group	We instigated sharing of data on repeat offences and offenders to support enforcement decision making by APHA and LAs.

Improving education and instruction

Action	Description
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Referrals guidance	We worked with Local Authorities and APHA to review and refine Manual for Official Controls guidance relating to identification, categorisation and referral of farm and transport non-compliances.
Referrals guidance	We worked with Local Authorities and APHA to produce a process flow to increase consistency of actions following a non-compliance referral to them.
Produce technical guidance	<p>We produced or enhanced technical guidance relating to:</p> <p>OV actions when referring incidents to LA/APHA, i.e., clarification on contacting the LA, breach types, referring DOA incidents, referring lame animals or animals injured during transport, the evidence gathering process.</p> <p>Clarification on who needs a CoC. Clarification on various considerations for suspension/revocation of CoC. Various amendments to the CoC species and activities codes table.</p> <p>Clarification on requirement for FSA Official's daily viewing of CCTV. Updated staff training requirements for the killing of animals in the lairage that are seriously suffering. Updated guidance about shackling animals during transport. Updated guidance on the use of boxes for non-stun slaughter, including the use of enforcement notices. Clarification on the use of mechanical cervical dislocation.</p>

Better analysis and reporting

Action	Description
Enhance the animal welfare referrals system (Chronos)	We enhanced functionality by linking Chronos directly to the new evidence repository, and we enhanced how referrals are categorised; to aid triaging of cases by APHA.
Improve data capture and reporting of Welfare Assurance Team (WAT) visits	We developed enhanced WAT slaughterhouse inspection reporting.
Board report	We produced 2021/22 Animal Welfare board paper.
2022 slaughter sector survey report	We supported Defra and Welsh Government in drafting the final report from the 2022 survey.
Mandating CCTV in slaughterhouses Wales	To support proposals to mandate CCTV in slaughterhouses in Wales the FSA animal welfare team conducted a survey of CCTV coverage Welsh slaughterhouses, which is currently installed on a voluntary basis. The survey results were encouraging and concluded that of 23 slaughterhouses, 17 have some form of CCTV in place, with 6 slaughterhouses having no CCTV at all

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