

**QUALITY MANAGER'S
ANNUAL REPORT**

Food Verification Agency
18 August 2021

Executive Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a snapshot view of the annual auditing programme for the Food Verification Agency (FVA).

Regulation 110(2)(l) of the [Food Regulations 2015](#) requires a FVA to have a quality assurance system which covers: **Internal Management** – providing for the regular review of the quality management system.

The [Quality Assurance Manual – Environmental Health Services](#) states “3.2 There will be an annual Quality Review Report compiled by the Manager – Quality which will review the effectiveness of the Quality System – what items audits have found, what changes may need to be made to ensure improvement suggestion for objectives etc. This will be presented to Environmental Health Services management for their consideration typically at a QMS Management Review meeting.”

Significant events during the year

In January 2021, IANZ conducted a surveillance assessment of the FVA's compliance with the requirements of the [Food Regulations 2015](#). IANZ were impressed with the FVA's performance and summarised as much by stating that:

The documented QMS was very detailed and well thought out. The agency was well supported by a management team who were seen to be invested and committed to the successful operation of the agency. The agency had implemented a number of useful and proactive measures in the last year and this was seen to be a good example of an agency being committed to improving and growing its activities and people.

IANZ identified three non-conformities which the team has worked through and closed out. These will be revisited when IANZ conduct the next surveillance assessment in January 2022.

In January 2021, IANZ conducted a surveillance assessment of the FVA and identified three non-conformities. Corrective action plans were prepared and agreed on, to address these. All actions are now complete.

- **NC 1:** This relates to overdue verifications and expired registrations. Actions are due by 31 May 2021. Actions completed in June 2021.
- **NC 2:** This relates to the peer review and competency assessment templates. Actions complete and acknowledged by MPI in March 2021.
- **NC 3:** This relates to the competency management system. Actions are due by 28 May 2021. Actions completed in June 2021.



NC 1



NC 2



NC 3

Next Assessment: January 2022

In February 2021, there were 8 food business records which were recorded as expired. This was identified by IANZ during their assessment as a non-conformity. The FVA developed a process to manage expired registrations, and these records have all progressed through this new process. The FVA has demonstrated the continued implementation of this new process by adopting it as normal business as usual.

In January 2021, there were 41 overdue food verifications. This was identified by IANZ during their assessment as a non-conformity. In March 2021, the FVA management panel adopted a new process to manage overdue verifications. This new process requires the FVA to send a series of correspondence (email or letters) to the operator to prompt a response. If no contact is made over the 3-month period that the FVA attempts to make contact, the process progresses through 'suspension' to 'cancellation'. In June 2021, there were 5 overdue food verifications, however these were all accounted for and the FVA had plans in place already to address them.

Auditing Programme

The FVA's auditing programme consists of two types of auditing:

- **System audits** are performed against the requirements of a quality management system as outlined in the Regulations 110 of the [Food Regulations 2015](#). This covers: conflict of interest; confidentiality; staffing; resourcing; reporting; records; non-compliance and corrective actions; complaints or disputes; internal management; review of performance and contractual arrangements. These audits are scheduled over the year.
- **Process audits** are based on specific processes the FVA undertakes which follow the end-to-end process. This covers: registration; verifications; consumer information and reporting. These audits are scheduled bi-monthly.

This report details the audits conducted for the 2020-2021 period (1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021).

Peer Reviews

Recently, the FVA has developed a peer review process where verifiers review the work of their colleagues. This process will help ensure the technical decisions made by verifiers are sound and reasonable. This will further support the auditing programme. The first set of reviews are scheduled for September 2021.

Quality Updates

Beginning in February 2021, a quality update is produced each month which covers the FVA's performance from a quality perspective. This covers: status of external assessment; status of internal audits; updates on conflicts of interest and complaints and performance reporting.

Summary

In summary, the FVA has a robust auditing programme and systems in place, designed to support its quality objectives.

Regards,



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System Audits

The following table details the status of system audits for the 2020-2021 period:

- **Complete** means an audit has been conducted and either identified no non-compliance or recommendations during the audit; or if there were non-compliance or recommendations identified that these have been addressed through a Corrective Action Plan. The actions associated with a Corrective Action Plan have been completed and verified.
- **Active** means an audit has been conducted and the corrective actions are still to be actioned; or the audit report is yet to be released.
- **Scheduled** means an audit has been scheduled in the next audit cycle (2021–2022 period).

Regulation	Most Recent Audit Findings			Next Audit	Status	
	Audit Outcome	Audit Date	Non-Compliance			Recommendations
Regulation 110(2)(a) & (b) - Conflict of interest and maintaining impartiality	The FVA has policies, procedures and a system available to adequately satisfy the requirements of this regulation, however these are not being implemented.	December 2020	3 minor	3	October 2021	Complete
Regulation 110(2)(c) - Confidential information	The FVA does have policies, procedures and a system available to adequately satisfy this requirement, and these have been consistently and effectively implemented. There is room for improvement in ensuring physical records held offsite (from home) are effectively managed.	March 2021	0	1	March 2022	Complete
Regulation 110(2)(d) - Staffing	This audit is scheduled for August 2021.	August 2021	-	-	August 2021	Scheduled
Regulation 110(2)(e) - Resourcing	The FVA has policies, procedures and a system available to adequately satisfy the requirements of this regulation, and these are consistently and effectively implemented.	July 2021	0	12	July 2021	Active
Regulation 110(2)(f) - Reporting requirements	The FVA has policies, procedures and a system available to adequately satisfy the requirements of this regulation, and these are consistently and effectively implemented.	December 2020	0	0	December 2021	Complete
Regulation 110(2)(g) & (h) - Records	The FVA does have policies, procedures and a system available to adequately satisfy this requirement, which have mostly been implemented.	April 2021	1 minor	0	April 2022	Complete
Regulation 110(2)(i) & (j) - Non-compliance and corrective actions	The FVA does have policies, procedures and a system available to adequately satisfy this requirement, which have been implemented.	May 2021	1 minor & 1 isolated	0	May 2022	Complete
Regulation 110(2)(k) - Complaints and disputes	This audit is scheduled for November 2021. Last audited in June 2020.	November 2021	-	-	November 2021	Scheduled
Regulation 110(2)(l) - Internal management	This audit is scheduled for September 2021. Last audited in October 2020.	September 2021	-	-	September 2021	Scheduled
Regulation 110(2)(m) - Review of performance	The FVA does not have policies, procedures and a system available to adequately satisfy this requirement, although it has implemented some procedures which do. There is room for improvement in recording procedures and ensuring performance is regularly monitored.	February 2021	2 minor	4	February 2022	Complete
Regulation 110(2)(n) - Contractual arrangements	This audit is scheduled for August 2021. Last audited in December 2020.	August 2021	-	-	August 2021	Scheduled

Process Audits

The following table details the status of system audits for the 2020-2021 period:

- **Complete** means an audit has been conducted and either identified no non-compliance or recommendations during the audit; or if there were non-compliance or recommendations identified that these have been addressed through a Corrective Action Plan. The actions associated with a Corrective Action Plan have been completed and verified.
- **Active** means an audit has been conducted and the corrective actions are still to be actioned; or the audit report is yet to be released.
- **Scheduled** means an audit has been scheduled in the next audit cycle (2021–2022 period).
- *These are audits conducted by special request and are not typically part of the audit cycle. Following the IANZ assessment, these areas were identified as a non-conformity and an audit was scheduled to provide evidence that the process was consistently and effectively implemented.

Process	Most Recent Audit Findings				Next Audit	Status
	Audit Outcome	Audit Date	Non-Compliance	Recommendations		
Document Control and Scope of Services	The FVA has policies, procedures and a system available to adequately satisfy this requirement, and these are consistently and effectively implemented. However, there is room for improvement in updating the Quality Assurance Manual.	January 2021	0	4	January 2022	Complete
Registration Process	The FVA has an established process for registering food businesses, however parts of this process have not been consistently or effectively implemented.	March 2021	2 minor	3	March 2022	Active
Verification Process	The FVA has an established process for verifying food businesses and this has been consistently and effectively implemented.	May 2021	0	8	May 2022	Complete
Expired Registrations*	The FVA has an established process for managing expired registrations and this has been consistently and effectively implemented.	June 2021	0	0	N/A*	Complete
Overdue Verifications*	The FVA has an established process for managing overdue verifications and this has been consistently and effectively implemented.	June 2021	0	0	N/A*	Complete
Consumer Information	This audit is scheduled for September 2021.	September 2021	-	-	September 2021	Scheduled
Reporting	This audit is scheduled for November 2021.	November 2021	-	-	November 2021	Scheduled