

Safe Food Production NSW Annual Report 2000/01

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Safe Food Production NSW Annual Report 2000/01

Mission

Protecting consumers by developing scientifically robust food safety systems and ensuring their effective adoption by the New South Wales food industry

Values

Accountability

Credibility

Integrity

Equity

Openness

Innovation

Profile

Safe Food Production NSW is a statutory body established under the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998. SafeFood, as it is known, was established in December 1998 with the commencement of certain sections of the Act. Its regulatory functions and powers commenced on 1 July 1999, when the NSW Dairy Corporation was dissolved and became SafeFood's Dairy Branch. SafeFood is responsible to the Minister for Agriculture.

Establishment of SafeFood is a major step towards the Government's goal of a single NSW agency responsible for food safety. When fully implemented, SafeFood will be responsible for the safe production, processing, wholesale and distribution of all primary produce and seafood for human consumption from the paddock or ocean to the back door of the retail shop, with additional coverage of retail butcher shops and supermarket meat departments.

SafeFood's responsibility is to ensure that food safety standards are implemented in an integrated and consistent way. This will maximise the benefits for consumers and the food industry, while minimising compliance costs for individual food businesses.

NSW Health and local government will continue to be responsible for the retail and food service sectors pending a Ministerial review of the SafeFood initiative which must begin shortly after 18 December 2001 and be completed within 12 months. That review, which is required by SafeFood's legislation, must also consider whether and how a single NSW food safety regulator should be established.

National standards

Where national food safety standards are in place, SafeFood is responsible for ensuring their implementation in the industries it covers. These standards currently include those in the meat industry developed by the Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ) and will include the proposed Food Safety Standards developed by the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) and adopted by the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Council.

SafeFood's core function is to develop, implement and manage food safety schemes tailored to particular industries or sectors. The schemes, which are introduced by regulation, are based on the preventative methodology known as Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP). This requires the systematic identification and control of food safety risks at all points in the food supply chain.

The Dairy Food Safety Scheme was prescribed by the Food Production (Dairy Food Safety Scheme) Regulation 1999 and is now administered by SafeFood's Dairy Branch.

In August 2000, the NSW Meat Industry Authority (MIA) was dissolved, and the former Authority became SafeFood's Meat Branch. The Meat Food Safety Scheme was prescribed by the Food Production (Meat Food Safety Scheme) Regulation 2000. The regulation came into force on 4 August 2000 and is administered by the Meat Branch.

Administrative responsibility for the NSW Shellfish Quality Assurance Program was transferred from NSW Fisheries to SafeFood during July-August 1999, pending its integration into a Seafood Safety Scheme. The target for introduction of a scheme covering the seafood industries is late in 2001. Public comment on a proposed Seafood Safety Scheme was called on 8 June 2001, closing on 9 July.

With the completion of the risk assessment phase for plant products (that is, fruit and vegetables, grains, pulses and seeds), SafeFood has begun work on development of a food safety scheme covering priority risk areas in those industries. Consultation has begun with stakeholders with the objective of introducing a food safety scheme in the second half of 2002.

Work is also proceeding on development of a food safety scheme for the regulation of goat and sheep milk. The risk

assessment phase has been completed and is being independently reviewed. At the same time SafeFood is working with these industries to encourage adoption of HACCP-based food safety programs.

Penalties

A range of penalties is provided in the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998 for breaches of provisions of food safety schemes. Produce which is deemed not safe for human consumption may be seized, and SafeFood has the power to prohibit the cultivation, taking, harvesting or obtaining of any primary produce or seafood in the interests of public health.

The NSW Government intends SafeFood to be fully funded by the industries it covers through licensing fees, levies and fees for service under each food safety scheme. Budget funding of \$7.5 million was provided until 30 June 2002 to establish SafeFood and develop food safety schemes. In response to industry concerns with cost recovery arrangements, the Government established a review in January 2001 to recommend options for a secure and stable revenue base for the agency. The review was completed in July and its report is under consideration.

As required by the Act, a Safe Food Production Advisory Committee (SFAC) was established to provide expert advice to SafeFood on a range of matters. SFAC is chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of SafeFood and must include members with expertise in specified areas, including an

expert on consumer issues. The inaugural meeting of the SFAC was held in July 2000.

While SafeFood is responsible to the Minister for Agriculture, the Ministers for Health and Fisheries play a significant role. Each must concur in the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer and members of the SFAC. The Minister for Health must approve all food safety schemes. Any scheme covering seafood must also be approved by the Minister for Fisheries.

In March 2001, the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Health agreed that, in preparation for the Ministerial review, a sub-committee of SFAC should be set up to develop a possible model for a single food safety agency for NSW, building on the base established by SafeFood. The sub-committee, established in May, is to submit its report by 1 December 2001.

Food safety overview

- The standard of food safety in the dairy, meat and seafood industries administered by SafeFood was satisfactory in 2000/01. No outbreaks of foodborne disease from these industries were reported.

- In an incident on the South Coast in December 2000 a number of diners were diagnosed as suffering food poisoning understood, following a SafeFood investigation, to be related to consumption of imported frozen prawns.

- Eight consumer complaints were received concerning dairy products in respect to high temperatures of milk sold, chemical taint, foreign objects in milk and possible tampering of product. No cases of illness associated with the incidents were reported.

- One mandatory and four voluntary recalls of dairy product were made during the year.

- A total of 8,128kg of product was seized from 15 red meat, poultry and game premises and condemned.

- Seven prosecutions were initiated in the dairy, meat and seafood industries.

- SafeFood officers carried out 5,922 audits and 11,480 inspections and reinspections of premises and vans in the dairy, meat and seafood industries.

- 42 inspections of milk and dairy product factories were carried out as part of a new program of unannounced visits by an enforcement squad of SafeFood auditors.

- A total of 1,003 direction and improvement notices were issued in the dairy and meat industries in respect of product and premises failing to comply with standards and in the seafood industry, in respect of failures to comply with standards under the NSW Shellfish Quality Assurance Program.

- Ten orders for suspension of operations were made against meat premises.

- A more detailed sampling program is being conducted of fermented salamis - one of the highest food safety risk products in the meat industry. Special licensing conditions have been introduced requiring approval of process protocols before manufacture of the product.

- All companies supplying dairy product to Olympic Games venues in 2000 were audited, and there were no

adverse reports concerning food safety or product quality during the Games.

- SafeFood is collaborating in investigations in NSW and overseas into possible links between Johnne's disease in cattle and Crohn's disease in humans.

- SafeFood's first food safety scheme, for the dairy industry, operated throughout the year, and the new Meat Food Safety Scheme from August 2000.

- Development of a Seafood Safety Scheme is well-advanced. A Regulatory Impact Statement was released for public comment in June 2001. The target is to introduce the scheme late in 2001.

- A target date of mid-2002 has been set for introduction of a Plant Products Food Safety Scheme and preparations are continuing for a food safety scheme for the goat and sheep milk industry.

Further details are contained in the relevant sections of this Report.

Chief Executive Officer's Review



George Davey
Chief Executive Officer
Safe Food Production NSW

SafeFood has completed a successful year of consolidation. Substantial progress has been made towards the achievement of the Government's objectives for science-based food safety regimes in some of our most important primary industries. There is also an evolving process of organisational re-engineering to improve operational efficiencies; we are actively involved in national regulatory reform processes, and procedures for consultations with key stakeholders are being established.

SafeFood's core business is to develop, implement and manage food safety schemes tailored to the industries or sectors within our remit. Previous food safety arrangements in the dairy and meat industries have now been reconfigured as food safety scheme regulations and provide the framework for the operations of SafeFood's Dairy and Meat Branches.

Schemes reviewed

In the coming year, the schemes will be reviewed using the risk analysis principles promoted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission of the United Nations Food and Agriculture and World Health Organisations.

SafeFood has pioneered the use of risk analysis to develop regulatory standards for food industries. During the year, development of the Seafood Safety Scheme was completed. The scheme will be the first comprehensive regulatory standard for the seafood industry in Australia and is probably a world first in the use of risk analysis to develop a through-chain food safety regime for an entire industry.

The scheme will incorporate SafeFood's existing program for farmed shellfish and extend its requirements to wild harvest shellfish. That program was reviewed against international practice this year by Spanish-based expert Dr Chris Rodgers. His recommendations included a three-year project to classify the State's harvest areas based on detailed assessment of pollution sources. It is pleasing to report that in June, the Government endorsed key recommendations from his review and agreed to fund the first year of the classification project.

Good progress was also made this year in development of schemes for plant products (fruit and vegetables, cereals and pulses, nuts and sprouts) and goat and sheep milk.

During the past year, SafeFood has become increasingly involved in national food regulatory structures and processes. In November 2000, the Council of Australian Governments decided to establish a new national framework for food regulation. The fundamental idea is to bring together the various processes through which national standards for food and food production are set. Under these arrangements, the Minister for Agriculture joins the Minister for Health as a NSW member of the new Food Regulation Ministerial Council.

Industry award

The Chief Executive Officer of SafeFood, George Davey has been awarded the J I Scarr Medallion by the Dairy Industry Association Australia. The award was made for outstanding service to the DIAA. Mr Davey has served on the Association since 1984 in many key roles, including Federal President and NSW President.

Chief Executive Officer's Review

All national standards for food and food products will be developed by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ, currently ANZFA) within a policy framework established by the Ministers. The Ministers may request a review of proposed standards and ultimately may amend or veto them.

As the Chief Executive Officer of SafeFood, I am a member of the Food Regulation Standing Committee which advises the Ministerial Council. SafeFood is closely involved in developing the supporting arrangements for the Ministerial Council and Standing Committee and will participate at all levels. The new framework greatly enhances SafeFood's ability to contribute to national policy development and standard setting, and to related work on consistent and effective implementation and enforcement.

Key issue

All of this costs money. I reported last year that the key issue facing SafeFood is to secure a stable funding base. Industry concerns with the level of fees and charges needed to fully fund SafeFood under the current funding model came to a head this year with the introduction of licence fees and service charges for the dairy industry following its deregulation from July 2000.

The Government acknowledged these concerns and in January 2001 appointed the Hon John Kerin AM to conduct a comprehensive review of principles and options for the

funding of SafeFood. Industry and consumer representatives actively contributed to the work of the review, as did NSW Treasury and The Cabinet Office.

The review, which required substantial input by SafeFood staff at all levels, was a positive exercise for the agency in several respects. External scrutiny required us to provide a clear account of what we do and why, against a background of constant change and transition since our inception 2½ years ago. We understand our business even better than before.

Enhanced understanding

The review's comparative survey of Australian and international food safety agencies has enhanced our understanding of approaches elsewhere. Most importantly, I am hopeful that the Government's decision on the recommendations in Mr Kerin's final report, to be completed in July 2001, will establish the secure and stable revenue base the agency urgently needs.

Of particular concern to me are the limited resources available for enforcement activity, including investigation of potential breaches of the law, for example unlicensed food businesses or shellfish harvest contrary to harvest area closures. In December 2000, SafeFood sought additional funding to establish a dedicated Enforcement Unit which would work independently of the operational branches. This proposal was referred by the Government to the Kerin Review.

The past year has emphasised for me the essential role played by SafeFood's many stakeholders. The strong industry partnership of the former dairy and meat authorities has been carried through into SafeFood and provided a model for our work in the seafood and plant products industries.

It must be acknowledged that the Meat transition to SafeFood has been a difficult process for the industry and for SafeFood staff. The issues leading to the dissolution of the Meat Industry Consultative Council, and options subsequently submitted by the Frawley-Standen Review, are still being resolved. Nonetheless, the interim Meat Industry Advisory Committee is working well and I am confident that the spirit of constructive goodwill will be maintained.

I was also greatly encouraged by the constructive and high quality contribution by the dairy, meat and seafood industry members of the Kerin Review's Stakeholder Reference Group. Their joint submission to the Review marked the start of a whole-of-industry approach which I believe will serve both SafeFood and industry well as we inevitably move beyond a framework that has been based on commodity silos.

Last year I mentioned my disappointment that the Australian Consumers' Association (ACA) had found itself unable to work with us to develop a robust consumer partnership. It was therefore welcome and significant that the ACA responded favourably to the Government's invitation to participate in the Kerin Review.

Chief Executive Officer's Review

ACA also accepted an invitation by the Minister for Health to participate in preparatory work, to be led by Dr Gavin Frost, for the review of the SafeFood initiative required by section 73 of SafeFood's legislation (the Section 73 Review). ACA's contribution to the Kerin Review was substantial and constructive and I will be seeking to develop further the relationship during the coming year.

SafeFood also needs the counsel of experts with skills and experience in a range of fields including food science, food industry practice, public policy and public sector management, and consumer advocacy.

The Safe Food Production Advisory Committee (SFAC), appointed by the Minister with Cabinet approval in May 2000, has been an invaluable source of advice – challenging at times – over the past year. In addition to its scheduled meetings and a special teleconference, SFAC members made substantial contributions to the Kerin Review, preparatory work for the Section 73 Review, and SafeFood's Emergency Management planning.

Strategic Plan

In mid-1999, SafeFood developed its first Strategic Plan covering the period up to December 2001, when the Section 73 Review must begin. That review must consider whether and how NSW should take the next step to the Government's long-term goal to establish a single food regulatory agency.

During the year to 30 June 2001, SafeFood made great progress towards each objective in the Plan. With the incorporation of the former NSW Meat Industry Authority as SafeFood's Meat Branch from 4 August 2000, the structural integration of existing agencies and programs into SafeFood was completed. In September 2000, SafeFood brought all Sydney-based staff together in its Elizabeth Street premises and integrated the Corporate Services and Licensing functions in a single Branch.

Integration has been complex and difficult due to the need to maintain dual or multiple financial, information technology and licensing systems while common systems are developed.

New system

The common systems will be underpinned by a new Client Management System (CMS), for which government funding of \$1.8 million was approved early in the financial year. Detailed specifications and an implementation plan were developed during the year and contractors selected. Implementation will proceed during 2001/02.

The CMS development provides both the opportunity and the necessity for SafeFood to standardise its business processes. A business process redesign project will be undertaken in parallel with the CMS project and will be a major step in the development of consistent practices and procedures across all operational areas.

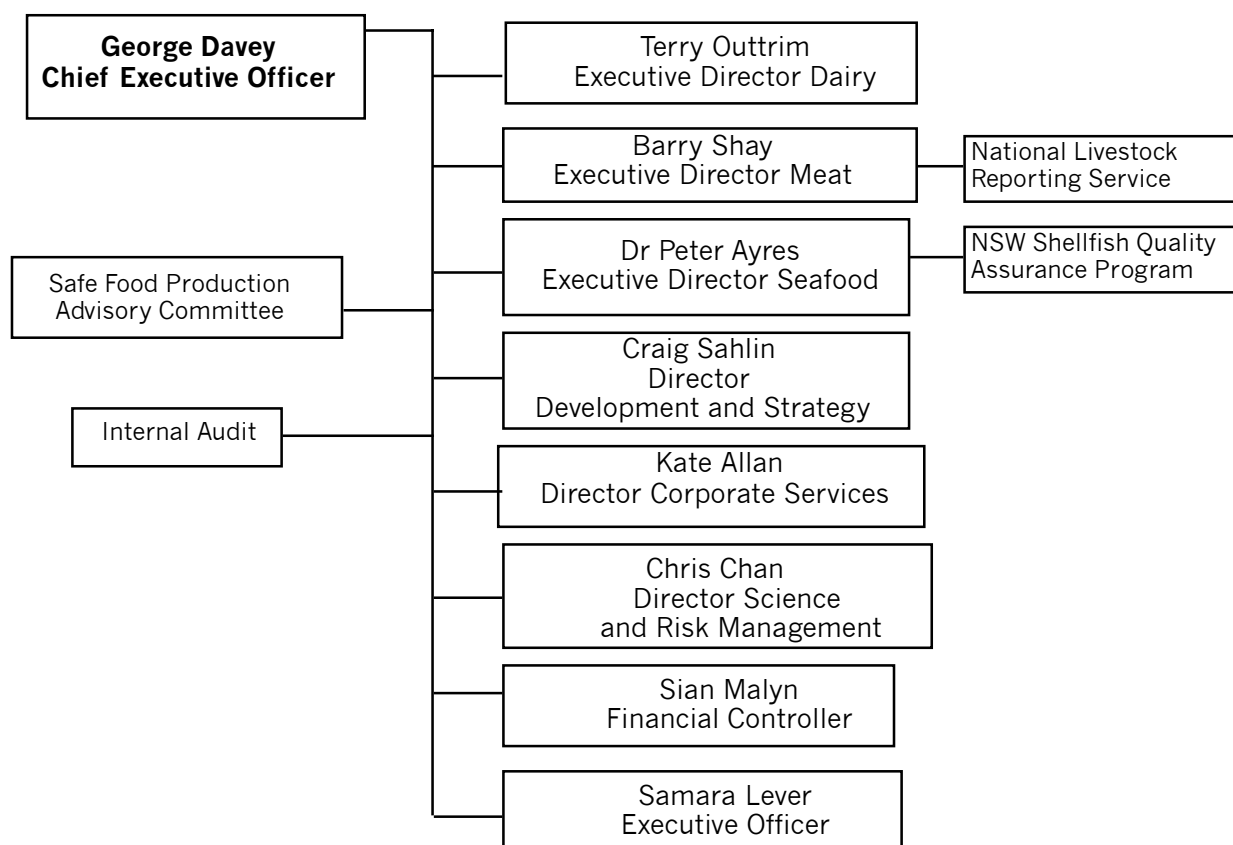
The past year has taken SafeFood close to the end of its first Strategic Plan, and with it completion of the first stage of the Government's agenda. In November, SafeFood's Executive and a cross-section of its staff will develop the second Strategic Plan, which will take the agency forward to the Section 73 Review and the next phase of its development.

I thank the Executive and staff of SafeFood for their enormous commitment and hard work, often well beyond the normal call of duty. I also gratefully acknowledge the willing spirit of co-operation exhibited by our key stakeholder representatives in dealing with the many difficult issues during the year.

Particular thanks are due to our colleagues in NSW Agriculture and NSW Health for their active participation in our planning and working groups dealing with matters of mutual importance. Special recognition is due to the members of the Safe Food Production Advisory Committee for their wise counsel and valuable advice.

Finally I thank the Hon Richard Amery, Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Land and Water Conservation for his encouragement and guidance, and for the continuing support of his office.

Organisation structure



Chief Executive Officer, George Davey, is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology Inc. and a Member of the Australian Society for Microbiology Inc. He holds Bachelor of Science (Hons) and Master of Science degrees in Food Technology from the University of New South Wales. He was appointed Chief Executive Officer on 7 July 1999.

Mr Davey was General Manager of the former NSW Dairy Corporation with which he had 15 years' service.

As Chief Executive Officer he has an employment contact with the Minister. A performance agreement is reviewed every quarter.

Executive Director, Dairy, Terry Outtrim, holds a Diploma in Dairy Technology from Hawkesbury Agricultural College. He was appointed Deputy General Manager of the former NSW Dairy Corporation on 27 April 1990. Before his present appointment he had 29 years' service with the former Corporation and its predecessors.

Mr Outtrim was appointed Executive Director on 1 March 2000.

Employed under the Senior Executive Service, he has an employment contract with the Chief Executive Officer. A performance agreement is reviewed every quarter.

Executive Director, Meat, Barry Shay, holds a Master of Science degree in microbiology from Griffith University in Queensland. He was formerly Group Manager of the food safety and quality area in Food Science Australia and has 33 years' experience in food safety research and food safety management. He has acted as a consultant on meat safety for both government and the meat industry. He is a spokesperson on food safety for the Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology.

Mr Shay was appointed to his present position in August 2000.

Employed under the Senior Executive Service, he has an employment contract with the Chief Executive Officer, reviewed each quarter.



SafeFood's Executive Committee (left to right, in front), George Davey, Chief Executive Officer; Sian Malyn, Financial Controller; Barry Shay, Executive Director, Meat. (Back) Kate Allan, Director, Corporate Services; Craig Sahlin, Director, Development and Strategy; Samara Lever, Executive Officer; Dr Peter Ayres, Executive Director, Seafood; Chris Chan, Director Science and Risk Management; Terry Outtrim, Executive Director, Dairy.

Executive Director, Seafood, Peter Ayres, M I Biol, PhD, has had extensive experience in fisheries in Britain, Australia and other parts of the world.

Dr Ayres had considerable experience with depuration programs for the oyster industry and joined NSW Fisheries in 1982, becoming Chief of the Division of Fisheries after its integration with NSW Agriculture. He joined the NSW Environment Protection Authority in 1993 as manager of the Sydney region operations section, and was appointed to Safe Food in January 2000.

Employed under the Senior Executive Service, Dr Ayres has an employment contract with the Chief Executive Officer. A performance agreement is reviewed every quarter.

Director, Development and Strategy, Craig Sahlin, holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree from Macquarie University and an LLB from the University of New South Wales. He was seconded to SafeFood from The Cabinet Office in February 1999 and appointed to his present position in January 2000.

He was The Cabinet Office representative on the Kerin Food Safety Taskforce in 1997 which led to the SafeFood initiative.

He has a performance contract with the Chief Executive Officer which is reviewed every quarter.

Director, Corporate Services, Kate Allan holds a Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Honours) degree from the University of Melbourne and a Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary).

Ms Allan has a background in research and education and has spent the last six years working in the field of food safety. She has extensive experience in the management of business units in the public and private sectors and has specialised in strategic planning and organisational development.

She held the position of Manager, Consumer and Industry Liaison in the former NSW Meat Industry Authority and was appointed to her position in August 2000.

Development of SafeFood

When the NSW Government decided in principle to establish a food safety authority in the State, it decided on a two-phase approach. The first phase was the establishment of SafeFood under the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998, and the second is to be considered after a ministerial review of the initiative, required by section 73 of the Act. The review must commence in December 2001, three years after the establishment of SafeFood.

SafeFood was established with coverage extending from production, harvest or catch to the back door of the retail shop. SafeFood also covers retail businesses where raw meat is further processed, such as butcher shops and supermarket meat departments.

Retail, food service and some manufacture sectors continue to fall within the jurisdiction of NSW Health and local government at least until the completion of the review under section 73 of the Act.

The first phase of SafeFood's implementation is well under way in each of the four commodity areas of dairy, meat, seafood and plant products.

This has involved the dissolution of the NSW Dairy Corporation and the NSW Meat Industry Authority, their incorporation with the NSW Shellfish Quality Assurance Program into SafeFood, and the development of risk-based food safety schemes for the seafood and plant products industries.

The key milestones have been:

- July 1999. Commencement of SafeFood's regulatory powers and functions. Transfer of the functions, assets and staff of the NSW Dairy Corporation to SafeFood. Introduction of the Dairy Food Safety Scheme.
- August 1999. NSW Shellfish Quality Assurance Program transferred to SafeFood.
- August 2000. Transfer of the functions, assets and staff of the NSW Meat Industry Authority to SafeFood. Introduction of the Meat Food Safety Scheme.
- November 2000. Risk assessment of plant products completed.
- June 2001. Draft Seafood Safety Scheme and Regulatory Impact Statement released for public comment. Development begins of a Plant Products Food Safety Scheme.

Strategic plan

SafeFood's strategic plan was developed to take phase one of the SafeFood initiative to the review of the agency in December 2001. Accordingly, it has a set of 'end 2001' outcomes. To help track toward these outcomes, a set of strategic pathways were developed, forming the basis of key priority work areas. The strategic plan and priority work areas are reviewed quarterly and planning reassessed for the next period.

At 30 June 2001, the process had entered its final six months and was on target to meet its December 2001 outcomes. A workshop is planned for November 2001, the focus of which will be the development of a new strategic plan for the period after December 2001.

The key priority work areas in the final six months of this Strategic Plan are:

- working towards a common operational approach in areas such as licensing, audit and enforcement, including redesign of business processes;
- working towards a secure funding base - the Kerin Review outcomes;
- preparation for a review under section 73 of the Act.

Business process redesign

The purpose of redesigning the business processes at SafeFood is to align SafeFood's future common schedule of services to its stakeholders' and customers' expectations. The formation of SafeFood involved the merger of three existing systems, those of the NSW Meat Industry Authority, the NSW Dairy Corporation and the NSW Shellfish Quality Assurance Program. In addition, systems have been or will need to be developed for industries such as seafood and plant products.

Development of SafeFood

Business process redesign will ensure the efficiency, consistency and uniformity of these different systems. It will also provide an opportunity to improve current practices and ensure that a customer focus is achieved in all of SafeFood's activities. The implementation of consistent business processes and supporting infrastructure is critical for the achievement of SafeFood's business goals. The goals for the project are to reduce costs, enable changes to be implemented more readily, ensure a customer focus and improve efficiency.

Business processes will be underpinned by a sophisticated Client Management System which will involve the automation of licence applications, generation of audit reports and schedules, and an ability to track trends in business performance and food safety indicators.

Kerin Review

When SafeFood was established, the Government intended that it would be fully funded by industry through licence fees, audit fees and levies. However, implementation of full cost recovery has proved controversial, most recently with the introduction of dairy licence and audit fees following deregulation.

In January, the Premier approved a proposal for a review to be conducted by the Hon John Kerin. The final report of the Kerin Funding Review is complete and it is due to be submitted to the Minister in late July.

The review identified the key activities of SafeFood, the funding principles which should apply, and recommends options for a secure and stable revenue base for the agency.

John Kerin was assisted by a Steering Committee comprising a senior officer each from Treasury and The Cabinet Office and the Chief Executive Officer of SafeFood. In addition, there was consultation with a Stakeholder Reference Group, including industry and consumer representatives as well as two members of the Safe Food Production Advisory Committee.

Section 73 Review

Under section 73 of the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998 a Ministerial review is to be undertaken of the SafeFood initiative. The review has to consider whether food safety operations by different government agencies in NSW should be the responsibility of a single agency, and if so, the means of achieving that objective.

The review is to commence as soon as possible after 18 December 2001 and its report must be tabled in Parliament within 12 months.

The Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Health agreed to set up a sub-committee of the Safe Food Production Advisory Committee to help the Government prepare for the review.

The 2001 Review Sub-committee is to develop a possible model for a single food safety agency for NSW building on the base established by SafeFood. This work will facilitate and streamline the 2001 Review by providing a forum for the agencies currently involved in food safety to reach a consensus on the issues involved. The sub-committee will also make recommendations regarding the nature and extent of public consultation which should be undertaken during the 2001 Review.

Dr Gavin Frost, of the Safe Food Production Advisory Committee, chairs the sub-committee which includes senior officers from SafeFood, NSW Health, NSW Agriculture, the Department of Local Government, and Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW. It also includes a member each of the Australian Consumers' Association, the Australian Food and Grocery Council and the Safe Food Production Advisory Committee.

The sub-committee will report to the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Health by 1 December 2001.

Food safety schemes

Food safety best practice has shifted from traditional methods of quality control and end-point inspection to preventative approaches based on risk management principles. The key preventative methodology is Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) which requires the systematic identification and control of food safety hazards within a food business.

Contemporary food safety regulation places responsibility on individual food businesses to use preventative approaches, such as HACCP-based food safety programs, to control food safety hazards. The regulator's role is to ensure that adequate systems are in place and to use audit and other monitoring tools to verify their effectiveness.

Food safety schemes are the means by which the responsibilities of food businesses, and SafeFood's regulatory role, are detailed for each industry or sector covered by SafeFood. Each scheme is tailored to particular industries or sectors, and is prescribed by regulation under the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998.

Each scheme is a regulatory package that includes:

- operational requirements on food businesses, including food safety program requirements and relevant standards or other specific requirements;
- a compliance regime, including licensing and audit arrangements;

- funding arrangements, including licence, audit and other fees;

- a mechanism for consultation with the relevant industries or sectors on the scheme's operation.

The Act requires each scheme to be developed on the basis of scientific assessment of food safety risks and in consultation with the industries or sectors to be covered by the scheme.

Under a food safety scheme, food safety programs developed by industry units have to be certified by SafeFood. To grant certification, SafeFood must be satisfied that programs comply with the HACCP principles and are adequate for the processes carried out. SafeFood audits and inspects the industry unit for which certification has been granted. It carries out fee-based inspections of industry units for which no food safety plan has been certified.

SafeFood uses risk analysis as the cornerstone of scheme development. Risk analysis is a methodology developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission of the United Nations. It is a tool to develop strategies and control measures to manage food safety hazards, and provides the foundations for food safety policies, regulations and HACCP-based food safety programs.

The risk analysis process provides the basis for the operational requirements of food safety schemes, template food safety programs,

industry guidelines and training materials. It is also the basis for the development of licensing and audit arrangements.

The Dairy Food Safety Scheme was based on the dairy food safety arrangements under the Dairy Industry Act 1979, so a full risk analysis process was not undertaken. However, the existing arrangements were reviewed in the light of the outcomes of a risk profiling study of the NSW dairy industry by an independent scientific body, and revised in consultation with industry.

The Dairy Food Safety Scheme was the first to be developed and the regulation promulgating it came into force on 1 July 1999. The Meat Food Safety Scheme came into force on 4 August 2000, and it is expected that the Seafood Safety Scheme will be in effect late in 2001. The comprehensive development process for the Seafood Safety Scheme is outlined in the section on Seafood.

Notices of the intention to make a regulation to promulgate a food safety scheme and calling for public comment are advertised in the press. The notices set out the purposes of the regulation and describe the manner in which copies of the Regulatory Impact Statement and the draft regulation may be obtained.

Food safety schemes

Goat and sheep milk

Currently NSW Health administers a licensing system for farms supplying raw goat milk for human consumption. During 1999/2000, the Dairy Branch began development work on a food safety scheme for goat and sheep milk products. SafeFood will assume responsibility for the safe production, processing/manufacture, distribution and handling of goat and sheep milk products on implementation of the scheme.

The goat and sheep milk industries in NSW are small and their products are aimed at niche markets. About 15 goat farms in NSW are licensed to supply unpasteurised goat milk for human consumption. They produce about 350,000 litres of milk a year one-third of which is used to produce specialty cheeses and yoghurts.

The only sheep dairy in NSW at present has a milking herd of about 600 Awassi sheep. All sheep milk is used to manufacture cheese and yoghurt.

The initial phase of the developmental work in preparing a food safety scheme for goat and sheep milk involved a risk analysis for each of the commodity groups. A joint Reference Group, consisting of officers from SafeFood, NSW Health, NSW Agriculture, ANZFA and representatives of industry sectors in the goat and sheep dairy industries, was established for consultation on the project.

A risk assessment phase has been conducted by an independent consultant, AgriQuality New Zealand. The assessment

covers all goat and sheep milk products produced or handled in NSW as well as those imported from overseas and interstate. The project identifies the potential food safety risks in the production and supply chain. There will then be a risk management phase to devise strategies to minimise risks.

At the same time SafeFood is working with the goat and sheep milk industries to encourage adoption of HACCP-based food safety programs. SafeFood has prepared generic HACCP manuals to help the industries implement the programs. Adoption of food safety programs is voluntary at present.

Plant and plant products

The target date for introduction of a food safety scheme for plant products is the end of 2001/02.

A risk assessment of plant products has provided a comprehensive profile of microbiological, chemical and physical risks, and has described existing programs and practices that control these risks.

The profile has identified five products which pose a high microbiological risk: fresh cut vegetables consumed raw, fresh cut fruit, vegetables in oil, seed sprouts and unpasteurised fruit juices. A further 17 products have been identified as posing medium microbiological and or chemical risk. No chemical hazards were identified as high risk but phthalates and phytoestrogens in infant formula and cereal were identified as medium risks. Foreign bodies are a significant risk in all food categories.

SafeFood will develop a food safety scheme that focuses first on areas of highest risk. The scheme will be developed with the participation of industry and in consultation with consumer and government stakeholders.

Consultative mechanism

The Food Production (Safety) Act requires the establishment of a consultative mechanism for each industry to be covered by regulation before the preparation of a food safety scheme. The NSW Dairy Industry Conference has been established by regulation as the consultative body in respect of the Dairy Food Safety Scheme.

A Meat Industry Consultative Council was formed of the members of the board of the former NSW Meat Industry Authority. In late 2000 the Minister dissolved the Council and commissioned a review to determine options for alternative methods of consultation. In the meantime, an interim Meat Industry Advisory Committee has been providing a consultative link with the industry.

Legislation

The Food Production (Dairy Food Safety Scheme) Amendment (Fees) Regulation 2000 gazetted in November 2000 made changes concerning determinations of fees and definitions in relation to dairy products and buildings.

Safe Food Production Advisory Committee

Under the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998, the Minister must establish a Safe Food Production Advisory Committee (SFAC).

This body provides expert advice and makes recommendations to SafeFood or the Minister on a wide range of matters relating to food or to the operation of the Act or its regulations that may be referred to it by the Minister or the Chief Executive Officer of SafeFood. It also advises or makes recommendations concerning the making of regulations, in particular those prescribing food safety schemes.

SFAC currently has seven members, including the Chief Executive Officer of SafeFood, George Davey, who under the Act, is the chairperson. The other six members appointed by the Minister with the concurrence of the Ministers for Health and Fisheries are:

- **Professor Ken Buckle**, Associate Dean, International Development, the Faculty of Life Sciences, University of NSW; a member of the Food Advisory Committee, NSW Health, and a shellfish expert. Expertise in food or seafood technology.
- **Ms Dian Coffey**, Director, Sylvania Investments and Finance, with wide experience in the media, meat industry and consumer issues; conversant with the interests of the public as consumers of food.
- **Dr Michael Eyles**, Chief Executive Officer, Food Science Australia, with extensive expertise in virology and bacteriology, crisis and public affairs management.
- **Dr Gavin Frost**, Chief Medical Officer, MBF - expert adviser on public health to 1997 Kerin Food Safety Taskforce.
- **Hon John Kerin**, former Commonwealth Minister and Chair of the 1997 Kerin Food Safety Taskforce, with expertise in the handling or selling of primary produce or seafood, in food regulation systems and in public administration.
- **Dr Heather Yeatman**, Senior Lecturer, Graduate School of Public Health, University of Wollongong, and a member of the board of Australia New Zealand Food Authority.

The six part-time members were appointed for terms of two years from 16 May 2000. Secretariat services are provided to SFAC by SafeFood.

SFAC met a number of times during the year. It has made significant contributions to the Kerin funding review, the preparatory work for the Section 73 Review concerning the future of food safety in NSW, and to the Emergency Management Plan of SafeFood.

No outbreaks of foodborne disease associated with the consumption of milk and dairy products were reported during the year.

Incidents reported included microbiological contamination of products, chemical taints in milk, physical foreign objects or tampering, unhygienic/inappropriate premises and high temperatures of milk sold. These incidents were identified through the branch audit and inspection schemes, industry HACCP programs and consumer complaints to the branch. The incidents resulted in one mandatory and four voluntary recalls of product. In four other instances, product unfit for human consumption was not permitted to be sold.

Three prosecutions were initiated during the year. A plea of guilty was entered in a case involving foreign objects in milk, and a fine of \$2,500 was imposed by the court. Two matters are listed for hearing early in 2001/02.

Eight consumer complaints were received for the year. Complaints were received either directly from consumers or referred by NSW Health or other State food authorities. All were followed up by SafeFood officers.

Microbiological contamination of product included pathogenic bacteria *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Escherichia coli*, and coliform bacteria.

Chemical contamination included the presence of antibiotic residues in raw milk and sanitiser residue in manufactured product and chemical taint.

Foreign matter contamination was also reported. In one case a mandatory recall of ice cream was initiated due to the presence of glass fragments. Only one tub was identified as containing the glass fragments and no further incidents were reported during the period of the product recall. An episode of potential tampering of product was referred to the NSW Police Service after investigation by SafeFood.

Audits

A total of 387 audits of HACCP-based food safety plans were conducted of factories, depots and milk collection facilities, 1,408 of dairy farms and 458 of vehicle vendors. A total of 479 direction or improvement notices were issued. Direction notices relate to product handling that does not comply with standards, and improvement notices to unsatisfactory building structures. As a result of these audits, operations of factories were suspended in two cases, six factories were issued with major downratings of their audit system and there were 106 cases of minor downratings of factory systems issued. Systems were re-audited in the

cases of 20 dairy farms and eight vehicle vendors following major corrective actions identified in the annual audit.

A total of 42 inspections were carried out of factories, as part of a new program of unannounced visits by an enforcement squad of dairy auditors.

Visits by the enforcement squad began in March 2001. They are designed to complement HACCP programs and provide objective evidence of the program's effectiveness, as well as that of good manufacturing practice, Code of Practice and other programs.

Statistics concerning these activities are in Table 2.

This year was the first for the Dairy Food (Safety) Scheme under which the branch coordinates the food safety programs based on HACCP principles for the farm, farm milk collection, processing/manufacturing factories and distribution sectors.

The branch is constantly reviewing its food safety and quality control systems to ensure adherence to world's best practice. However systems

Table 1. Dairy licences

	2000/01	1999/2000
Dairy farmers	1,391	1,725
Milk receival factories*	22	
Milk processing factories*	11	
Dairy product factories*	91	
Milk stores	283	212
Milk collectors (from farms)	20	n.a.
Vendors	930	1,019
Total	2,748	2,956

*now included under Milk Stores and not recorded separately

Dairy

in the branch comply with the requirements of the Codex Alimentarius of the World Health Organisation.

Staff undergo continuing training to keep abreast of latest developments and there is a continuing program of verification of food safety programs in the dairy industry. Benchmarking meetings internally and with quality auditors from other industries have been held to develop a consistent approach to auditing quality systems. As part of HACCP verification programs, minimum microbiological testing requirements for factories were introduced and enforced during the year. The branch monitored implementation of these requirements.

In addition, the branch continued a program to monitor bulk milk transported from farms to processing factories for chemical residues, in support of an Australian Milk Residues Analysis survey. It also conducted a state pesticide surveillance program in consequence of a locust plague in south-eastern Australia, with no abnormal results reported.

The effectiveness of the audit of HACCP programs is to be reviewed with an external consultant in the coming year. The branch is participating in a further risk analysis of the dairy industry as part of an Australia-wide project of the Dairy Research Development Corporation which will help further refine the scientific basis for SafeFood's work.

During the year the branch initiated a review of the status of milk pasteurisers in dairy processing factories, always a critical point in milk safety. All milk pasteurisers now meet the requirements set by the branch. The industry consultative body, the NSW Dairy Industry Conference, endorsed dairy policy that all pasteurisers in operation comply with Austral-

ian Standards. Non-compliant pasteurisers are not permitted - pasteurisers must have current certificates of compliance issued by qualified engineers.

A plan to deal with a major contamination of product was drawn up by the branch, based on an emergency master plan developed by SafeFood.

Table 2. Section 68 - Dairy Food Safety Scheme

Section 68 of the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998 requires SafeFood to report on the number of food safety schemes and food safety programs, the numbers of inspections or audits to ensure compliance, the number of recalls of product, enforcement actions taken and any investigations in relation to an outbreak of disease transmitted by primary produce or seafood. Table 2 reports on activities under the Dairy Food Safety Scheme.

HACCP certification	
Dairy farms	1,391
Vendors	830
Milk factories	86
Inspections	42
Re-inspections:	
Suspended operations	2
Major downrating	6
Minor downrating	106
Audits:	
Factories/depots/milk collection	387
Farms	1,408
Vendors	458
Direction and improvement notices to enforce compliance	479
Produce unfit for human consumption not permitted to be sold	4
Recalls/retrievals:	
Mandatory	1
Voluntary	4
Prosecutions	3

All companies supplying product to Olympic Games venues in 2000 were audited by dairy auditors. Factories producing fresh milk and short shelf life products were subjected to audit or extra inspection leading up to and during the Olympics. No adverse reports of food safety or quality were received by the branch during the period of the Olympics.

MAP organism

The branch was actively involved in investigations into the *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (MAP) organism in milk and milk products.

MAP occurs in all dairy industry countries, and is spread through poor herd management practices. SafeFood has ensured through its on-farm HACCP programs that MAP control is effectively covered under animal health requirements. SafeFood is using the latest scientific information to review its risk management strategies for the organism.

There has been worldwide speculation that the MAP bacterium, which is responsible for Johne's disease (paratuberculosis) in cattle may be associated with Crohn's disease in humans.

There has been speculation as well about possible increased heat resistance of MAP, and its possible survival of standard pasteurisation temperatures used in the dairy industry. There is no scientific evidence supporting this speculation, but the matter must be kept under review.

Peter Sutherland, SafeFood's Technical and Operations Director, Dairy, visited the United Kingdom and the European Union in Brussels to gather the latest information on the organism. An information paper on MAP was sent to the Safe Food Production Advisory Committee, NSW Health and to all processing companies and to the NSW Dairy Industry Conference.

Dairy deregulation

The year under review represented the first 12 months of deregulation of the dairy industry in NSW. There were major changes following deregulation, with about 300 dairy farmers and 100 milk vendors leaving the industry. Five dairy factories closed as part of a rationalisation that has been proceeding in recent years, hastened in part by deregulation.

A Dairy Deregulation Impact and Assessment Committee was formed by the Minister late in 2000 to examine, report and make recommendations to Parliament on the financial impacts on the NSW dairy industry following deregulation. SafeFood was represented on the committee by the Executive Director, Dairy, Terry Outtrim.

The committee identified issues that required attention and in March 2001 submitted an interim report to the Minister. A final report will be submitted by the end of 2001.

Licences

For the first time, licences were issued to all participants in the dairy industry, replacing a system of certificates of registration that had been in place for many years under former statutory authorities. In accordance with the Food Production (Dairy Food Safety Scheme) Regulation, the Chief Executive Officer of SafeFood on 24 November 2000 determined licence fees for the industry.

Following deregulation of the dairy industry, staff numbers in the branch reduced from 64 to 28. The number further reduced because of internal operational reviews, staff and budget requirements, and the integration of corporate services and administrative staff. At 30 June 2001 staff exclusively involved in the dairy branch totalled 16.

During the year the NSW Dairy Industry Conference, the industry-based consultative group for the Dairy Branch, was restructured by the Dairy Industry Conference Amendment Regulation 2000 under the Dairy Industry Act 2000. The regulation, which came into force on 1 July 2000, among other things, reduced the number of members of the Conference from 39 to 11. The Executive Director, Dairy, of SafeFood is an ex-officio member of the Conference.

Meat

Under the Food Production (Meat Food Safety Scheme) Regulation which came into force on 4 August 2000, SafeFood assumed the responsibilities and functions of the NSW Meat Industry Authority (MIA), which was dissolved.

SafeFood's Meat Food Safety Scheme encompasses all red meat, poultry, game and rabbit meats from slaughter to the point of retail. SafeFood licenses all domestic and export abattoirs, meat processing plants and retail meat premises and as a rule audits the HACCP-based food safety plans of the domestic abattoirs. Knackeries and pet food processing plants, rendering plants, meat vans, game meat harvesters' vehicles and field chillers, are also licensed and audited and inspected.

Hygiene standards

All licensees must comply with the appropriate Australian Standards for meat hygiene. SafeFood will continue until August 2003 the former MIA's responsibilities for licensing of saleyards and regulation of lamb branding.

Export poultry establishments are audited by the branch on behalf of the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service under a Memorandum of Understanding.

The Food Production (Meat Food Safety Scheme) Regulation 2000 carries forward much of the Meat Industry Act 1978 and the Meat Industry Licensing Regulation 1996. The scheme is fully consistent with the agreement reached at ARMCANZ level that there be

one uniform Australian Standard for meat processing, supported by HACCP-based programs. Standards for those premises and vehicles required to be licensed under the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998 for which there is no Australian Standard have been carried forward into the Meat Food Safety Scheme from the Meat Industry Act.

Section 9 of the Food Production (Safety) Act requires SafeFood, among others, to keep under review construction, hygiene and operating procedures of premises, vehicles and equipment used for the handling of primary produce (meat and poultry) and to regulate the handling of such product to ensure it is safe for human consumption.

New scheme

The new scheme continues to specify types of licences, and matters relating to the issue, renewal, exhibition and transfer of licences, and detail such as classes of licence, standards, and operational requirements. Branding requirements for meat and the staining and labelling requirement for animal food also continued.

At the time SafeFood assumed the functions and responsibilities of the MIA, the Authority licensed more than 4000 participants in the sectors of the meat industry it covered.

This number increased significantly during 2000/01 with the inclusion of 1,995 retail meat premises.

With the additional inclusion of feral pigs as game animals, the number of game licences increased to 1287. At 30 June, there was a total of 7,485 licences for meat premises and vehicles. Details are given in Table 3.

HACCP-based programs were mandatory in all red meat, poultry and rabbit abattoirs and processing plants under the former MIA and this requirement has continued under the Meat Food Safety Scheme. At 30 June food safety programs were certified in all abattoirs, meat processing premises, retail meat premises and renderers.

Operators' food safety plans are audited at least twice yearly and premises are inspected regularly to ensure compliance with the requirements of the food safety scheme.

Audits are conducted more frequently where non-compliance is detected. The number of audits and inspections carried out during the year is set out in Table 4. A compliance rate of 94% was disclosed in the audits conducted.

No recalls

No voluntary or mandatory recalls of product were required during the year.

Table 4 summarises the enforcement action taken against licensees where non-compliance with the requirements of the food safety scheme was disclosed.

Improvement notices are issued where structural faults are found in premises. Direction notices relate to non-compliance with product handling. Where remedial action has not been taken in regard to a direction notice on product handling, a notice to show cause why a licence should not be revoked may be issued.

No notices to show cause were issued during the year.

A total of 8,128 kg of product comprising red meat, poultry or game were found in 15 instances not to comply with requirements and was seized and destroyed.

Two prosecutions were initiated under the Food Production (Safety) Act during the year. In one case the licensee pleaded guilty to delivering meat to shops without using his licensed insulated container and was fined \$156. In a second, a licensee pleaded guilty to storing two sheep carcasses that were not slaughtered at a licensed premises. The licensee was fined \$1,000.

The MIA became responsible for retail meat premises in July 1999 and an extensive program began to inform these operators of their obligations, followed in the middle of 2000 by the start to the further stage of conducting compliance audits. By 30 June 2001, 2,130 retail audits had been completed.

To facilitate the monitoring and auditing of retail food safety programs, staff of the Meat Branch developed a retail diary to help operators record factors significant to product safety such as the sources of product,

meat temperatures from delivery onward and other handling information. The first print run of the diary was distributed free. To help offset production costs, a small charge was made for copies of the second run, and advertising was obtained from suppliers to the meat industry. More than 2,000 copies have been printed.

About 35% of funding related to the operations of the Meat Branch is derived from the NSW meat industry levy which is based on the stock carrying capacity of each property.

Other income is received from licensing, auditing and inspection fees charged to premises, including abattoirs, meat processing plants, saleyards, animal food processors, retail premises, knackeries, game meat plants, and to meat, game meat and animal food transport vans.

Following the National Competition Policy review in 1998, the former MIA agreed on a schedule aimed at moving towards full cost recovery for food safety scheme implementation and compliance. In accordance with that schedule, audit fees increased to \$77 per hour on 1 January 2000. A total of 3,404 audits was conducted by the branch between August 2000 and 30 June 2001.

As a consequence of the Garibaldi food poisoning incident in South Australia in 1995, the Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ) directed that there be one uniform national standard for the meat industry. In NSW, SafeFood is responsible for ensuring compliance with this standard.

Table 3. Meat licences

	2000/01	1999/2000*
Abattoirs	99	102
Processing plants		
animal food	126	98
game meat	105	49
meat	461	452
Knackeries	7	7
Rendering plants	7	7
Retail premises	1,995	2,132
Saleyards	108	113
Total premises	2,908	2,960
Animal food vans	136	117
Game meat vans	1,161	509
Meat vans	3,280	2,835
Total licences	7,485	6,421

*under NSW Meat Industry Authority

Meat

Although no outbreaks of foodborne illness related to meat or meat products have occurred in NSW during the year, some high risk areas have been identified and a significant amount of resources has been directed to managing these areas.

Fermented salami is possibly the highest food safety risk product manufactured by the meat industry. These types of products can be made safely provided adequate food safety plans are in place and environmental conditions during their manufacture are controlled.

When SafeFood assumed responsibility for the safe manufacture of fermented salamis it began extensive microbiological sampling and industry education programs. In February 2001, SafeFood hosted a workshop to provide essential information for the production of safe salami-style products.

About 60 NSW smallgoods manufacturers, Meat Branch auditing staff and industry trainers attended the workshop. SafeFood officers and experts from Food Science Australia and Quality Ingredients described the nationally based standards and regulatory requirements introduced following the Garibaldi fermented salami outbreak in South Australia, and outlined the safety controls necessary in the manufacturing processes. Feedback from participants was positive.

Following a preliminary sampling of uncooked fermented product which revealed there

was in some cases, an alarmingly low level of understanding of the process and outcomes required, a more detailed sampling program is being conducted. A condition has been inserted into licences requiring manufacturers of uncooked fermented product to submit process protocols for approval before manufacturing.

With the increased reliance on risk analysis in food safety management, the branch is developing proposals for a consultant to be commissioned to recommend priorities in adapting the elements

of risk assessment, management and communication to the management of food safety issues in the meat industry.

Meat Branch staff have been involved through the ARMCANZ Meat Standards Committee in the development of Australian Standards for Rendering, Poultry, Sausage Casings and Ratites (ratites are emus and ostriches). The standards have been approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia and are to be published soon.

Table 4. Section 68 - Meat Food Safety Scheme

Section 68 of the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998 requires SafeFood to report on the number of food safety schemes and food safety programs, the numbers of inspections or audits to ensure compliance, the number of recalls of product, enforcement actions taken and any investigations in relation to an outbreak of disease transmitted by primary produce or seafood. Table 4, below, reports on activities under the Meat Food Safety Scheme.

	Inspections	Audits
Abattoirs	268	245
Meat processors	1,245	1,029
Retail meat premises	3,929	2,130
Meat vans	5,728	n/a
Enforcement action:		
Direction/improvement notices to comply	512	
Prohibition order to cease operations	10	
Product not safe for human consumption	8,128kg seized	
Prosecutions	2	

The branch also participated in the development through the Meat Standards Committee of a single document amalgamating the current Australian Standards applying to slaughter and transport with the Export Meat Orders. The revised standard has been presented for endorsement to the Standing Committee of Agriculture and Resource Management of ARMCANZ.

BSE

Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) disease constitutes a most significant global food safety threat. Although Australia is only one of a handful of countries enjoying the lowest possible risk ranking in relation to the occurrence of BSE, it is extremely important everything is done to put in place preventative strategies to ensure an outbreak does not occur.

Three of the main preventative measures adopted in place in Australia consist of the imposition of import controls on live animals, genetic materials, biologicals, therapeutics and

animal feedstuffs; the implementation and enforcement of bans on the feeding of meat and bone meal to ruminants, and monitoring and surveillance through the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Surveillance Program, a project administered by the Commonwealth.

While most of the controls for managing BSE currently come under the auspices of NSW Agriculture and lie outside the jurisdiction of SafeFood, there is continuing dialogue to ensure there are no gaps along the food safety chain in relation to this and other safety issues. SafeFood has been involved in providing advice to consumers in relation to the BSE issue.

Consultative bodies

The Food Production (Safety) Act 1998 requires the establishment of consultative industry bodies. Following the establishment of the Meat Branch, members of the board of the former MIA were appointed to a Meat Industry Consultative Council. In November 2000, the

Minister dissolved the council and commissioned a review by Tendring Management Pty Ltd and Taloumbi Investments Pty Ltd through Peter Frawley, and Dr Bruce Standen, former Managing Director, Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation, to determine options for alternative mechanisms for consultation. The results of the review were not available at 30 June.

An interim committee has been functioning with representation from the NSW Farmers' Association, the National Meat Association, the Country Meatworks Association, retail butchers, smallgoods manufacturers, the Australian Game Meat Producers' Association and the Stock and Station Agents Association. The branch maintains a close contact through a series of sector advisory groups and on a formal and informal basis.

A Poultry Industry Consultative Committee, which meets regularly, is comprised of representatives of the Australian Poultry Association, National Poultry Association, NSW Poultry Processors' Association, NSW Agriculture, NSW Health and AQIS.

National Livestock Reporting Service

The National Livestock Reporting Service (NLRS) provides meat and livestock market data nationally. It had its beginnings when the Victorian reporting service was contracted to the former NSW Meat Industry Authority (MIA) in 1997. SafeFood assumed responsibility for the NLRS when, in August 2000, it took over the responsibilities and functions of the MIA.

The establishment of the NLRS met a pressing need by industry and its stakeholders for an independent, timely and accurate data service using a national language and description and a standardised reporting format. The service expanded to achieve national coverage by February 2000.

Responsibility

While the NLRS operates in all states, SafeFood has direct management responsibility for Queensland, NSW, Victoria and South Australia.

NLRS officers collect market data mostly from major prime and store markets and direct sales throughout Australia. The information is provided to producers, livestock agents, meat processors and buyers, and to the media, market analysts, financial institutions and agricultural consultants. The NLRS provides detailed analysis on livestock markets in a variety of formats.

The NLRS is primarily funded by charging a fee for service for reporting physical markets as well as by income generated by the sale of information. It also receives a proportion of the NSW meat industry levy that covers the shortfall

between expenditure and income. The service has an annual budget of \$1.2 million with income totalling \$755,000.

During 1999/2000 it was indicated that funding for the Victorian arm of the NLRS would cease on 30 June 2001. However, agreement was reached between the Victorian Government and Meat and Livestock Australia to match funding for 2001/02. A committee is to be formed by the Cattle Council of Australia to review long term funding for the service.

Expanded reports

Report development has been high on the marketing and promotion agenda of the NLRS during the year, with particular focus on Queensland. The over-the-hook (OTH) and slaughter reports have been expanded, improving accuracy and reliability. The service has recently begun publishing a 'Weekly Round-up' encompassing all major points of interest for the week, and summaries on conditions in livestock markets.

The NLRS is targeting corporate clients to increase revenue from the sale of information. This activity extends beyond market reports. There is strong interest in the raw data generated by the NLRS among industry stakeholders who use it in forecasting and strategic planning. The NLRS believes the usefulness of this data is yet to be fully realised and is undervalued. The service produced a number of promotional brochures to bolster its marketing efforts to increase awareness of the service and its products.

The NLRS sponsored the Stock and Station Agents' Association's Young Auctioneers Competition at the 2001 Royal Easter Show. The competition produced a satisfactory result in terms of the marketing and promotion needs of the NLRS.

User pays

A new NLRS website has been developed and implementation will commence during 2001/02. Each month about 12,000 market reports have been accessed from the present site. The possible introduction of a user pays system on the new site, including historical data and market reports, is being investigated. While the number of reports accessed would be expected to reduce substantially once a fee was applied, the project would be a potential revenue raiser. It is expected usage would increase as NLRS clients became accustomed to the new standard of service.

Livestock market reporters are nationally accredited livestock assessors, accreditation being provided under a course designed and conducted by NSW Agriculture.

In November 2000, five reporters attended the first course. The next step is to accredit suitable staff as deliverers so the course may be offered to the cattle and sheep livestock industries nationally. Completion of cattle and sheep training courses has brought closer a system of national accreditation for their delivery.

Work on preparation of a Seafood Safety Scheme was well advanced at the close of the year, and the scheme is expected to be introduced late in 2001.

As the proposal stands, all seafood businesses up to the back door of the retail shop in NSW will be required to be licensed by SafeFood and to develop and implement food safety programs, including HACCP-based food safety plans to manage food safety hazards in their operations.

The timetable for implementing food safety programs and complying with the requirements of the food safety scheme will be based principally on identified food safety risks: those businesses SafeFood considers to have high food safety risks will have to develop their programs first. Businesses will be given a reasonable time to complete their programs and will be audited to ensure they meet and maintain the standard required.

A program of risk assessment of priority hazards of seafood in NSW conducted by specialist consultants was completed in December 2000. The program, together with preparing a food safety scheme, was supervised by a Seafood Reference Group established in July 1999 to promote understanding of the risk analysis program and acceptance of its outcomes by the seafood industry.

The group had representation from all seafood sectors, a consumer representative, and representatives from State and Commonwealth agencies. The work provided the scientific foundation for development of the Seafood Safety Scheme.

Five industry-based sector working groups worked with SafeFood and a specialist consultant to devise model food safety plans for each industry sector. The model plans were finalised in February 2001.

Food Science Australia, a joint venture between CSIRO and the Australian Food Industry Science Centre, reviewed and oversaw the risk analysis program. It reported on the scientific adequacy of the risk management strategies recommended by the working groups in managing hazards identified in the industry.

Following the risk analysis program, 11 workshops were held for industry participants in regional centres in October and November 2000. The workshops attracted representatives from other agencies and local government. A leaflet summarising the intent of the Seafood Safety Scheme was produced in five languages and circulated within industry.

A draft Food Production (Seafood Safety Scheme) Regulation 2001 which includes a licensing system, budget and funding arrangements, consultation processes and an implementation program has been drawn up. A Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) was developed in conjunction with external consultants and the draft regulation and RIS were released for comment on

8 June 2001. Comments and submissions were required by 9 July 2001, subsequently extended to 13 July.

Comprehensive guidance material for industry has been prepared in parallel with preparation of the draft Seafood Safety Scheme. The material will form a Seafood Safety Manual in conjunction with model HACCP food safety plans for the major industry sectors and operations. Following implementation of the regulation, each business applying for a licence will be given a copy of the manual, to help it develop its food safety program.

Funding has been obtained from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care to develop tools to help industry introduce food safety plans. Tenders have been called for consultants to prepare submissions on three projects – oyster shucking and temperature control, smoking of fish and cooking and cooling of prawns. The tools will be trialled with industry in late 2001 and the projects are scheduled for completion in January 2002.

South Coast incident

During Christmas/New Year 2000/01, people who ate imported frozen prawns at a smorgasbord in Wollongong became ill from an agent identified as *Salmonella typhimurium*, the most commonly isolated type of *Salmonella* in this country. Fifteen people became ill with food poisoning of whom four were treated in hospital. Oysters and imported prawns were initially suspected, and the oysters were eliminated following SafeFood investigation.

Seafood

NSW Shellfish Quality Assurance Program

Legislation providing for the establishment of the NSW Shellfish Quality Assurance Program (SQAP) was gazetted in 1995 as clause 12 of Division 4 Part 2 of the Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 1995. Following passage of the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998, the Government agreed that the NSW SQAP should transfer from NSW Fisheries to SafeFood with the commencement of SafeFood's regulatory functions in July 1999. The Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Amendment (Administration) Regulation 1999 effected the transfer of responsibility.

The NSW SQAP controls the harvest of shellfish (currently limited to farmed oysters and mussels) from class A aquaculture leases which are issued by NSW Fisheries over public water lands.

Link ends

With the gazettal of the Food Production (Seafood Safety Scheme) Regulation 2001, the NSW SQAP will cease to be linked to NSW Fisheries legis-

lation and will be fully integrated under SafeFood's legislation. Coincident with the final transfer to SafeFood it is proposed that the NSW SQAP will be renamed the NSW Shellfish Program and extended to cover all bivalve shellfish farmed or collected for human consumption.

The objective of the NSW SQAP is to ensure that shellfish taken from estuarine waters to be sold for human consumption are safe and wholesome. This is achieved by constant monitoring of shellfish harvest areas to assess water and shellfish quality. When environmental samples indicate that a harvest area does not meet prescribed water and shellfish quality standards, it is closed. Harvest is not permitted to resume under the NSW SQAP until all testing and environmental parameters demonstrate that an area meets required quality standards.

The NSW SQAP is partly funded by industry through a State levy and local levies on class A aquaculture permits. Industry contributions and in kind support by the shellfish

aquaculture industry are supplemented to a large extent by SafeFood resources.

Rectification work

Currently the NSW SQAP operates in 31 estuaries and bays along the coastline of NSW, and actively monitors water and shellfish quality in 137 separate harvest areas. Throughout 2000/01 much of the NSW coastline was subject to very high rainfall, resulting on several occasions in serious flooding. The NSW SQAP had to implement 575 harvest area closures during the year.

Despite the heavy rainfall and resulting pollution of waterways, the NSW SQAP achieved its statutory objectives during 2000/01. No food safety incidents were demonstrated to be caused by oysters harvested in NSW during the year.

No formal product recalls were conducted. However 37 product retrievals (a total of 21,250 dozen oysters) were required because testing results demonstrated that end-product criteria were not met. Product retrievals were undertaken from farm premises and transport/wholesale establishments and in most cases, product was returned to the water for additional growth, to be harvested later.

Warning letters were issued to 10 farmers for non-compliance with NSW SQAP requirements and prosecutions were commenced against two farmers for failing to deperate oysters prior to sale for human consumption. The prosecutions are listed for hearing early in 2001/02.

Table 5. Audits and inspections*

Inspections	117
Follow up inspections	38
Audits	265
Action to enforce compliance	12
Produce unfit for human consumption	nil
Recalls/retrievals	
Voluntary and mandatory	37
Prosecutions	2

*These activities were conducted by the NSW SQAP under the provisions of the Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 1995 pending implementation of the Seafood Safety Scheme.

Oyster depuration

Depuration is a process in which harvested shellfish are placed in tanks containing high quality sea water to allow purging of the gut contents prior to sale. The requirement that all oysters produced in NSW be depurated before sale for human consumption commenced in 1983. In October 1999 responsibility for these matters transferred to the Chief Executive Officer of SafeFood. When the Seafood Safety Scheme is introduced, depuration provisions will be included in the shellfish program operations manual.

Depuration plants operate under the authority of a permit issued by SafeFood. The agency's auditors inspected oyster depuration facilities during September to December 2000 before the issue of new permits for calendar year 2001. A total of 265 audits were conducted, and over 80 improvement notices requiring work to be done were issued.

Funding for the audit project was provided from Seafood Branch development funds. Future audits will be conducted on a fee for service basis as a part of the seafood business audit.

Harvest area surveys

A shoreline survey of 98% of farmed shellfish harvest areas in NSW was undertaken by a specially trained SafeFood auditor in conjunction with SQAP staff. The remainder will be completed in 2001/02. The survey is the first component of the harvest area sanitary survey and is designed to identify actual and potential

pollution sources that may impact on shellfish in the area.

The project will improve existing levels of harvested shellfish safety and provide a sound basis for further sanitary survey work. The work to date has been funded by Seafood Branch development funds.

Corrie Island

Following the shoreline and sanitary survey of a harvest area it may be given a risk ranking and classified accordingly. A project to survey and classify oyster leases at Corrie Island, Port Stephens, has been completed and approved by SafeFood.

The Corrie Island harvest area had been classified as Conditionally Approved under the Australian Shellfish Quality Assurance Program. Subject to the necessary legislative changes, the classification will mean that when the harvest area is open, product may be harvested and sold directly to the market place for human consumption and not required to pass through the depuration process.

However, before the classification system can be implemented, the relevant section of the Fisheries Management (Aquaculture) Regulation 1995 must be repealed and the new Seafood Safety Scheme regulation introduced. The changes are expected to be complete in time to coincide with the commencement of harvest from Corrie Island leases.

Marine Algal Toxin Management

In 1999/2000, a number of State Government agencies agreed that the Department of Land and Water Conservation should become the lead agency to administer the Regional Algal Co-ordinating Committees (RACC) that co-ordinate communications and information on freshwater and marine algal blooms.

Members of the Marine Algal Biotoxin Liaison Group, chaired by SafeFood, have drafted an Algal Contingency Plan and Notification Protocol, which identifies the roles of various agencies, including SafeFood in managing the potential impact of algal blooms on coastal waters. The NSW SQAP has updated the marine biotoxin contingency/reaction plan to reflect developments in biotoxin management and notification procedures.

The Seafood Branch has bought a microscope and ancillary equipment to capitalise on in-house expertise in algal identification. Monitoring and surveillance of harvest areas is conducted as resources allow.

SafeFood's role is concerned with food safety issues, particularly related to fish and shellfish production and consumption. It liaises with NSW Health as required to ensure all public health safeguards are in place. The scope and functionality of the RACC structure continues to expand as resources improve and experience is gained.

Seafood

Product Tracking System

In November 2000, a new system of recording and tracking product harvested for human consumption was introduced by shellfish farmers. Previously, the requirement for accurate record keeping was limited to farmers who also operated depuration plants, and there was no systematic data collection system. The new record keeping system has greatly improved identification and tracking of product harvested for human consumption in NSW at all stages of the harvest, process and distribution chain.

Product record books are issued to all farmers and/or depuration plant operators. Each book is sequentially numbered, not transferable and specific number series are allocated to individual farmers. Unique product record numbers identify any farmer's product from the point of harvest through the distribution chain and, after the introduction of the Seafood Safety Scheme, to its final destination.

The product record book has significantly improved compliance with the NSW SQAP. It fulfilled the Wallis Lake Interagency Taskforce recommendation regarding improved product identification and increased the safety of farmed shellfish in the marketplace.

NSW Shellfish Quality Assurance Committee

The NSW Shellfish Quality Assurance Committee (NSW SQAC) is appointed by the Ministers for Fisheries and Agriculture. The SQAC's responsibilities include supervising

the administration of the NSW SQAP, advising the Minister on the establishment and operation of the NSW and local programs, and on the appointment of the manager of the NSW program.

The NSW SQAC is also responsible for developing and implementing programs for the education of aquaculture farmers and the general community in public health and environmental issues.

Members of the NSW SQAC who served during the year were: Don Burgoyne, Stephen Verdich, Paul Wilson and Graeme Campbell (industry representatives) and Andrew Derwent (SafeFood). Chair of the NSW SQAC was rotated between Don Burgoyne and Stephen Verdich. The NSW SQAP manager, Dr Kerry Jackson, attended all meetings.

Development plan

The NSW SQAC has determined that continued development of the NSW SQAP by completing sanitary surveys and formal classification of harvest areas will continue as the focus of its operations during 2001/03. The NSW SQAC is also committed to working with the Australian Shellfish Quality Assurance Advisory Committee to amend the current Australian Shellfish Quality Assurance Program to improve its applicability to NSW harvest areas and its suitability for the Sydney rock oyster, the species farmed primarily in NSW.

The NSW SQAC has agreed that education and training of local committee members is a primary goal. Development of a code of conduct and a work-

shop for members will be central to its schedule.

Review of the NSW SQAP

At the request of industry, SafeFood funded an external review of the SQAP to advise on the processes and funding requirements to progress it to world's best practice status for domestic and export shellfish markets. The review was divided into management and operational aspects, with separate reviewers for each part. The management review was completed in June 2000 and the final report for the operational review was received in January 2001.

The review analysed the operation of the NSW SQAP and drew comparisons with the Australian Shellfish Quality Assurance Program, the US National Shellfish Sanitation Program and the European Union Shellfish Quality Assurance Program.

The reviewer found that the NSW SQAP provides a good level of food safety for consumers of NSW farmed oysters. Recommendations were made for further improvement, particularly for provision of additional resources, and adoption of procedures that would lead to recognition of NSW SQAP on a footing equivalent to similar programs.

SafeFood has sought funding from NSW Treasury to implement the review recommendations relating to further risk assessment. SafeFood continues to consult with industry on the most effective means of continuing the development of the NSW SQAP, particularly on ensuring developments are tailored to NSW conditions.

SafeFood's Strategy Branch is a small unit responsible for whole-of-agency work in key program areas, including strategic management and planning, policy and legislation, science and risk management, communication and issues management.

Strategic management and planning

SafeFood's strategic plan has been in place since October 1999. The Strategy Branch is responsible for co-ordinating and managing the plan as well as the priority work areas arising out of it. The plan contains strategic projects and priority work areas outside the usual work of SafeFood's other branches.

Following its adoption, the strategic plan was incorporated into the annual plans of SafeFood's branches to form their strategic basis, aligning them in a common direction. The Strategy Branch developed a methodology and templates for the strategically aligned branch plans. They have now been developed into performance agreements between the Executive Director of each branch and the Chief Executive Officer ensuring management commitment to the plan. Next year the strategically based performance agreements will be cascaded throughout the organisation.

Policy and legislation

The policy work of the Strategy Branch during the year focussed on three areas:

- the Kerin Funding Review, intended to develop principles and options for a secure and stable revenue base for SafeFood;
- preparatory work for the Section 73 Review, through the Frost Sub-committee;
- SafeFood's participation in the new Food Regulation Ministerial Council and its supporting structures.

The first two areas are explained in detail in Development of SafeFood earlier in this Report. The third area is explained in the Review by the Chief Executive Officer.

Science and risk management

The Strategy Branch has focussed on science and risk management work for the plant products and goat and sheep milk industries for which there is not yet a food safety scheme.

The risk assessment work for plant products was recently finalised. Five products were identified as posing a high microbiological risk. These were fresh-cut vegetables (consumed raw), fresh-cut fruit, vegetables in oil, seed sprouts, and unpasteurised fruit juices.

A further 17 products were identified as posing medium microbiological and/or chemical risk. The risk assessment report describes existing programs, processes and practices currently in place to control these risks.

SafeFood will be guided by this report in developing a food safety scheme to address priority risk areas in the first instance. The scheme will be developed with the participation of industry and in consultation with consumer and government stakeholders. The target date for introduction of the scheme is mid-2002.

The goat and sheep milk risk analysis, which is almost complete, will provide a sound scientific foundation for development of a food safety scheme for the sector.

A joint Reference Group established for consultation during the risk analysis project of the goat and sheep milk industries consists of industry stakeholders and members from NSW Health, NSW Agriculture, Australia New Zealand Food Authority and SafeFood. The group's main function is risk communication to the industry, consumers and other government agencies.

The work of the Strategy Branch has aimed at increasing consistency and uniformity of food safety approaches across SafeFood's branches, and facilitating regular review of existing systems. For example, Strategy Branch worked with the operational branches to develop an agreed set of food safety system principles which each branch used to review or revise operational approaches.

Strategy

The risk analysis process requires regular review of existing programs to ensure that risks are appropriately prioritised and addressed. For example, the Dairy Food Safety Scheme is currently undergoing review through a risk analysis process. A similar process for the Meat Food Safety Scheme is planned for 2001/02.

Communications

SafeFood's strategic communication plan includes a twice yearly production of *SafeFoodNews*. It includes as well participation in national and international communication processes and conferences. Two editions of *SafeFoodNews* have been produced and distributed to a readership of around 2,000.

SafeFood believes that generating consumer understanding of food safety practices enhances its work on preventative food safety. To this end, it participates in the Food Safety Information Council and managed the secretariat/co-ordination of Food Safety Week 2000.

Presentations on SafeFood and its risk analysis process have been given at international scientific conferences in Germany, Austria and the UK, and at national conferences. They generated much local and overseas interest in SafeFood's approach.

SafeFood has received several international visitors seeking to share information on food safety approaches and techniques. These include the Chief Health Officer of Hong Kong food and environmental hygiene department, and delegates from the Canadian Food Safety Agency.

Issues management

The Strategy Branch prepared a SafeFood Emergency Management Plan with co-ordinated input from other branches. The plan sets out protocols for issues and crisis management across SafeFood.

Corporate Services

In July 2000 SafeFood's Executive approved a plan to create a single corporate service structure in one location by 1 September 2000. The object was to integrate effectively the corporate structures from the Dairy, Seafood and Meat areas, the last of which was due to be absorbed in August.

Implementation of the integration plan was undertaken in a consultative way through the work of an Integration Advisory Committee (IAC), consisting of representative staff from the Dairy, Meat and Seafood Branches and the Public Service Association. Placement and voluntary redundancy/redeployment policies were adopted, and appointments to the interim corporate service structure were recommended by the IAC and endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer.

All SafeFood head office staff were located in the Elizabeth Street, Sydney, premises as the most cost-effective option in the short term. Movements of staff were completed by 28 August 2000.

Corporate Services staff developed operational plans to provide services to all branches based on the desired outcomes of the SafeFood strategic plan. The operational plans focussed on merging corporate service delivery while providing day-to-day services. Staff were kept informed of changes as systems were rationalised.

In November 2000, one finance system was introduced for all SafeFood transactions and fleet management records and procedures were amalgamated.

Payroll and human resource management systems were combined by December 2000, and an Information Technology infrastructure was in place by February 2001. Implementation of the SafeFood records management plan was under way at the close of the year.

In June 2001, SafeFood commenced a review of its business processes with the intention of establishing one integrated, customer focussed way of conducting business. The review will examine the services provided by SafeFood, the human resource management systems in place and the workplace culture.

Equal Employment Opportunity

An organisational culture survey involving all staff was undertaken in SafeFood during the year. The survey is part of the more general program aimed at integration of the staffs, business processes, human resources and cultures of agencies that have been brought together to form SafeFood. It is one outcome of the transitional planning for SafeFood begun in the previous year. The results of the survey will form the basis of a management development program that is to be an EEO priority in 2001/02.

Joint Consultative Committee

A Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) that has been formed has representation from management and the Public Service Association and head office, regional and field staff.

One project initiated is the amalgamation of SafeFood auditor classifications and conditions of employment in the Dairy and Meat Branches. The project is aimed at greater flexibility in monitoring food safety programs and inspections of premises and systems. A conference of SafeFood auditors was held to enable staff members raise issues of concern that had emerged during the process.

Following recommendations of the JCC, an Occupational Health and Safety Committee to be formed early in 2001/02 will work in conjunction with the JCC.

Information management

SafeFood's Information Management and Technology Strategic Plan for 2000-03 provides the vision of a single corporate information system to support the functions of the agency. The system is known as the Customer Management System (CMS). The requirement and functional specifications for the system were completed in December 2000 with the assistance of a consultant contracted under the NSW Supply panel contract. In June 2001 SafeFood advised the State Contracts Control Board of the preferred tenderer for the supply of CMS software and integration services.

SafeFood developed an interim website in February 2001 providing an Internet presence for the agency. The website contains general information about SafeFood, contact information and the Annual Report.

Corporate services

Information technology

The information technology infrastructures of the former NSW Dairy Corporation and NSW Meat Industry Authority were relocated to SafeFood's head office in August 2000. By May 2001 a single information technology infrastructure was developed to provide the basis for future development. The work was carried out by Allcom Networks Pty Limited which was successful in a call for competitive quotations from the NSW Supply panel contract.

SafeFood contracts out all its information technology service needs. Allcom Networks has been contracted for the year from 1 June 2001 to provide SafeFood with network management and user help desk services, measured against a service level agreement.

Staff

At 30 June 2001 the staff of SafeFood totalled 71, excluding Senior Executive Service officers. As a result of the restructure of the Dairy Branch from 1 July 2000, 20 staff of the branch accepted voluntary redundancy packages, of whom 10 worked into the early part of 2000/01 completing wind-up tasks.

All staff accepting voluntary redundancy were provided with Job Search leave and access to the Job Assist Scheme. Five former Dairy Branch staff sought redeployment. Two gained positions in other public sector agencies, one was seconded to a Commonwealth agency for a period, followed by a second-

ment to private industry, and the other two were redeployed internally within SafeFood.

Two of the staff transferred to SafeFood as a result of the integration of the former NSW Meat Industry Authority obtained secondments to other Government agencies.

Tables 7-10 contain staff statistics.

Sick leave

Sick leave during the year averaged 4.69 days per staff member. Of all sick leave, 55% was supported by medical certificates.

Training

Two members of SafeFood's traineeship program graduated in 2000/01 to become fully qualified food safety auditors.

Women

One of two trainees who graduated as food safety auditors, Jane Verwoerd, was awarded the 2000 Murray Goulburn Award for best overall performance in the Graduate Certificate (Dairy Technology) at the University of Melbourne.

Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement

SafeFood maintains its commitment to the principles of cultural diversity. The Dairy Branch has pursued the implementation of HACCP-based quality systems in dairy factories operated by people from a language background other than English.

Assistance was provided in developing HACCP plans, upgrading HACCP systems and helping factory staff understand the importance and principles of quality systems in the production process.

The Seafood Branch has produced a leaflet in Vietnamese, Italian, Greek, Cantonese and English, setting out the legal requirements for licensing under the proposed Seafood Safety Scheme due to be introduced early in 2001/02. The leaflet also describes the guidelines that will be available to help operators develop their food safety programs, and to manage hazards.

Privacy management plan

In July 2000 SafeFood prepared and issued to all staff its Privacy Management Plan which contains details of the type of personal information SafeFood collects and maintains about its clients, stakeholders and staff in electronic and paper form. The plan was prepared in accordance with section 33 of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.

The plan emphasises SafeFood's obligation to ensure that all personal information collected for official use is used solely for the purpose for which it was collected, and that any use of it does not breach the provisions of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act.

As a consequence of the integration of the NSW Meat Industry Authority into

SafeFood in August 2000 and the creation of a Seafood Branch, the plan was revised, updated and reissued in March 2001.

Code of Conduct

SafeFood's Code of Conduct and Internal Reporting Policy under the Protected Disclosures Act were revised during the year to take into account the integration of the NSW Meat Industry Authority into SafeFood and the establishment of a Seafood Branch.

The Code of Conduct outlines the role and responsibilities of SafeFood and the responsibilities of each member of staff in terms of their conduct. The Internal Reporting Policy commits SafeFood to the aims and objectives of the Protected Disclosures Act 1994.

It recognises the importance of contributions of staff to enhance administrative and management practices, and strongly supports disclosures being made by staff which disclose corrupt conduct, maladministration or serious and substantial waste of public money.

At year-end draft documents were referred to the Joint Consultative Committee for comment before being finalised and submitted to the Executive Committee for endorsement and distribution to all staff.

Internal audit

SafeFood's internal audit functions are performed under contract by Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu. The arrangement provides for maximum efficiency and effectiveness in

monitoring SafeFood's systems of internal control, and the need to comply with aspects of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983.

Energy management

SafeFood is committed to its goal of exceeding the energy saving target of 25% by 2005 as required by the Government Energy Management Policy (GEMP). The agency has already achieved substantial energy savings exceeding the GEMP energy reduction target of 15% by 2001, by restructuring and rationalising its operations. Where cost effective and feasible SafeFood will endeavour to continue to reduce energy consumption in buildings and transport. (Table 6).

As part of its commitment to achieving savings in energy usage, SafeFood arranged for

an electricity tariff review of its head office and Taree office. The review of electricity consumption, undertaken in March 2001 by NSW Department of Public Works and Services, showed no savings were to be made at this stage by changing tariff at Taree office, while for head office the change would be only marginal and was not recommended.

It is likely that tariffs will be reviewed again in early 2002 when a full, open, contestable electricity market is scheduled to commence.

Accountability and responsibility for energy management in SafeFood has been established in accordance with the Energy Management Plan (EMP). SafeFood's 2000 Plan has been operating for more than 12 months and the annual review is due to commence shortly.

Table 6.

Major energy fuels purchased by SafeFood in 2000/01

	Total energy consumed (GJ)	% of total energy	Annual cost \$	Greenhouse gas(CO ₂) emission (tonnes)
Electricity	567.5	26	16,270	150.7
Petrol	6,490.6	74	196,754	428.4
Total	7,058.1	100	213,024	579.1

Electricity consumption in 2000/01 was 567.5 GJ, which is 1% less than 1999/2000 for SafeFood and NSW Meat Industry Authority combined. The energy performance indicator for the head office building was 415 MJ/m² per annum in 2000/01 compared to 449 MJ/m² per annum in 1999/2000.

Passenger vehicle fuel consumption was 10.86 litres/100km in 2000/01, including the additional vehicles in Meat Branch, compared to 10.74 litres/100km in 1999/2000.

Corporate services

Staff were reminded about SafeFood's energy management plan and of the need to save energy whenever possible by doing the simple things: turning off office lights, computers and office machines when not in use.

Milk Marketing (NSW) Pty Limited

The NSW dairy industry ceased providing financial support to Milk Marketing (NSW) Pty Limited at the end of 1999/2000 and the company ended its promotional campaigns for milk. However the company continued into 2000/01, winding up some aspects of its operations. It also worked with industry as a co-ordinator in sales analysis and in matters such as developing strategies for issues and crises management.

Early in 2000/01 the directors of the company resigned, and the Minister approved the reappointment of George Davey (Chief Executive Officer of SafeFood) as Chairman, and Robert Grey as director.

Pacific Industry Services Corporation Pty Limited

Pacific Industry Services Corporation Pty Limited (PISC), the subsidiary company of SafeFood, operated SafeFood's laboratories until it merged with a leading microbiological consultancy, Microtech Laboratories (NSW) Pty Limited, in May 2000. Under the arrangement, PISC held 35% of the issued capital of the joint venture.

The laboratory premises occupied by PISC at 140 Myrtle Street, Chippendale, were excluded from the arrangement. PISC retained ownership and received a commercial rent from Microtech for the premises. PISC's microbiology section moved to Microtech's premises, and the chemistry and food safety sections continued at PISC's premises at Chippendale.

Following a decision by Microtech to move to new premises in August 2001, SafeFood in August 2000 commissioned a report on the options available to it in relation to the laboratory premises at Chippendale occupied by Microtech.

SafeFood subsequently decided to sell the premises and in March 2001 accepted an offer of \$4.7 million with settlement planned for 1 August 2001.

During the year PISC was approached by a representative of Silliker-Biomerieux Corp. (USA), a company associated with Microtech offering to buy PISC's 35% share in the joint venture. Upon the recommendation of the PISC directors, SafeFood decided to sell the shares for \$525,000, which was \$92,029 above the original investment cost. An agreement for sale was made on 1 May 2001 with the purchase due to be settled on 1 August 2001.

Risk management

SafeFood participates in the NSW Treasury Managed Fund for workers compensation, motor vehicle, property, public liability and miscellaneous insurance. GIO General Insurances Ltd manages the Fund on behalf of the NSW Government.

SafeFood also implemented a comprehensive data backup regime during the year including a tape rotation schedule and an off-site tape storage provided by the NSW Government Records Repository.

Recycling

As required by the NSW Government Waste Reduction and Purchasing Policy, SafeFood this year submitted to the Environment Protection Agency its strategies on reducing waste and purchasing products with a recycled content.

During the year, an estimated 5.8 tonnes of paper waste was recycled from head office and Taree office. A program is in place to recycle used printer, fax and photocopier toner cartridges. All A4 size copy paper purchased for use by head office has an 80% recycled content.

Corporate Services

Table 7. Staff numbers by category

	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01	1999/00	2000/01
	Administration staff		Technical staff/ food safety auditors		Branch totals	
Corporate Services						
Administration	n/a	15	n/a	0	n/a	20
Licensing	n/a	5	n/a	0		
Strategy	1	1	2	2	3	3
Dairy	32	*1	28	20	60	21
Meat	n/a	0	n/a	17	n/a	21
#NLRS	n/a	4	n/a	0	n/a	0
Seafood	6	2	1	4	7	6
Total staff	39	28	31	43	70	71

* One officer on secondment to private industry

National Livestock Reporting Service (NLRS) is part of the Meat Branch and as at 30 June 2001 also employed 12 market reporters who are contract staff and are not included in the overall staff numbers.

Note: excludes Senior Executive Service officers one of whom was recruited during 2000/01.

Table 8. Representation and recruitment of Aboriginal employees and employees with a physical disability

	Total staff		Aboriginal staff		Staff with a physical disability	
	No.	Recruited	No.	Recruited	No.	Recruited
1999/00	70	10	2	0	5	0
2000/01	71	30**	1	0	3	0

** Includes 21 staff transferred from NSW Meat Industry Authority from 4 August 2000.

Recruitment comprised nine staff including five temporary and four permanent. They included five females and four males.

Note: excludes Senior Executive Service officers

Table 9. Staff numbers by gender

	1999/00	2000/01
Male	42	45
Female	28	26
Total	70	71

Note: Excludes Senior Executive Service officers

Corporate Services

Table 10. Representation of women and people from racial, ethnic and ethno-religious minority groups (REM) within salary levels at 30 June 2001

Salary level	1999/2000			2000/01		
	Total staff	Women	REM staff	Total staff	Women	REM staff
Below \$26,802	0	0	0	0	0	0
\$26,802 to \$35,202	4	4	0	2	2	0
%	6%	100%	0%	3%	100%	0%
\$35,203 to \$39,354	6	5	1	8	4	2
%	9%	83%	17%	11%	50%	25%
\$39,355 to \$49,799	11	7	1	14	8	1
%	16%	64%	9%	20%	57%	7%
\$49,800 to \$64,400	34	10	5	31	8	3
%	48%	29%	15%	44%	26%	10%
\$64,401 to \$80,499	14	2	1	15	4	1
%	20%	14%	7%	21%	27%	7%
Above \$80,499	1	0	0	1	0	0
%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Total	70	28	8	71	26	7
% Total staff	100%	40%	11%	100%	37%	10%

Note: excludes Senior Executive Service officers

Appendices

List of appendices

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- Achievement of strategic outcomes, as set out in SafeFood's Strategic Plan, to position the agency as a model for a single food safety agency for consideration in the Section 73 Review, scheduled to begin in December 2001.

- Timely completion of the Kerin Funding Review.

- Establishment of the Frost Sub-committee as the chief vehicle for providing Government with advice on a model for a single food safety regulator and key issues for the Section 73 Review.

- Formation of stakeholder consultative committees for strategic projects, in particular the Kerin Funding Review and Frost 2001 Review Sub-committee, comprising experts in specified areas and consumer representatives.

- Ensuring consultation with industry groups under Dairy and Meat Food Safety Schemes, including the operation of the NSW Dairy Industry Conference with discussions to commence on its future in a deregulated environment, and implementation of an effective informal Meat Industry Advisory Committee pending decisions in response to the review of the Meat Industry Consultative Committee.

- Representing SafeFood on the Australia New Zealand Food Regulation Standing Committee.

- Representing the State and Australia on a number of food safety and promotion related committees and organisations including Standards Australia and the International Dairy Federation.

1. Executive performance

Performance Statement: George Davey, Chief Executive Officer, Level 6.

As the Chief Executive Officer of Safe Food Production NSW during 2000/01, George Davey was responsible for:

- Co-ordination of regulatory reform and internal restructure with the dissolution of the NSW Meat Industry Authority and its incorporation as the Meat Branch of SafeFood. This included the enactment of the Meat Food Safety Scheme Regulation under the Food Production (Safety) Act 1998 and the successful rollout of the Meat Safety Scheme to retail, with 95% of retailers HACCP certified.

- Completion of the draft Seafood Safety Scheme and Regulatory Impact Statement. This included a successful public consultation process and independent review of the scientific credibility of the scheme by Food Science Australia.

- Effective application to the goat and sheep milk industries and the plant products sector of the innovative framework for risk analysis, developed for the Seafood Safety Scheme and based on internationally recognised principles.

- Maintaining dairy food safety through the difficult period of deregulation.

2. Representation on committees

SafeFood committees

Executive Committee

George Davey, *Chief Executive Officer*; Terry Outtrim, *Executive Director, Dairy Branch*; Barry Shay, *Executive Director, Meat Branch*; Dr Peter Ayres, *Executive Director, Seafood Branch*; Craig Sahlin, *Director, Development and Strategy*; Kate Allan, *Director, Corporate Services*; Chris Chan, *Director, Science and Risk Management*; Sian Malyn, *Financial Controller*; Samara Lever, *Executive Officer*.

Seafood Risk Analysis Reference Group

George Davey (Chair), Chris Chan (Program Manager), Peter Ayres.

Sheep and Goat Milk Risk Analysis Reference Group

Terry Outtrim (Chair), Chris Chan (Program Manager), David Miles.

Joint Consultative Committee

Management representatives: Terry Outtrim, Kate Allan, Narelle Millar, Aaron Iori; *staff representatives*: Peter Day, George Mottee, Lois Ruprecht, Pat Breen; *Public Service Association*: Anthony d'Adam, Alice Murphy.

Industry committees

SafeFood officers are members of a number of industry committees and industry and government bodies. They include:

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia, National Safe Food Working Group - Chris Chan.

Agriculture Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand: Meat Standards Committee - George Davey, Barry Shay, Peter Grant; Meat Standards Technical Committee - Barry Shay, Peter Grant.

Australia New Zealand Food Authority Review Committee of *Listeria* Standards - Peter Sutherland.

Australian Dairy Authorities' Standards Committee - Chris Chan.

Australian Dairy Products Federation Working Group, Review of Dairy Standards - Chris Chan.

Australian Dairy Products Standards Organisation - Chris Chan.

Australian Food and Grocery Council, Food Science Bureau - Barry Shay.

Australian Food Safety Information Council - Chair, Barry Shay; Chair, public relations - Samara Lever.

Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology, 35th Annual Convention organising committee - Samara Lever; convention technical committee - Samara Lever, Edward Jansson.

Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology, Food Safety and Hygiene Advisory and Scientific Affairs Committees - Barry Shay.

Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology, NSW Branch Food Microbiology Group - Peter Sutherland.

Australian Institute of Food Science, NSW Branch - Samara Lever

Australian National Committee of the International Dairy Federation - George Davey.

Australian Shellfish Quality Assurance Advisory Committee - Dr Kerry Jackson, Andrew Derwent.

Dairy Deregulation Impact and Assessment Committee - SafeFood representative, Terry Outtrim.

Dairy Industry Association of Australia - National Executive Council member, George Davey.

Dairy Industry Association of Australia, NSW Division - President, Peter Sutherland; George Davey, Edwina Mulhearn.

Dairy Research Foundation, University of NSW - George Davey.

Department of State and Regional Development Food Focus Group - Andrew Derwent.

Expert committee on *Listeriosis*, NSW Health - Peter Sutherland.

Food Safety Auditor Accreditation Committee - Edwina Mulhearn.

Food Safety Programs Project (Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care) Steering Committee - Craig Sahlin.

Interdepartmental Committee on Intensive Agriculture – Associate member, Dr Kerry Jackson.

International Dairy Federation Group, International Milk Promotion (IMP) Group - Vice President, George Davey.

International Dairy Federation Standing Committees on:

Marketing (including nutrimarketing) - George Davey (Rapporteur); Additive and Risk Management of Residues and Chemical Contaminant; Analytical Methods for Additives and Contaminants; Animal Health, Food Labelling and Terminology - Chris Chan.

Manufacturing Procedures: Microbiological Methods of Analysis; Microbiological Quality and Hygiene of Milk and Products - Peter Sutherland.

Microbiological Risk Management - George Davey, Peter Sutherland.

Physico-chemical Methods of Analysis: Quality Assurance, Statistics of Analytical Data, Sampling and Risk Assessment of Residues and Contaminants - Chris Chan.

International Journal of Food Microbiology, Editorial Committee - Barry Shay.

National Association of Testing Authorities Australia, Biological Accreditation Advisory Committee - Chairperson, George Davey.

NSW Fisheries Research Advisory Committee - Dr Peter Ayres.

NSW Meat Chemical Residue Consultative Committee - Chris Chan.

NSW Milk and Dairy Products Association Technical Committee - Chairperson, Chris Chan, Edwina Mulhearn.

NSW Dairy Industry Conference - ex officio member, Terry Outtrim.

NSW Meat Chemical Residue Consultative Committee - Chris Chan, David Miles.

NSW Milk and Dairy Products Association Technical Committee - Chairperson, Chris Chan; Edwina Mulhearn.

NSW Shellfish Quality Assurance Committee - Andrew Derwent.

On-site Sewage Management Program, Technical Advisory Panel - Dr Kerry Jackson.

Raymond Terrace Waste Water Treatment Works Special Monitoring Committee - Dr Kerry Jackson.

Regional Algal Co-ordinating Committee (Department of Land and Water Conservation) - Dr Kerry Jackson.

Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, Chicken Meat Committee - Chairman, Barry Shay.

South Coast Regional Algal Co-ordination Committee - Dr Kerry Jackson.

Standards Australia:

Committee FT/4, Food Microbiology - Chairperson, George Davey, Peter Sutherland; Committee FT/5, Cleaning and Sanitising Meat, Poultry, Seafood Industry - Peter Grant; Committee FT/9, Dairy Detergents and Sanitisers - Edwina Mulhearn; Committee FT/10, Chemical Analysis of Dairy Products - Chris Chan; Committee FT/11, Milk Coagulating Enzymes for Cheese Manufacture - Edwina Mulhearn; Committee FT/12, Dairy Factory Equipment - Chairperson, Edwina Mulhearn; Committee FT/15, Wrapping Materials for Dairy Products - Edwina Mulhearn; Committee FT/17, Salt for Food Manufacture - Edwina Mulhearn; Committee FT/21, Meat for Human and Animal Consumption - Barry Shay, Peter Grant; Committee QR/6, Guidelines on quality and/or environmental management systems auditing - Peter Grant.

The Crawford Fund, NSW Committee - George Davey.

Working Group on Primary Products Standards - Barry Shay.

SafeFood officers are directors of the following companies:

Milk Marketing (NSW) Pty Limited - Chair and Director, George Davey.

Pacific Industry Services Corporation Pty Limited - Director, Edwina Mulhearn.

3. Papers and presentations

Dr Peter Ayres

Executive Director, Seafood

Presentations: Briefing on development of Seafood Safety Scheme
NSW Oyster Industry Research and Development workshop
Port Macquarie, July 25-26 2000

Role and direction of SafeFood and Seafood Safety Scheme
Aquaculture Field Day
Bateman's Bay 3 August 2000

Development of proposed Seafood Safety Scheme
Fish Receivers workshop
Sydney Fish Market
11 October 2000

Introduction to SafeFood and Seafood Safety Scheme
Manager of Seafood Training Centre and directors of the Hunter Group Training
Newcastle
24 November 2000

Update on Seafood Safety Scheme
Oyster Farmers' Association
Executive Council
24 February 2001
NSW Farmers' – Oysters
10 March 2001

Good food handling practices
Merchants and Tenants Association, Sydney Fish Markets
8 May 2001

Introduction to the Seafood Safety Scheme
NSW Fish Co-operatives Association, Sydney
10 May 2001

Chris Chan
Director, Science and Risk Management

Presentations: SafeFood Overview
Meat Residues Consultative Committee
23 August 2000

Managing Risks, Delivering Food Integrity
AVCARE Summit
30 October 2000

Managing Food Safety Risks in the Dairy Industry
Dairy Industry Association of Australia National Conference
Sydney, 1 June 2001

George Davey
Chief Executive Officer, SafeFood

Presentations: Risk Analysis as a food safety tool
Australian Society for Microbiology, Annual Scientific Meeting,
Cairns, 8-13 July 2000

Generic promotion of milk in Australia

All Africa Dairy Expo 2000
Bloemfontein, South Africa
11-13 September 2000
(and publication in proceedings)

SafeFood Overview
Cattle and Sheepmeat Committees of the NSW Farmers Association
19 February 2001

SafeFood Overview
Packaging Council of Australia
27 March 2001

Which Method? A Food Microbiologist's Nightmare
Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology, 33rd Annual Convention
Brisbane
21 August 2000
(published in Food Australia)

ESL. A Sleeping Giant or Lame Duck?
International Dairy Federation
World Dairy Summit
Dresden, Germany
16-20 September 2000
(and paper in Australian Dairy Foods)

The Australian Dairy Situation
International Dairy Federation
World Dairy Summit,
Dresden, Germany
16-20 September 2000

Food Safety Regulation in Australia - Keeping it Clean and Green
International Dairy Federation
Vienna, Austria
10 May 2001

Issues and Crises Management
International Dairy Federation
Vienna, Austria
10 May 2001

The Australian Dairy Situation
International Dairy Federation
Vienna, Austria
10 May 2001

Butter. Taste the difference,
Australian Dairy Corporation entry to International Milk Presentation Trophy
International Dairy Federation
Vienna, Austria
10 May 2001

Dairy: The Food of Life. Australian Dairy Corporation Campaign International Dairy Federation Vienna, Austria
10 May 2001

The Rise and Fall of Australian School Milk Programs - An Opportunity Lost
The 1st North American International Conference on School Milk Toronto, Canada
4-6 June 2001

George Davey and Chris Chan
Presentations: SafeFood NSW - Approach to Risk Analysis and Crisis Management
International Dairy Federation Vienna, Austria
10 May 2001

Practical application of Risk Analysis
10th Australian Food Microbiology Conference
Melbourne, 30 March 2001

Dr Kerry Jackson
Program Manager, NSW SQAP

Presentations: Shellfish Safety in NSW - Update on Recent Initiatives Since Joining SafeFood
Australian Shellfish Quality Assurance Advisory Committee, Adelaide
13 October 2000 and on 23 May 2001

Update of harvest area classification and Seafood Safety Scheme
NSW Farmers' Oyster section
8 June 2001

Edward Jansson
Program Development Officer,
Seafood

Paper: Lactic acid bacteria. In Moir et al (Eds) 2001. Spoilage of Processed Foods: Causes and Diagnosis. AIFST Inc (NSW Branch), Food Microbiology Group, Sydney.

Samara Lever
Executive Officer

Presentation: Educating consumers - A report of Food Safety Information Council Activity
Second Food Safety Forum, Canberra
21 February 2001

Edwina Mulhearn
Senior Food Safety Officer - Factory and Quality Assurance

Presentation: Pasteuriser design standard review - industry feedback
Dairy Process Engineering Centre - Pasteuriser Design Standard Review
7 May 2001

Craig Sahlin
Director, Development and Strategy

Presentation: SafeFood Overview
AVCARE Animal Health Committee
22 February 2001

Craig Sahlin and Chris Chan

Presentation: SafeFood, The Fundamentals of a Food QA System
Strategic Food Industry Conference
2001
30 April 2001

Barry Shay
Executive Director, Meat

Presentations: (1) Food Safety Objectives
(2) Microbial Risk Analysis
National Food Technology Seminar
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
20-27 October 2000

The BSE Crises - Lessons for the Dairy Industry
Dairy Industry Association of Australia National Conference
Sydney, 1 June 2001

Peter Sutherland
Technical and Operations Director,
Dairy

Presentations: Safe Food Production NSW overview and Johne's disease control programs in NSW
Northern Ireland Dairy Council
Belfast, Northern Ireland
1 February 2001

Mycobacterium paratuberculosis - a dairy conundrum
Dairy Industry Association of Australia, National Conference
Sydney, 1 June 2001

Paper: The international battle to control Johne's disease on farm
Australian Dairy Foods
April 2001

4. Overseas visits

The Chief Executive Officer, George Davey, attended the International Dairy Federation (IDF) World Dairy Summit in Dresden, Germany, from 16-20 September 2000. Mr Davey represented Australia on Standing Committees dealing with Marketing and Promotion, and Safety and Hygiene. At meetings of the Standing Committee on Marketing and the International Marketing and Promotions Group, Mr Davey was elected Rapporteur and Vice Chairman respectively.

In the week before the IDF meetings in Dresden, Mr Davey was invited by the Milk Producers Organisation (MPO) of South Africa to present a paper on 'Generic Promotion of Milk in Australia' at MPO meetings in Pretoria and Pietermaritzburg, and at the All Africa Dairy Expo 2000 held in Bloemfontein from 11-13 September 2000. Costs for Mr Davey to attend the meetings in Germany and South Africa were met by the MPO of South Africa and Milk Marketing (NSW) Pty Limited.

In May 2001, Mr Davey attended meetings of the Presidium of the International Milk Promotion Group and the IDF Standing Committee on Marketing in France from 4-6 May, and the IMP mid-year meeting in Vienna, Austria, from 9-11 May.

Mr Davey also attended meetings in London to discuss bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), Mycobacterium paratuberculosis (MAP), foot and mouth disease and the relationship between Johne's disease in dairy cows and human Crohn's disease. The costs for Mr Davey to attend these meetings were met by the Australian Dairy Corporation.

Mr Davey attended the First North American International Conference on School Milk in Toronto, Canada, from 4-6 June 2001. At this conference, Mr Davey presented a paper on 'The Rise and Fall of Australian School Milk Programs - an Opportunity Lost?' The costs for Mr Davey to attend this conference were met by the organising committee.

The Executive Director, Meat, Barry Shay, delivered two papers to the National Food Technology Seminar, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 20-27 October 2001. One paper was on Food Safety Objectives, and the second on Microbial Risk Analysis. The cost of the visit was borne in part by the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute.

SafeFood's Technical and Operations Director, Dairy, Peter Sutherland, was overseas from 24 January to 7 February 2001. He attended in Belgium the International Dairy Federation Symposium on Control and Management of Mycobacterium paratuberculosis.

He visited the UK Dairy Industry Federation, the UK Food Standards Agency, National Dairy Council and Hannah Research Institute in the United Kingdom, and Queen's University and the Northern Ireland Dairy Council in Belfast. On 1 February he presented a paper to the Northern Ireland Dairy Council on 'Safe Food Production NSW overview and Johne's disease control programs in NSW'.

5. Freedom of Information

Applications for information under the Freedom of Information Act 1989 are processed by SafeFood's Freedom of Information (FOI) co-ordinator who may be contacted on (02) 9295 5717. In the spirit of the legislation, SafeFood has a policy of open access to information where possible. FOI applications are few and therefore of limited impact on resources.

FOI requests	2000/01	1999/2000
New	2	5
Brought forward	1	0
Total to be processed	3	5
Unfinished (carried forward)	0	1
Completed applications		
Granted in full	2	3
Access granted in part	1	0
Refused	0	1
Total	3	4
Formal consultations	0	0
Amendment/notation of personal records	0	0
Requests granted in part or refused		
Basis for disallowing or restricting access		
Exempt	1	1
Total	1	1
Costs		
Assessed	\$60	\$120
Received	\$60	\$120
Days to process		
0-21 days	3	3
22-35 days	0	1
Total	3	4
Hours to process		
0-10 hours	0	3
11-20 hours	3	1
Total	3	4
Reviews and appeals finalised		
Internal	1	0
Ombudsman	0	0
Admin Decisions Tribunal	0	0
Grounds for request for internal review		
Access refused	1	0
Internal review results		
Upheld	1	0
Varied	0	0

6. Consultancies

Details of consultants engaged costing \$30,000 or more:

Project :
Develop Requirement and
Functionality Specification for
Customer Management System
(CMS) - Stage 1

Consultant : Mastech Asia Pacific

Cost : \$33,522

Project :
CMS Procurement Project -
Stage 2

Consultant : Mastech Asia Pacific

Cost : \$44,000

Project :
Technical Assistance to Kerin
Funding Review

Consultant : Hassall & Associates

Cost : \$40,000

Details of consultants engaged
below \$30,000 in cost:

Total number of consultancies: 13

Total cost: \$114,260

7. Senior Executive Service

CEO/SES positions 4

Level/Band 1 CEO Level 6
3 SES Level 3

Positions filled by women 0

The remuneration package for the
Chief Executive Officer totals
\$219,510 per annum including
employment benefits of \$18,248.

8. Publications

Annual Report of Safe Food Production NSW 2000/01. ISSN No 1038-3093. Print run 500. Average cost per copy \$12.90. Available free.

Statement of Affairs. The Annual Report represents the Statement of Affairs of SafeFood. Available free.

SafeFoodNews. This publication is produced twice yearly. Available free.

Code of Conduct sets out a standard of conduct for employees of SafeFood. Available free.

Dairy Manual. Details sample handling procedures, test requirements and chemical and microbiological test methodology. Available from head of file at a cost of \$200.

Code of Practice for the Collection of Milk from Dairy Farms - March 1997. Describes bulk farm milk sampling procedures and testing requirements, and storage and collection requirements. Available free.

Code of Practice for Dairy Buildings- September 1995. Outlines the structural and site requirements for dairy buildings. Available free.

Code of Practice for Depuration Plants. Revised by the Expert Committee to Review Oyster Depuration Standards in NSW. Available free.

Code of Practice for Milk Distribution Depots - January 1995. Details the structural and site requirements for milk distribution depots. Available free.

Australian Manual for Control of Listeria in the Dairy Industry* - July 1996.

Australian Manual for the Control of Salmonella in the Dairy Industry* - January 1994.

*These are national manuals providing the Australian dairy industry with a greater understanding of Listeria and Salmonella and the various programs designed to detect and minimise contamination. Available from SafeFood at a cost of \$20 each.

9. Statement of responsibility

SafeFood has effected internal control processes designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of its objectives. The internal audit function conducts a program of review to assess these controls.

George Davey
Chief Executive Officer
SafeFood Production NSW
24 August 2001

Safe Food Production NSW
Annual Report 2000/01

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