

Victorian Food Safety News

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Forum promotes information sharing and relationship building

The 2007 Food Safety Forum brought together more than 140 representatives from local councils across Victoria, the Department of Human Services head office and regions, The University of Melbourne, New Zealand Food Safety Authority, Industry and Regional Development, DIIRD Office of Small Business, Dairy Food Safety Victoria, Primesafe, the Municipal Association of Victoria and Safe Food Queensland.

Held at Flemington Racecourse on 18 April, the forum was opened by Dr John Carnie, Victoria's newly appointed Chief Health Officer. Dr Carnie encouraged participants to take the opportunity to share information and to strengthen collaborative relationships.

“The forum provides a venue to talk about what we have done well and what could be done better. Experience tells us that teamwork is vital in achieving the best outcomes. No one person or body can deal with an incident by itself—teamwork is essential,” he said.

Food Safety Unit and OZFood Net officers presented some interesting case studies covering food contamination, recalls and outbreaks, and also reported on the Food Safety Supervisor requirement and the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission draft report on food safety regulation. Representatives from PrimeSafe, the Municipal Association of Victoria, the

University of Melbourne and Mildura Rural City Council updated participants on relevant projects and activities.

The forum finished up with a panel discussion, which addressed a range of questions submitted before the forum as well as many from the floor.

Feedback from participants was very positive with 89 per cent of those responding to a survey indicating that they ‘strongly agreed or agreed the forum met their reasons for attending’.

Continued on page 4



Carol Bate takes on a global food regulation focus

Carol Bate was Assistant Director of the Food Safety and Regulatory Activities Unit (FSRA) from February 2006 to February 2007. While only a short time, Carol views this year at the FSRA as a great experience and one with many achievements.

Carol highlighted the work of the FSRA in participating in the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) review of Victorian food regulation. “We worked closely with the Commission to ensure that the views of the department were conveyed, and we prepared an extensive submission to the Review,” she said. Carol also noted the ability of the FSRA to deal with a large number of food safety incidents in a timely and professional manner.

“The staff of the FSRA are dedicated public health professionals and it was great to work with such a wonderful team”, she said.

Carol’s new role as Regulatory Manager Australia for Fonterra Australia Pty. Ltd. keeps her involved in food safety regulation in Victoria and in issues such as health claims, food labelling and food standards. A part of Fonterra’s global regulatory team, Carol also has broadened her focus to international regulations and standards.

Pauline Ireland has joined the team as Acting Assistant Director. Pauline comes from Policy Instruments Development and Review, Metropolitan Health and Aged Care Services Division; and brings a wealth of review, policy and intergovernmental experience.

Food Safety showbag a hit at the Good Food and Wine Show

Thousands of visitors to the 2007 Good Food and Wine Show stopped by the Food Safety Unit stand to receive information and advice around the key safety messages of ‘Enjoy your food don’t let it turn nasty’ and ‘Avoid the temperature danger zone’.

The give-away showbags—containing brochures, posters, a fridge magnet and thermometer—were a big hit, with 5,000 handed out over the three days.

The annual Good Food and Wine Show is Australia’s largest consumer food, drink, kitchen appliance and cookware exhibition. The Food Safety Unit has participated each year since 2004, raising awareness of the importance of food safety.



VCEC Draft report released for final comment

A more streamlined approach, a focus on high risk activities, improving monitoring and analysis, and education and training are major themes in the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission's (VCEC) draft report on food regulation in Victoria.

Simplifying the Menu: Food Regulation in Victoria, was released on 2 April 2007.

Interested parties now have the opportunity to comment on the Commission's analysis before a final report is prepared for Government.

The report highlights the complexity of the current system of food regulation and proposes more streamlined approaches. On releasing the draft report, Robert Kerr, VCEC Commissioner noted: "The regulation of food production and consumption is very complex with three levels of government, and implementation by 79 councils and three state based regulators. Consumers, business and community groups would benefit from a more streamlined and consistent approach which puts the focus on areas of risk. It is possible to improve food safety in Victoria and also cut red tape."

The findings and recommendations presented in the draft report are directed at the three levels of government.

At the national level, the report acknowledges opportunities for Victoria to advocate for the use of non-regulatory approaches in some instances, for example for labelling and health claims, and to improve the timeliness and justification of decisions about national food standards.

Reducing state regulatory costs

VCEC estimates that state regulatory costs can be reduced by at least \$38 million per year, while improving food safety by:

- focusing regulatory effort on higher risk activities such as serving food to vulnerable groups, while lightening administrative burdens for lower risk activities such as many community events
- strengthening 'rewards' for good performers with less paperwork and fewer council inspections
- providing more 'sticks' such as on-the-spot fines, and also requiring training for businesses that fail to comply
- improving monitoring and analysis to identify and target problem areas
- implementing a statewide education and training program to promote community awareness of basic food safety, given that potentially one quarter of all cases of foodborne illness are caused in the home.

(page 19, *Simplifying the Menu: Food Regulation in Victoria A draft report for further consultation and input*, April 2007)

Three 'high level' **state** issues are identified:

- The need for stronger accountability by, and coordination among, Victorian food regulators.
- The need to clarify food regulatory objectives to give primacy to protection from food borne illness.
- The need for statewide and local performance monitoring to ensure that these objectives are achieved.

At the **local** government level, the reports reflects issues felt by local councils, such as:

- Inconsistency in interpretation and enforcement of the Food Act.
- Challenges associated with the recruitment and retention of the EHO workforce.
- Perceived differential levels of capacity and commitment to carry out statutory obligations.

The report also considers issues relating to regulation of the community sector and recognises that regulatory requirements can confuse community groups and impose financial and other costs, such as volunteers' time devoted to ensuring compliance.

VCEC makes 24 recommendations in the report that are specific to national, state, local government and community sector issues.

In preparing the draft report, VCEC consulted widely and received 63 submissions from a range of organisations, including food businesses and community groups.

The draft report was released for a further round of consultation, which closed on 15 June 2007. The Commission is expected to deliver its final report to the Victorian Treasurer in September 2007.

Continued from page 1

Panel discussion varied and vibrant

To close the forum, a panel of three—Paula Giles, Municipal Association Victoria, and Victor Di Paola and Gary Smith from the Food Safety Unit—answered aggregated questions received before the forum as well as questions from the floor.

The questions covered a wide variety of topics. Here's just a taste:

- The use of Penalty Infringement Notices—the FSU supports their use and the DHS/MAV Food Safety Project is examining issues related to their use by Environmental Health Officers.
- The Food Safety Supervisor requirement and the proposed changes to the qualifications—FSU is interested in the content of competencies and is preparing a submission to recommend changes to competencies to ensure they are more relevant.
- The development of a tool to make the transition between sectors simpler—many are concerned about how changes to competencies and training will affect the qualifications that people have already achieved.
- Temporary premises—issues discussed included registration requirements, application of standard practices and the possibility of a FSP for commercial temporary premises.
- Food Safety Programs—the FSU is undertaking the most extensive review of FSP templates and this provides an opportunity for local government to have their say.

Food Safety Supervisor requirement—improving understanding and implementation

The Food Safety Supervisor requirement generates many questions from food businesses and local government. Jodie Eden-Jones, from the Food Safety Unit, reported on progress in implementing the requirement.

To inform and support ongoing improvements in food safety training and practice, the Food Safety Unit commissioned research to evaluate the food safety supervisor requirement in 2005. The Food Safety Supervisor Requirement Evaluation Project looked at issues such as how the requirement was working across the food sectors, how well the training provides the skills and knowledge required, stakeholders understanding of the requirement, and the accessibility of training. The project was undertaken from February–June 2005 and divided into four sections:

1. Food Safety Supervisor Skills and Knowledge for Compliance
2. Competencies of Food Safety Supervisors reported to Victorian Local Government Authorities
3. Food Safety Training available in Victoria
4. Stakeholders' understanding of the Food Safety Supervisor's Role

Each contractor produced a report of the work undertaken and these reports can be found at: www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/research/fss.htm

The reports highlight areas of concern and opportunities for improvement.

In response, the Food Safety Unit is facilitating and promoting improvements in areas such as stakeholder understanding, training, information provision and relationship building. Examples of activities being undertaken by the Unit include:

Stakeholder understanding

- Meeting with registered Training Organisation networks, the Office of Training and Tertiary Education, local

government, Food Safety Trainers Network and Service Skills Victoria.

- Updating information and making it more accessible.
- Improving training sector understanding of the food regulation system.

Training

- Making submissions to Training Package reviews, including identifying what the units of training should cover.
- Working on the possibility of improving training certificate clarity by including a 'skill set' statement that may better link training to the regulatory environment.
- Working with stakeholders to facilitate improvements in Recognition of Prior Learning methods to make this more accessible for businesses.

Information

- Providing more information via the food safety website.
- Providing information through VicFin.
- Encouraging information sharing.
- Promoting policy development.
- Attending business events and give presentations.

Building relationships

- Meeting with business organisations and associations.
- Strengthening relationships with industry and other government agencies.
- Meeting with local government to discuss specific issues.
- Working with the Office of Small Business to assist businesses timely access to information.

The Food Safety Unit will continue to develop Food Safety Supervisor requirement policy, participate in training package reviews and communicate across the food sectors.

Case studies

A number of case studies were presented at the forum to show how food safety issues are investigated and addressed.

Mildura improves supervisor compliance

Environmental Health Officers Melissa Leerson and Brooke Keher presented the Mildura Rural City Council’s response to the issues and challenges of implementing the Food Safety Supervisor requirement.

When the requirement was first implemented, the Mildura Rural City Council took a ‘soft’ approach, providing businesses with information via newsletters and at inspection visits. There was no implementation strategy and compliance with the requirement was low.

A few years on, food business proprietors were sent letters about the Food Safety Supervisor requirement and received follow up phone calls. However, inspections continued and Certificates of Registration were issued. There were only small improvements in compliance.

Recognising the need for an Implementation Strategy, the Council now pursues a proactive approach that involves the following six steps:

1. Send renewal application and request proprietor to name the Food Safety Supervisor.

2. Cross-check returned forms against records of training.
3. Update records if new qualified Food Safety Supervisor nominated. Send letter if records show that the person nominated has not been trained. This letter is strongly worded and gives business 14 days to submit the Certificate of Competency or show proof of booking with a Registered Training Organisation.
4. After 14 days, follow up call is made informing the business that they will not receive a Registration Certificate unless the Food Safety Supervisor Certificate of Competency is provided.
5. If still not complying, a visit to the premises is made to discuss with the proprietor.
6. So far this step has not been required!

Taking a strategic approach has paid off, with compliance increasing dramatically. This level of contact with food businesses has also increased understanding and compliance with Food Safety Programs.

Deliberate contamination suspected

Fiona Jones, Senior Food Safety Officer with the Food Safety Unit, presented the case of a packet of pitted dates containing pieces of metal blade. While the study demonstrated the investigation and action involved to protect public safety, it also revealed the roles of various authorities across state borders.

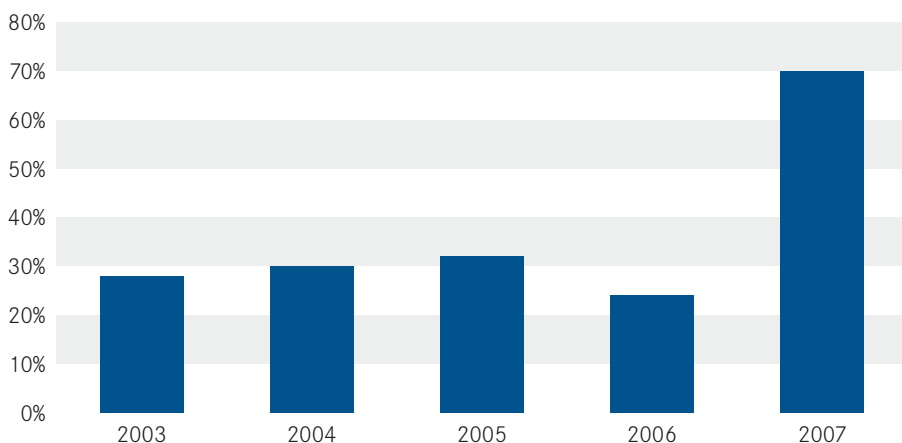
While the manufacturer of the dates was based in South Australia, the company head office was located in Victoria. Under the nationally agreed Home State Rule, lead jurisdiction is where the head office is located. Therefore, Victoria led the investigation, keeping SA Health, Police and the Department of Human Services Food Safety Assistant Director, the Chief Health Officer, Minister and Media Unit informed.

Within two days of the company reporting the blade finding to police, the Department of Human Services was notified, a risk assessment was completed and a product recall was issued.

The investigation found that the contamination was not deliberate. At the packing stage, unauthorised knives were used to cut packing film. The in-line metal detectors did not detect the blade pieces. Not all pieces of blade could be accounted for, representing a real risk that other products would contain blade pieces. As a result, a national food recall of the 19 products packed on that line was issued.

An investigation of the site found that the line in question was the only line not to have a second metal detector to scan the final packaged product. It also found that the company’s knife policy was not documented or policed. As a result of the investigation the line now has a second metal detector and the knife policy is written down and enforced.

% outstanding FSS certificated submitted



Nutrient profiling a key to making health claims

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is proposing the use of a nutrient profiling tool to calculate whether a food is eligible to carry a health claim, in the proposed new standard: Proposal P293–Nutrition, Health and Related Claims.

FSANZ has developed a system that is based on a UK model and has been tested on more than 10,000 Australian and New Zealand food products. The nutrient profiling method takes account of the overall composition of the food. It assesses foods on criteria such as salt, sugar and saturated fat content, as well as considering other positive nutrient attributes such as fibre, fruit and vegetable content.

FSANZ has developed an electronic calculator and made it available on their website, to allow a simple calculation of whether a food is eligible to carry a health claim. Using the calculator, food manufacturers can see how to reformulate their products, for example, by reducing sugar, salt or fat, to meet the new health claim criteria.

The nutrient profiling method is just one component of the proposed new food standard for nutrition, health and related claims that FSANZ is developing. Proposals relating to this complex issue have now been through three rounds of public comment. The third and final round, which closed in May 2007, will inform the development of a Final Assessment report.

The proposed new standard classifies nutrition, health and related claims into three categories for regulation purposes:

- **Nutrient content claims**—statements regarding the amount of a nutrient, energy or a biologically active substance in the food (such as ‘low salt’, ‘reduced fat’).

- **General level health claims**—claims that describe a relationship between a nutrient or substance in a food and the particular benefits of these components in relation to a health function (such as ‘calcium is good for strong bones and teeth’).

Manufacturers must hold scientific evidence to substantiate general level claims and produce this evidence, on request, to enforcement agencies.

- **High level health claims**—describe a relationship between a nutrient or substance in a food and particular benefits of these components in relation to a serious disease or condition, or a biomarker of a serious disease (such as ‘This food is high in calcium. Diets high in calcium may increase bone mineral density.’).

Manufacturers must obtain pre-market approval from FSANZ to make high level claims and provide scientific evidence to substantiate the claims.

Note that general level or high level health claims are not permitted on alcohol or infant formulas.

The proposed standard aims to benefit both the food industry and consumers.

Producers will be able to promote the health and nutrition benefits of their products, as long as these claims are truthful and can be scientifically verified. This encourages innovation and a healthy approach in the food sector.

For the consumer, accurate claims will help them make informed choices.

The preliminary final assessment report for Nutrition, Health and Related claims, including a short guide, has been available on the FSANZ website at http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/_srcfiles/P293%20PFAR%20Short%20Guide.pdf.

The Final Assessment Report is expected to be considered by the FSANZ Board during August 2007.

New standard 1.2.7

The proposed standard will appear as Standard 1.2.7—Nutrition, Health and Related Claims in the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code*.

Important provisions include:

- criteria for foods allowed to make claims
- a requirement that all general level and high level claims be substantiated
- specific qualifying criteria for nutrition content claims (e.g. food described as ‘low salt’ must contain no more than 120mg sodium per 100g for solid food)
- additional labelling for some nutrition content claims (e.g. the level of potassium in the food must be declared if a claim about salt is made)
- specific conditions for some claims (e.g. a weight loss or weight maintenance claim must be made in the context of the importance of regular exercise)
- substantiated and pre-approved claims about diet-disease relationships (e.g. low sodium diet assists in reducing blood pressure)
- recommendations for cause-related marketing and dietary information.

(*Nutrition, Health and Related Claims A guide to the development of a food standard for Australia and New Zealand* March 2007, page 6)

Pest control becomes centre responsibility

A Christmas beetle in a doughnut sparked an investigation that has changed cleaning and pest control management programs at a large shopping complex.

When the Shire of Yarra Ranges received a complaint from a customer who found a beetle in a doughnut, their Environmental Health Officers went to the scene—at a large shopping centre—to investigate. While looking at the premises, they found signs of cockroaches. This prompted them to look further afield and they soon discovered that the centre had a very significant cockroach problem.

Discussions with franchise management, store owners and centre management revealed that the pest control program was inadequate. Pest controllers visited the premises only once every three weeks and they failed to look for or address the problems of cockroaches breeding in warm places such as motors and switchboards. No-one oversaw the pest control program and pest control measures were not recorded or monitored. The pest controller was asked about how pest activity was monitored. Environmental Health Officers were astounded by the reply: ‘we ask the proprietor if they have seen any pests’.

Because of the seriousness of the problem at the centre, the Shire of Yarra Ranges began an intense period of investigation and follow up at the centre. One store was closed for extensive cleaning, including steam cleaning of fat-covered motors and switchboards. Shop owners and managers were advised of a fumigation program and what they needed to do to keep their food and premises safe.

Council also kept in contact with centre management, assisting them to understand the issues and develop an appropriate response.



As a result of the thorough investigation and follow-up by Council officers, and the involvement of centre and franchise managers, the centre now has a clear and effective pest control program, which is overseen by centre management. Management of the major franchise store involved in the investigation is reviewing the equipment it uses and assessing how this impacts on the possibility of further infestations.

This case indicates the need for a coordinated response where more than one shop is involved. Where cockroaches are seen in one shop, it is very likely they are a problem for nearby shops. Also, pest control programs need to be developed to respond to specific pests. Cockroaches

love warm sticky spaces, such as switchboards, so an effective pest control program needs to include regular investigation and cleaning of these spaces.

A problem of this magnitude does take time, numerous inspections, meetings, persistence and patience.

Positive steps to safe and healthy food

The City of Glen Eira is encouraging local food businesses to achieve high standards through a program of incentives and marketing.

Council recognises that food safety is important to residents, particularly given that an estimated one in three meals is now purchased outside the home. Glen Eira City Council has regulatory responsibilities in relation to 800 food businesses.

To achieve better food safety, nutrition and disability access for the people eating within Glen Eira, the Council works in partnership with local food businesses, conducts a program of incentives to encourage business to provide the highest quality food safety, and performs a strong legislative role, prosecuting poor performers when required.

Incentives provided by Glen Eira for businesses that maintain high standards of safety and cleanliness include:

- Reduced annual registration fees for businesses that achieve 5-star performance.
- Free publicity for 5-star businesses in the *Glen Eira Safe Food Guide* which is sent to 60,000 households each year.
- Awards for *Shop of the Year* and other categories.
- Certificates to display in store to promote safe food practices.
- The opportunity to participate in Council's nutrition and disability access programs, *Taste 4 Health*, *Taste 4 Health Kids* and *Access 4 All*.

Since the introduction of the positive *Five-Star Safe Food Incentive Program*, Council has seen a decrease in food related complaints and food poisoning incidents.



From left to right: Winners at the 2007 Food Business Awards Ceremony: George and Soula Fotopolous, proprietors of Zests Pizza, Shop of the Year 2007; Guest Speaker, Gabriel Gate; Mayor of the City of Glen Eira Councillor Margaret Esakoff; Julie MacShane proprietor of The Ormond Provadore, Shop of the Year Runner-Up.

Other programs, such as Glen Eira's nutrition programs, *Taste 4 Health* and *Taste 4 Health Kids*, are also proving popular with businesses and residents. Developed in partnership with dieticians from the International Diabetes Institute, Bentleigh-Bayside Community Health Service and Caulfield Community Health Service, these programs help address the increasing rates of obesity in adults and children by encouraging food businesses to provide healthy menu choices.

For more information about Glen Eira's food safety and nutrition programs, contact Glen Eira City Council on 9524 3333.



Adding water to wine

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is currently considering an application by Australia's wine industry to permit additional water to be present in wine.

In 2006, the Winemakers' Federation of Australia applied to FSANZ seeking to update Standard 4.5.1 Wine Production Requirements (Australia only) in the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code*.

The Federation wants the regulations to allow an increase of water use in wine production from 30 mL/L to 70 mL/L, in conformance with good manufacturing practice. The Federation has argued that this is already accepted practice in Europe and the United States and is supported by an agreement between the European Community and the United States of America that allows an upper limit of 70 mL/L of water in winemaking.

FSANZ proposes to vary the current subclause 5(7) in Standard 4.5.1 from:

(7) Wine, sparkling wine and fortified wine may contain water in proportion not exceeding 30 mL/L where the water is necessary for the incorporation of any substance specified in clause 3 or clause 4, or where the water is incidental to the winemaking process.

to

(7) Wine, sparkling wine and fortified wine may contain water in proportion not exceeding 70 mL/L where the water is necessary for the incorporation of any substance specified in clause 3 or clause 4, or where the water is incidental to the winemaking process, and where the presence of water in wine is a result of good manufacturing practice.

The Federation has also advised that water may already be added to wine at levels above those currently permitted for technical reasons. For example, it may be necessary to add more water to incorporate processing aids and food additives. While wine or grape juice can be used for some additives, others can only be added in water.

Also, during large scale production of wine, the wine is transferred via long pipelines and through large volume equipment. This process can add water from the pipelines and equipment.

FSANZ has undertaken a preliminary regulation impact assessment and has found that there are no public health and safety implications, and that the proposed draft variation is "necessary, cost-effective and of benefit to both producers and consumers". For winemakers, the amendment would result in more flexible production requirements as well as aligning winemaking practices with those in other countries.

The Draft Assessment Report is available at: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/standardsdevelopment/applications/>

Responses to the Draft Assessment Report will be used to develop the Final Assessment Report, which went to the Board in May 2007, followed by Ministerial Council consideration. If a review is not requested, the amendment is expected to be gazetted in mid-2007.



Food safety resources and website updates

Food Safety Rules poster

The new 'Food Safety Rules' poster, released in June 2007, has been designed to summarise the key points of the Food Safety Program Template and to remind staff of the key messages in food safety, such as the temperature danger zone, cross-contamination and cleaning.

The poster can be ordered online at: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/order.htm>

or downloaded from: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/pubs.htm>



Handwashing poster

The new 'Keep Hands Clean and Food Safe' poster, also released in June 2007, outlines the different stages of hand washing and reminds staff of when it is important to their wash hands.

The poster can be ordered online at: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/order.htm>

or downloaded from: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/pubs.htm>



Food safety supervisor and training—requirements for food businesses

A new information sheet, *Food safety supervisor and training*, has been released to provide information to food businesses about the food safety supervisor requirements. This information sheet replaces the previous one. It explains in detail the requirements, and the steps the food business should take, including tips on where they can find training.

This information sheet is available to be downloaded from the food safety website at: http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/bus/skills_knowledge/fss.htm

Changes to the food safety website

The food safety website now features a Skills and Knowledge page to make it easier for food businesses to find information on food safety training.

Information is now presented in the following three categories:

- Food Handlers.
- Food Safety Supervisor Requirements.
- Information for Food Safety Trainers.

The **Food Handlers** section provides information about what food handlers need to know about food safety in your business.

The **Food Safety Supervisor Requirements** section provides information to assist businesses in meeting the food safety supervisor requirement, including links to assist businesses to find food safety training if they need it.

The **Information for Food Safety Trainers** section provides information specifically for food safety trainers.

Go to: http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/bus/skills_knowledge/



Making compliance easier

Victorian businesses will benefit from initiatives to improve government services and make compliance to regulation easier.

The Office of Small Business has been working with local government councils to provide Victorian businesses with online tools to help them understand and simplify their dealings with local government, making it easier to apply for permits, licences or registrations. These tools include:

- Searching for local, State and Federal Government licences.
- Step-by-step guides to discover requirements for specific business activities.
- Complete forms online and submit to the relevant local council.

- Ask-a-question and search facilities across government, including local government business contacts.

These tools and other services can be accessed through the Business Victoria website (www.business.vic.gov.au), the Victorian Business Line 13 22 15, Victorian Business Centres and through many local government websites.

The Foodsmart application of the Department of Human Services has also been integrated into the Business Victoria website. This allows those starting or operating a food retail or food service business to build a Food Safety Program and to register this with council.

Business Victoria registered users can fulfil these compliance tasks and access their Food Safety Program from www.business.vic.gov.au.

Current Foodsmart registered users can also link their Foodsmart account to their Business Victoria account and access both accounts with the one username and password.

Having the scope to explore across government from a central location reduces the confusion that small businesses have often cited as a time consuming problem.

With the improved regulatory information and services all in one place, businesses will have more time to run their business.

Food Safety Conference 2007

Are you a food producer or regulator? Do you have an interest in food safety?

If you have a role to play in the future of food and food safety, register for The Food Safety Conference 2007 to be held in Sydney on 19-21 September.

The three-day *Future Directions* program will bring together some of the foremost specialists in food safety and regulation from Australia and overseas to present, lead discussions and conduct masterclasses on crucial issues for the consumer, regulatory, health and industry sectors.

Choose from masterclasses in food safety, allergies, labelling, standardisation or dietary modelling and hear speakers from the World Health Organisation, FSANZ, NSW Food Authority, ACCC, Choice and more.

The conference will have something for everyone involved or interested in food and food safety:

- Regulators will need to carefully consider emerging trends in relation to health and safety objectives, and ensure the practicality of implementing new food regulations.
- Industry will be affected by the range of community perspectives on future foods, market trends and the nature of food regulators' responses.
- Consumer organisations will gain an insight into the scale of innovation that is possible and how food regulators are likely to respond in balancing consumer expectations.

View the comprehensive program and register online at www.foodsafetyconference.com.au

Your contributions

Victorian Food Safety News is a journal focusing on news in the food and food safety industry. We welcome your input. If you have any comments or stories of interest, please contact Alexandra Ermolaeff on 1300 364 352 or email: foodsafety@dhs.vic.gov.au.

Please note that articles and information provided may be edited.

To subscribe

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Trial of the Revised Food Safety Program Templates No. 1 and FoodSmart No. 2

The Food Safety Unit, in consultation with representatives of local government and business associations, has recently reviewed the Department of Human Services Food Safety Program Template No 1 and FoodSmart No 2. Subsequently revised templates have been drafted and are about to be trialled across Victoria.

The template review conducted in recent months has identified a number of areas where additions and improvements were necessary. For example, changes are made to Template No. 1 to incorporate the outcomes and recommendations of previous projects on Time and Temperature Procedures and Daily Diary and Display Log (2004).

The new content will also address off-premises activities in both templates and provides other additional information relevant to the template users to assist them to continue meeting national food safety standards.

Consultants, PDF Management Services Pty Ltd, have been engaged to oversee the trial.

The trial involves:

- More than 40 businesses to participate.
- Trial commencement workshops to induct participating businesses into the trial.
- Information workshops to introduce the revised templates to local government environmental health officers and relevant departmental representatives.
- Trial feedback workshops for participating businesses and council officers.

When the trial has been completed, a report will be prepared that will outline the results and feedback from the trial and provide recommendations to inform the final writing of the revised templates.

Victorian Food Safety News

This publication can be found online at:
www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/news.htm

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