

Food Regulation Roundtables

Terms of Reference

Endorsed by Food Regulation Standing Committee on 21 May 2018

Background

The regulation system encompasses all aspects of the food supply chain including public health, biosecurity, agriculture, manufacture, retail and consumers. It includes food policy, development and enforcement of food safety standards, livestock health and incident response. The effective mitigation, coordination and management of issues are critical in underpinning confidence in our system.

The food regulation system is complex. The Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) has identified that stakeholders have difficulty with the intricacy of the system, its transparency, its lack of clarity regarding engagement mechanisms, and roles and responsibilities. The Food Regulation Roundtable (the Roundtable) is part of a suite of initiatives adopted under FRSC's communications strategy to address these challenges.

Terms of reference

The Roundtable is a stakeholder engagement initiative of the FRSC. These meetings will provide FRSC and stakeholders with the opportunity to strengthen relationships, share information and improve visibility of activities that are being progressed within the food regulation system. It will provide an opportunity for dialogue between key stakeholders and FRSC on food system priorities and emerging issues. This will also inform the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (the Forum).

Purpose

The Roundtable events will increase effective collaboration between government and key stakeholders through:

- a. providing a forum for information sharing;
- b. considering priorities for inclusion on the FRSC workplan;
- c. discussing key policy issues, including matters that are currently on the FRSC workplan;
- d. undertaking environment scanning so that FRSC members are informed about the emerging issues for both industry and non-industry stakeholders; and
- e. providing a mechanism for strengthening relationships and building trust.

Meetings

The Roundtable will:

- be held at a frequency to be determined by participants, with reference to the timing and frequency of other targeted stakeholder engagement activities;
- be hosted by the Commonwealth, Queensland, New South Wales or Victorian governments;
- be held in Canberra, Brisbane, Sydney or Melbourne, ideally the day before a FRSC face-to-face meeting;
- be chaired by the Chairperson of FRSC; and
- operate on an invitation only basis.

Roles of Participants

The focus of the Roundtable will be on ensuring that the views of stakeholders are well understood and are used to inform FRSC priorities and workplan for the food regulatory system and inform FRSC's advice to the Forum.

Participants will observe Chatham House Rules. Any external communication such as the 'Roundtable communique' will be agreed by roundtable participants and FRSC.

Roundtable participants are expected to:

- contribute honestly and in good faith;
- have reasonable expectations about the opportunities and limitations of the Roundtable; and
- acknowledge that Ministers may make decisions that may not align with the views of each stakeholder.

Participants

Attendance at Roundtables will be on an invitation basis. Roundtable participants will consist of representatives from public health, industry, consumer and government organisations:

- Government representation:
 - two FRSC members from each jurisdiction (ideally representing public health, agriculture and food industries portfolios;
 - Food Standards Australia New Zealand; and
 - Australian Local Government Association.
- up to 15 senior representatives from key national stakeholder groups representing public health, consumer and industry interests;
- additional stakeholder groups or technical experts invited to attend, as needed, considering the agenda and priorities of the food regulatory system.

Outputs

- Roundtable meeting notes, reviewed and agreed by participants, will be provided for information to FRSC out-of-session.
- A communique containing the Roundtable outcomes (outputs, actions and next steps), agreed by attendees and FRSC, will be published on the Food Regulation website.

Support

- The host jurisdiction and the Food Regulation Secretariat will organise and deliver the Roundtables.
- Members will be provided with an agenda, short background paper and other materials as required a week prior to each roundtable.
- The Secretariat will settle, with attendees, and publish a 'communique' on the Food Regulation website summarising the Roundtable discussion.