



*Visit of the
New Zealand Minister on Food Safety
3 March 2008*

Creation of EFSA

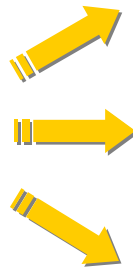


Origins

- Succession of food scares (e.g. BSE, dioxins)
- Loss of consumer confidence in safety of food chain and damaged trust in public authorities
- Creation of agencies to handle food issues at national level
- ➔ Need to strengthen EU food safety system and policy

EFSA has three main goals

Make a
significant
contribution to:



Improving EU food safety

Re-building consumer
confidence in EU food safety

Re-building confidence of
trading partners in the EU
food supply

Legal basis

Regulation EC 178/2002 – 28 January 2002

- General principles / requirements of Food Law
- Establishment of EFSA
- Rapid alert system, crisis management and emergencies

Mandate

- Provision of scientific advice and support for Community legislation/policies in all fields with direct/indirect impact on food and feed safety
- Provision of independent information on all matters within these fields
- Risk communication

The main changes

- Risk assessment separated from risk management
- EFSA not part of European Commission nor answerable to it
- EFSA has independent Management Board
- EFSA works in close co-operation with national authorities
- EFSA to actively consider and meet stakeholder needs (in particular consumers)
- Better support to and coordination of Scientific Panels

EFSA's tasks

1. Provide scientific advice, opinions, information, and technical support for Community legislation and policies
2. Collect and analyse data to allow characterisation and monitoring of risks
3. Promote and coordinate development of uniform risk assessment methodologies
4. Communicate risks related to all aspects of EFSA's mandate

Who can task EFSA?

- European Commission
- European Parliament
- Member States
- EFSA can also task itself

What EFSA does



Core values

Scientific excellence

Independence

Openness

Transparency

Responsiveness

EFSA structure



**Management
Board**

**Advisory
Forum**

**EFSA Directorate
and Staff**

**Scientific Committee
and Panels**

Composition

14 Members

- Selected on basis of individual expertise and competence through an open call
- Members do not represent EU Member States
- Widely range of backgrounds (e.g. consumer, government, agriculture, industry, retail as well as scientific experience)

1 Member representing the European Commission (DG SANCO)

Role

- Primary role: ensure Authority functions effectively and efficiently
- Establish budget, agree work programmes and monitor implementation
- Ensure Authority stays within remit of Founding Regulation
- Appoint Executive Director, Scientific Committee and Panels
- Audit Authority's operations

Scientific Panels

- Food additives, flavourings, processing aids, materials in contact with food (AFC)
- Animal Health and Welfare (AHAW)
- Biological hazards (BIOHAZ)
- Contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)
- Additives and products in animal feed (FEEDAP)
- Genetically modified organisms (GMO)
- Dietetic products, nutrition and allergies (NDA)
- Plant health (PLH)
- Plant Protection Products (PPR)

Scientific Panels

- Structure defined in Founding Regulation and carried over from Commission
- Cover whole food chain
- Members appointed by Management Board following open call for applications
- Chairs appointed for three years renewable
- Selected on basis of proven scientific excellence, experience in relevant fields, specialised expertise
- Geographical balance and gender also taken into account
- Maximum 21 members per panel
- Composition re-established every three years

Scientific Committee

COMPOSITION

- Chairs of nine Scientific Panels
- Six scientists not members of any Panel

ROLE

- General co-ordination of EFSA's scientific work, ensure consistency of opinions
- Guidance and scientific advice on multi-sectoral issues
- Establish expert working groups
- Advice on risk assessment and policies related to EFSA scientific work

Composition

- Representatives from national food safety authorities/bodies with role equivalent to EFSA
- One representative per Member State (special representatives for animal health and plant health)
- Commission and European Parliament invited as observer
- Special invitees (accession countries, observers from Norway, Iceland, Switzerland)

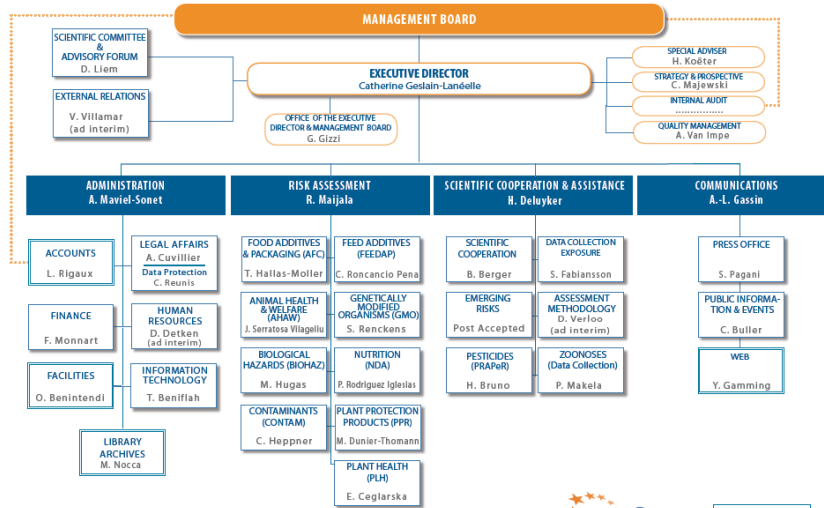
Role

- Advise EFSA on scientific matters, work programme/priorities and emerging risks
- Ensure close collaboration between national bodies and EFSA
- Assist in resolving contentious scientific issues and avoiding divergent views on food/feed safety issues
- Avoid duplication of scientific effort
- Play a key role in sharing and disseminating information
- Assist in increasing scientific co-operation between Member States

Overall profile

- Over 317 in February 2008
- Genuinely multinational and multicultural
- Temporary agents, contract agents, national experts

EFSA Staff



Communications



Communication

Provide appropriate, consistent, accurate and timely communications on food safety issues to all interested parties, stakeholders and the public at large, based on the Authority's risk assessments and scientific expertise

Context

27 Member States with different attitudes and perceptions regarding:

- Nutrition and health
- Food safety
- Risk

Risk perceptions: Top Concerns

PESTICIDES: Greece, Italy, Hungary, France, Portugal, Slovenia, Germany, Spain, Finland

NEW VIRUSES LIKE AVIAN INFLUENZA: Malta, Latvia, The Netherlands

RESIDUES IN MEAT: Cyprus, Greece, Belgium

FOOD HYGIENE OUTSIDE HOME: Poland, United Kingdom, Denmark, Ireland, Spain



CONTAMINATION BY BACTERIA: Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Slovakia

POLLUTANTS LIKE MERCURY OR DIOXINS: Belgium

GMOs: Austria

ADDITIVES: Lithuania, Estonia

WELFARE OF FARMED ANIMALS: Denmark, Sweden

How to be effective?

- Understand public perception of risks linked to food chain
- Explain and contextualise risk
- Work with key actors to reach a broader public with relevant messages
- Co-ordinate communications with risk managers, i.e. Commission and Member States

How EFSA involves Stakeholders

- Stakeholder Consultative Platform (since 2005)
- Board meetings: web-cast, open to public
- Public Consultations
- Bilateral meetings
- Speaking engagements
- Pre-notification of scientific opinions and press releases

Milestones in 2007



- Our output of scientific opinions passed 500 - 185 opinions and reports this year
- EFSA's Strategy for Networking and Scientific Cooperation becomes more concrete – realisation of joint projects with MSs – signature of "focal Points" agreements
- EFSA and the US FDA signed a unique and historic agreement on information exchange
- Process around DOIs strengthened – new procedure adopted by the MB
- Responsiveness – accelerated procedure endorsed by MB
- Scientific excellence = internal and external review of scientific output
- The number of employees reaches 300
- EFSA marked its 5th anniversary – celebrations with all partners

Challenges



- Increasing and partially predictable workload
- Adjusting prioritisation with Risk Managers
- Regulatory deadlines, increasing urgency for opinions
- New technologies, e.g. nanotechnology, animal cloning
- Changing legislative landscape
- Emerging risk

Key objectives for 2008

- Continue to deliver the best scientific advice in a timely manner, in a context of increasing workload (X2)
- Build on the quality of EFSA's scientific outputs
- Be at the forefront of RA methodologies in Europe
- Enhance the impact and effectiveness of EFSA communications