



**FALMOUTH AND TRURO
PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY**

FOOD SERVICE PLAN GUIDANCE



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1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The overall aim is to deliver a food safety regulatory service by the most cost effective means available. The Authority will aim to demonstrate that it is achieving continuous improvement in all of its services, including food safety. The Authority recognizes its overall role in improving the health of the local maritime communities and the food safety service has an important role to play through both its enforcement and educational roles.

(a) Food Hygiene

The primary objective is to inspect the registered food businesses with the level of professionalism and at a frequency described in The Food Safety Agency's code of Practice no. 9. Any further action following an inspection will be determined by the Authorities Enforcement Policy, which will be published on the Authorities Web Site www.falandtruropa.co.uk and periodically reviewed.

(b) Imported Food

- i. The prevention of unfit or unwholesome food entering the UK is a longstanding core function of the Authority. Food imported from another EU country will be treated no differently to food originating from the UK unless directed otherwise by the Food Standard Agency or DEFRA.
- ii. Third Country imports of non-animal origin food will only be granted veterinary clearance through the Border Inspection Post (BIP) after the authorised officer is satisfied the food complies with the food safety requirements as described in the Food Safety Act 1990.
- iii. All relevant EU Directives and UK Regulations will be applied to prevent the entry into the UK of non-compliant animal product foodstuffs. Subsequent decisions made by Britain and the EU in determining this will also be observed.
- iv. Officers will inspect products intended for sale anywhere within the European Community with the same care as they inspect products intended for sale in the UK.

(c) Vessels

Vessels arriving in the district will be boarded in accordance with the Authorities Boarding Policy to ensure acceptable standards of food hygiene are maintained. Incidents of non-compliance with either the International Health Regulation or British Regulations will be dealt with in accordance with the Authorities Enforcement Policy.

(d) Shellfish

- (i) The Authority will sample all bivalve mollusc production areas at the prescribed frequency in order to achieve a hygiene classification under The Food Safety (Fishery Products & Live Shellfish) (Hygiene) Regulations 1998.
- (ii) The Authority will also observe the marine biotoxin sampling programme and engage in research and development when the appropriate opportunity arises.

1.2 Background – Links to Corporate Objectives and Plans

The Food Service Delivery plan will form an integral part of the Authorities long established Service Delivery Plan which deals with all Port Health Functions. The Authority is also part of a National Benchmarking group for Port Health Authorities. Two of the main aims of the group will be to advise robust and appropriate performance indicators, which should be adopted for measurement of future performance and to create Good Practice Guides for agreed areas of the Port Health function, which will inevitably include food safety.

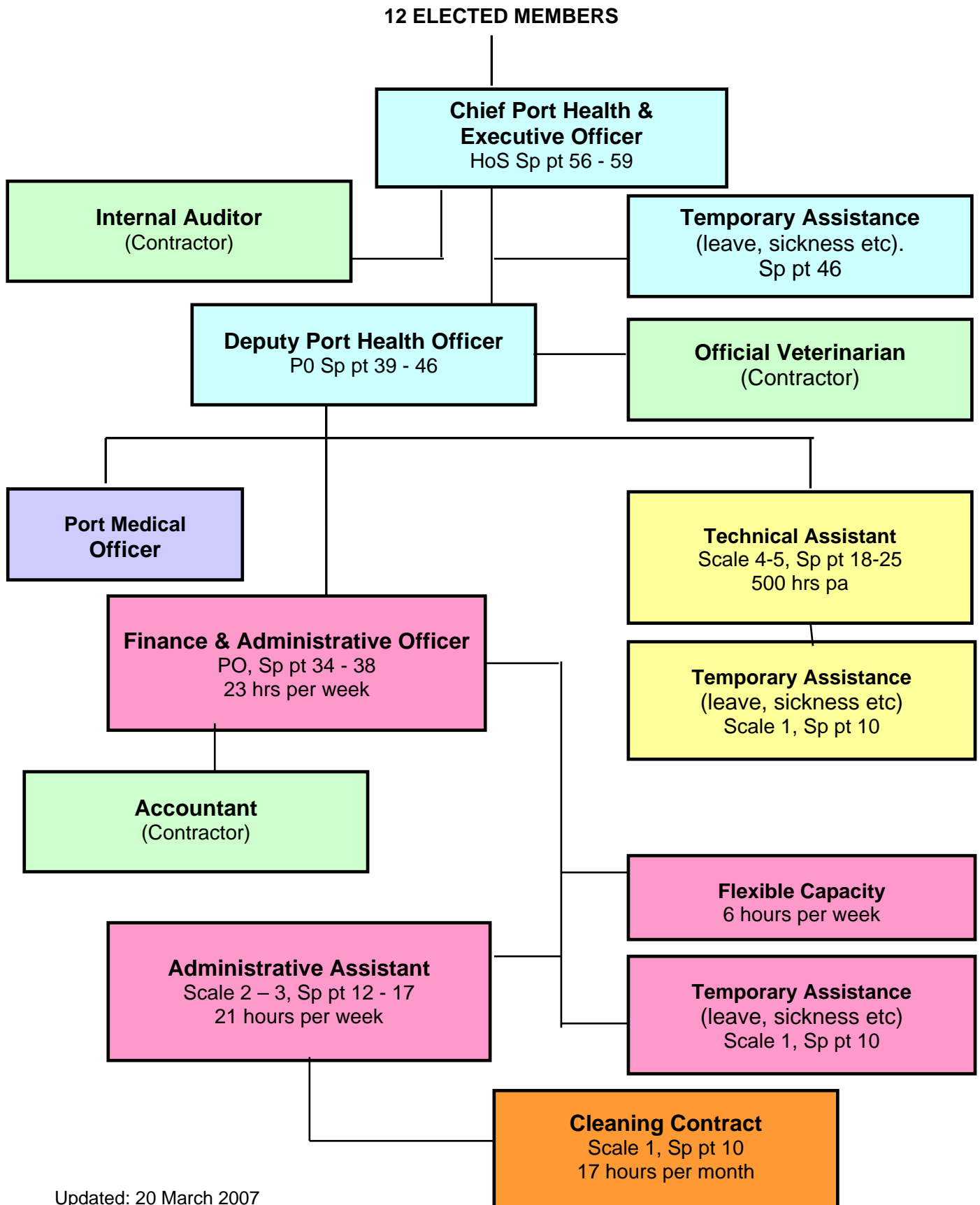
2. BACKGROUND

The Falmouth & Truro Port Health Authority was established by Statute in 1888 to protect against the introduction into the UK along the South Cornish Coast, infectious diseases and unfit food. The area of jurisdiction has been increased in 2001 although the core function remains largely the same. The Port Health District includes all docks, harbours and as far as the tide flows, all rivers, canals, creeks, streams, channels, waters and water courses. The Authority is a joint board formed by two riparian Authorities consisting of 8 members from Carrick District Council and 4 from Kerrier District Council and is funded accordingly. The joint board has jurisdiction as Port Health Authority over all waters and land within the Port Health District. The functions assigned to the joint board are given in the schedule to The Falmouth & Truro Port Health Authority Order 1988 and the relevant legislation shall have effect as if

- 1. any vessel lying within their jurisdiction were a house, building or premises and
- 2. the master or other person in charge of the vessel were the occupier.

2.2 Organisation Chart

STAFF STRUCTURE AS OF 01/01/2006



Updated: 20 March 2007

As can be seen from the organization chart, we are a relatively small Authority and so a broad skill base and unlimited flexibility is necessary. The CPHO and DPHO are both Chartered Environmental Health Practitioners and Corporate members of CIEH. The Port Medical Officer is also the CCDC for the Cornwall and I.O.S. Health Authority. The Authority has a contract with the P.H.L.S. Truro to carry out analysis of most food samples although we have access to other laboratories for specialist work e.g. The Public Health Analyst (Somerset), E.A. (Exeter) and CEFAS (Weymouth).

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

All premises and vessels within the District are inspected by the two Port Health Officers who are the only Officers authorised to do so. The main remit whilst carrying out an inspection is food safety and infectious disease control.

2.4 Demands on the Food Service

The Authority has a varied premises profile with risk ratings in all categories from A to E. The majority of premises fall within category C. Approximately 50% of premises fall within the scope of the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995, the remaining ones are controlled by The Food Safety (Fishery Products and Live Shellfish) (Hygiene) Regulations 1998. Two particular local features that continue to stretch the service are:

- (1) Regulating the extensive shellfish industry in all its forms and,
- (2) Dealing with an increasing number of applications for approval as fish factory vessels.
- (3) Locating and regulating fish landings and fishing vessels

The Authority now operates out of a new building ideally situated within Falmouth Dockyard. The Border Inspection Post adjoins the offices. Office opening hours tend to be 0745 to 1700 although both the PHO's are on permanent standby round the clock for emergencies. An out-of-hours answer phone gives contact details for both officers. The Authority occupies no other buildings.

2.5 Enforcement Policy

The Enforcement Policy can be found on the Authorities Web site and is also available in hard copy at the offices. The steps and guiding principles of the document will be followed before the Authority embarks on enforcement action following a food safety contravention.

3. SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Food Premises Inspection

The Authorities policy on inspection frequency is simply 100% compliance with the frequency scheme described in the latest Code of Practice No. 9. Also all other aspects of that and the other relevant Codes of Practice and Industry Guides will be observed as will LACORS advice where appropriate. Following internal staff restructuring in recent years, current staffing levels should be adequate to deliver

this. However, additional financial resources may be required to comply with the increased Marine biotoxin programme presented by CEFAS.

3.2 Food Complaints

The Authority has not had to deal with a great number of food complaints. However where complaints arise, the investigation will follow the route recommended by LACORS, including fully embracing the 'Home Authority Principle'. A significant rise in complaints and subsequent resource implications is not envisaged.

3.3 Home Authority Principle

The Authority fully endorses the Home Authority Principle even though it does not act as Home Authority for any given business. However it will co-operate fully with any organization should food products (e.g. Shellfish) originating from within the Port Health district become a cause for concern to others. Live Bivalve molluscs (both purified and unpurified) originating from estuaries within the Port Health district are dispatched throughout the UK and Europe. In this regard, the Authority will continue to co-operate fully with the shellfish industry to ensure proper traceability mechanisms are in place.

3.4 Advice to Business

The Authority will continue to give swift and accurate advice in an appropriate format to business when requested. It will further develop the County Shellfish Liaison Group so that it becomes more inclusive to industry and other interested parties. Existing resources can deliver this.

3.5 Sampling

The Authority will continue to meet its statutory sampling obligations prescribed by International and UK Regulations. Food imports from Third Countries and EU member States will be sampled following an appropriate risk assessment. Live shellfish will be sampled in order to comply with relevant Hygiene and Biotoxin Regulations. Potable water samples will be taken from visiting vessels and shoreside hydrants in compliance with International Health Regulations. Samples will be tested at the local Public Health Laboratory or at Cefas Weymouth as appropriate.

3.6 Control And Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

The Authority will provide a response to all notifications of Food poisoning and food born illnesses and infections. This will include adherence to the Cornwall Outbreak Control Policy and where appropriate the US Vessel Sanitation Programme Operations Manual.

3.7 Food Safety Incidents

The Authority will respond to all food hazard warnings in accordance with relevant Government Guidance and Codes of Practice. A system is in place to receive food hazard warnings Electronically and by text to mobile phones at weekends. The Authority has documented procedures for handling all Food Hazard Warnings.

3.8 Liaison with other Organisations

The CPHO attends monthly coordinating meetings of the CEHO's Group and DPHO attends the regular meetings of the CEHO's Food Sub Group. The Authority also hosts the Cornwall Shellfish Liaison Group and is actively involved in the Association of Port Health Authorities.

3.9 Food Safety Promotion

The main thrust of food safety promotion will continue to occur at the time of food hygiene visits/inspections – the underlying message will be one of risk management. The Authority will also assist the Food Standards Agency in any Food Hygiene Promotion Campaigns it has.

4. RESOURCES

4.1 Financial Allocation

Food law enforcement forms an important part of the Port Health function but does not have an allocated budget. However, Audited Accounts which give a comprehensive breakdown of expenditure are available for members of the public to see, by appointment, at the Port Health Office.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

There are two fully qualified Chartered Environmental Health Practitioners employed to enforce UK Food Hygiene Regulations. There is also 1.5 FTE admin support and 0.4 FTE technical support.

The two Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner,s are required by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health to undergo at least 30 hours Continuing Professional Development per year including 10 hours specific to Food Safety as required by Food Safety Act Code of Practice No. 19. Both officers have many years experience in food safety enforcement.

4.3 Staff Development

The two Chartered Environmental Health Practitioners will continue their professional development in line with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health rules which will include a minimum of 10 hours food safety training to ensure compliance with Code of Practice No. 19. The training budget will be set accordingly. The technical assistant will also receive on-the-job training delivered by one of the Chartered Environmental Health Practitioners.

5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The Deputy Port Health Officer will regularly review performance to ensure compliance with the FSA's Framework Agreement and this Service Delivery Plan. The Authority will also engage in any peer review exercises including Audits organized by the Cornwall C.E.H.O. Food Group

5.1 Review against the Service Plan

Periodical review will be presented to the Authority and this will include identification of any variation from the Service Plan and any relevant areas of improvement.