

ANNEX 5: Inspection Rating Schemes

A5.1: Introduction

This Annex deals with the food hygiene and food standards inspection ratings and frequencies for primary inspections of food businesses.

A5.2: Food Hygiene Inspection Rating Scheme

A5.2.1: Basic Principles

- i. Food Authorities that are responsible for enforcing food hygiene law should determine the food hygiene inspection frequencies of food businesses within their area using the risk assessment criteria in this Annex, in order to determine their planned food hygiene inspection programmes.
- ii. Establishments subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004 are excluded from this determination and are dealt with separately (see ix. below) except stand-alone cold stores. In respect of these establishments and collection centres and tanneries supplying raw material for the production of gelatine or collagen intended for human consumption (see Paragraphs 4.3.4 and Paragraph 5.1.3) inspection frequencies should be determined using the Food Hygiene Inspection Risk Rating Scheme in this Annex.
- iii. The scheme incorporates an option for alternative enforcement strategies other than primary inspections for "low risk" businesses in which the inherent hazards are not significant by virtue of their trading activities or the number of consumers they supply (see below).
- iv. The scheme is set out in the form of an assessment document that can be used by officers in the field. An assessment should be completed at the end of every primary inspection.
- v. Officers should use the full range of scores available within the system, as the purpose of the rating system will be frustrated by cautious marking or by a reluctance to recognise effective management/control systems.
- vi. The operation of this inspection rating scheme within the Food Authority should be subject to periodic management review to ensure that staff are using the scheme correctly and consistently.
- vii. Establishments that are due or overdue for inspection should be inspected according to their respective inspection ratings, with those having higher ratings being prioritised for inspection over those with lower ratings. The practice of completing the inspection programme of lower rated establishments that have not been visited during an earlier programme before commencing the inspection of higher rated establishments cannot be supported.

- viii. Primary inspections should normally be completed by the due date as determined by the inspection rating, but in any case no more than 28 days after that date, apart from circumstances outside the control of the Food Authority such as seasonal business closures.

A5.2.2: Establishments Subject to Approval under Regulation 853/2004

- ix. Each approved establishment except stand-alone cold stores (see ii. above), must receive at least one primary inspection, and, if required, one or more secondary inspections, so as to achieve the minimum number of inspections in any 12 month period set out in Paragraph 4.3.4. These inspections are relevant to food hygiene matters. However, the frequency of inspections in approved establishments for food standards purposes should be assessed as part of the food standards risk rating system.

A5.2.3: Low-Risk Activities

- x. Establishments scoring less than 31 points overall need not be subject to primary inspections (see Paragraph 4.1.11).
- xi. Such “low-risk” establishments must, however, be subject to an alternative enforcement strategy not less than once in any 3-year period.
- xii. Food Authorities that decide not to subject “low-risk” establishments to primary inspections must set out their alternative enforcement strategies for maintaining surveillance of such businesses in their Food Service Plan or Enforcement Policy.
- xiii. It is not intended to preclude inspections of such establishments where inspection is the Food Authority’s preferred surveillance option, in which case the minimum frequency of inspection is determined by the inspection rating.

