Welcome to the first edition of Queensland Health’s food safety auditor newsletter. The newsletter is intended to provide information for auditors approved under the *Food Act 2006*, particularly in relation to new or topical issues.

**Request for feedback on auditor resources**

Various guidelines, forms and templates supporting Queensland’s auditing framework have now been in use for approximately 12 months. Food Safety Policy & Regulation has commenced a review of these resources and seeks your feedback on their usability and clarity.

Your comments are sought on both the positive and negative aspects of the following documents:

- Notice of written advice – consideration for accreditation of food safety program
- Food safety audit report
- Notice of critical non-compliance
- Food safety programs – administration, accreditation, auditing and enforcement (guideline)


Your comments are also sought on whether you consider your conditions of approval to be relevant and easy to understand.

You are also welcome to suggest an additional resource that you believe may be of use to you as an auditor.

Please provide your comments in writing no later than Friday 30 July 2010. Comments may be submitted by email (foodsafety@health.qld.gov.au) or post (Food Safety Policy & Regulation, PO Box 2368 Fortitude Valley BC QLD 4006).

**Hot topics**

**Area of service**

Food Safety Policy & Regulation often receive enquiries from auditors checking whether they can operate outside their originally nominated geographic area(s). The ‘local council area of service’ noted in the register of approved auditors is not a limitation on your approval and you may choose to provide auditing services outside this area. If you would like the register amended to show a different area of service, please complete and submit an Application for change in details form (available on our website).

**Local government fees & forms**

Local governments can set fees for providing a service or taking action under the *Food Act 2006*. This means that each local government is likely to have different fees for different services and actions depending on their specific circumstances. They may also have specific forms for submitting information. Auditors commencing work on a food safety program for a food business, either for the purposes of providing a notice of written advice or for conducting an audit, are encouraged to contact the local government that has accredited (or will accredit) the food safety program to confirm what forms and/or fees are required to complete the work.

**Audit criteria**

Audit criteria are the set of legislation, standards, policies, procedures or requirements against which an auditor will assess a food business and determine compliance.

The audit criteria for food safety programs under the *Food Act 2006* are:

1. the *Food Act 2006*;
2. the food standards code, standards 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 (the food safety standards); and
3. the accredited food safety program.
Minimum competency standards for approved auditors from 25 October 2011

As advised to approved auditors in August 2009, changes to the auditor approval process in Queensland will affect existing approved auditors and future applications for approval as an auditor (including renewals). The changes are in accordance with the National Food Safety Audit Policy and relate to the minimum competency standards for auditors.

Queensland Health is committed via the Food Regulation Agreement to implement the National Food Safety Audit Policy by 25 October 2011. The Food Regulation Agreement is an agreement between all Australian States and Territories to ensure a national approach to food regulation within Australia.

The minimum competency standards that will be required for approval as an auditor from 25 October 2011 are set out in Table 1.

Table 1 – Minimum competencies for approved auditors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of competency code</th>
<th>Unit of competency title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FDFFSACCA</td>
<td>Assess compliance with food safety programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDFFSCFSAA</td>
<td>Conduct food safety audits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDFFSCHZA</td>
<td>Identify, evaluate and control food safety hazards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDFFSCOMA</td>
<td>Communicate and negotiate to conduct food safety audits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If an auditor wishes to audit specific high risk processes, further competencies are required and are set out in Table 2. Please note that these competencies are only required should you wish to audit food businesses conducting these food processing activities.

Table 2 – Additional competencies for specific high risk processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit of competency code</th>
<th>Unit of competency title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FDFFSCC4A</td>
<td>Audit a cook chill process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDFFSHT4A</td>
<td>Audit a heat treatment process (e.g. pasteurisation, canning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDFFSBM4A</td>
<td>Audit bivalve mollusc growing and harvesting processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDFFSME4A</td>
<td>Audit manufacturing of ready-to-eat meat products</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What this means for you

★ If you wish to continue your approval as an auditor under the Food Act 2006 you must obtain all of the competencies detailed in Table 1 prior to 25 October 2011.
★ If you wish to be approved to audit specific high risk processes, you must obtain the relevant competency(ies) detailed in Table 2 prior to 25 October 2011.
★ All current approved auditors will retain their approval until its expiry date even if their approval expires after 25 October 2011.
★ Applications for an approval or renewal of an approval will not be approved for a period beyond 25 October 2011 unless the applicant has completed each of the competency units detailed in Table 1.
★ Applications for an approval or renewal of an approval received after 25 October 2011 will not be approved if the applicant has not completed the required competency units.

Contact us – Food Safety Policy & Regulation

Office
Floor 1
15 Butterfield Street
Herston QLD 4006

Postal
Environmental Health Branch
PO Box 2368
Fortitude Valley BC QLD 4006

Phone
07 3328 9310

Email
foodsafety@health.qld.gov.au

Fax
07 3328 9354