

Lead Food officers
REHIS
SFELC

FSS/ENF/17/005

7th February 2017

Dear Colleagues

Approved Establishments Scottish National Protocol

The Approved Establishments Scottish National Protocol will apply from Monday 13th February. The protocol has been developed in partnership with the SFELC Approved Establishment Working Group as part of a suite of actions being undertaken by the group with the objective to achieve a consistent high standard of service delivery when approving establishments and undertaking official control activity within such businesses thereafter.

The protocol applies to all approved establishments both in Local Authority and Food Standards Scotland domain, and replaces the two guidance documents '*Guidance for local authority authorised officers on the approval of establishments*' and '*Operational Policy for the Approval of Meat Establishments Undertaken by the Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland*'.

This harmonised protocol is intended to provide a single source of information to all authorised officers. The update has addressed areas where further clarification has commonly been sought and applies some changes to existing guidance the main ones of which, are summarised below;

- The requirement for a validated food safety management system to be in place **before** a conditional approval can be implemented.
- An amalgamated decision tree for all approved establishments (with the exception of slaughter and game handling).
- A clear formalised structure to the approval process.
- A requirement for Local Authorities to inform FSS at all stages of the approval process.
- Adopting a common approach for dealing with closure of establishments.
- A greater emphasis on HACCP competencies of authorised officers.

- A determination of the approval status of an establishment to be made within 20 working days of all necessary relevant information having been supplied by the Food Business Operator. At this time, the establishment should be conditionally approved, fully approved or the approval should be refused.
- Where an additional activity or significant change in activity requires a new approval to be added, it will normally be appropriate for the new activity to be subject to Conditional Approval. The existing operations will remain approved, and therefore the establishment will be subject to both Conditional and Full Approval. This will require two separate approval documents, one for the full approval and a separate one for the conditional. Both will refer to the same approval number. Once the Competent Authority is satisfied that the conditional approval can progress to full approval, a single approval document should be issued replacing both the existing full and conditional approvals within a single approval.

Local Authorities are asked to ensure that their authorised officers working in this sector are aware of this document and apply it from the 13th February 2017. The next update of the Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) intends to accommodate reference to this protocol.

A link to the Protocol is contained below;

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/food-safety-standards/regulation-and-enforcement-food-laws-scotland/local-authority-approvals>

If you have any queries regarding this correspondence please send them to Enforcement@fss.scot.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Lorna Murray'.

Lorna Murray
Head of Enforcement Delivery
Food Standards Scotland