

Paper 12.1 ACSS Secretariat Update (February 2024).

Summary

This paper is for information and provides an update to members on secretariat activity. Key meeting dates and topics of discussion at other FSA SACs are presented in Annex A.

Recruitment

We will be joining the SAC recruitment campaign in the Summer of 2024 and seeking members from Northern Ireland and Wales to improve our representation of the devolved administrations. We would be grateful if members could consider suitable applicants within their networks. To inform recruitment, we will also be reflecting on skills and expertise of current members in order to identify any potential gaps. We anticipate new members will be in post by March 2025. Five current members come to the end of their appointment period in October of this year. We are exploring options to extend terms of appointment for those members.

Secretariat staffing and resource

Since the last plenary meeting, Kerry Gillespie and Abbie Collins have both left secretariat team (and have moved on from the FSA). In late 2023 we welcomed Laura Gent and Becky Wood to the secretariat team. Laura will be supporting the Wider Consumers Interests Working Group, and Becky will be supporting the Assurance Working Group as well as the new Understanding Regulatory Change Working Group. The secretariat continues to be supported by Carol Scott from the SAC Admin Hub team.

Forward Look

Following consultation across FSA senior leaders, and discussions with ACSS members at the forward look meeting (and subsequently), we have identified 2 strategic topics for ACSS input: consumer insight around a) ultra processed foods and b) regulated products reform. Work in these areas will be undertaken by the Wider Consumer Interests working group and a new working group focusing on Understanding Regulatory Change, respectively. Further detail is provided in the Working Group Update papers.

In addition, outside of the working group model, members will continue to support specific social science projects (e.g. Food and You 2, Allergen Communications) and provide social science expertise to the Science Council (e.g. Wider Impacts Expert Group)

ACSS 2023 Annual Report

The ACSS Annual report (covering activity within the 2023 calendar year) is expected to be published on the ACSS website in March.

Annex A: SAC meetings and Key agenda items

Science Council

Last open meeting: 8th December 2022, key agenda items included:

- The Chair presented a summary of her activity over the last 6 months.
- The FSA led a discussion of the FSA Science Update 2022 (FSA 22/12/07) to the FSA Board.
- The CSA updated the Council on his recent activity and discussions (including Government Office of Science's review of SACs, changing FSA priorities this year, the Precision Breeding Bill).
- Updates from Science Council members attending Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs) and a proposed streamlining of members' engagement.

18 May 2023 – Science Council published the final report of Working Group 6 "[Food Safety in the Net Zero Era](#)".

Next open meeting: 15th March 2024

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)

Last meeting: 7th February 2024, Key topics included:

- 3 CADs that had previously been discussed were reviewed all requiring further refinement and some further information from the applicant advised.
- A draft safety assessment on outcomes developed and agreed by the PGT Subcommittee. 1 GM application was reviewed requiring further refinement.
- The Committee was updated on planned improvements to the regulated products service and ways of working.
- PGT Subcommittee: next meeting 8th March.
- CBD Subgroup: next meeting 22nd May 2024.

Next open meeting: 17th April

Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)

Last meeting: 8th February 2024. Key topics included:

- AMR Working Group
- PATH-SAFE
- Kitchen Life 2

Next meeting: June 2024

Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT)

Last meeting: 6th February 2024: At their February meeting the Committee discussed papers on [Benchmark dose modelling](#) in a UK chemical risk assessment framework, they were also provided with an update from the FSA fellow on [Advancing in silico methods](#) for chemical risk assessment which covered similar themes. The Committee undertook their annual [horizon scanning](#), and were updated on [actions taken](#) subsequent to the Committee's advice. The Committee also continued their work on a Second draft statement on the potential risks from [ergot alkaloids](#) in the maternal diet, a third draft statement on the safety of [titanium dioxide \(E171\)](#) as a food additive and a fourth draft interim position statement on [bisphenol A](#).

Next meeting: 2nd March 2024

Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COC)

Last meeting: 16th November 2023. Workshop exploring 2 questions:

- If we can't use animal data, what can we do?
- How is carcinogenicity assessed in the cosmetics and personal care industry?"

Next meeting(s): 21st March 2024

The Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COM)

Last meeting: 12th October. Key topics included:

- Titanium dioxide
- QSAR guidance
- Lay summaries for COM website

Next meeting: 29th February 2024

The Advisory Committee on Animal Feeding stuffs (ACAF)

Last meeting: 31st January. Key topics included:

- Dossiers for assessment:
 - RP1072 Avatec 150G (Chickens, turkeys & minor avian species). ACAF/89/02
 - RP1070 Avatec 150G (Game birds). ACAF/89/03
 - RP1512 PB6 (Bacillus velezensis ATCC PTA-6737). ACAF/89/04
- Ways of working – Members will have a final chance to comment on the document proposed to be published on the ACAF website. ACAF/89/08
- Reclassification of RP1087
- Microbiology workshop

Next meeting: TBC