



Minutes of the Eleventh Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee of  
**safe food**, held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2009 at 9.30 am  
**safe food**, Block B, Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

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**PRESENT:**

Prof Charles Daly, Chairperson (CD)  
Dr Wayne Anderson (WA)  
Dr Ken Baird (KB)  
Mr Jim Buckley (JB)  
Mr Barny Heywood (BH)  
Mr Martin Mullane (MM)  
Dr Brian Smyth (BS)  
Prof Barbara Livingstone (BL)  
Ms Patricia McCusker (PM)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Martin Higgins, Chief Executive (MH)  
Mr Ray Dolan, Director, Corporate Operations  
Dr Marian Faughnan, Senior Technical Executive, Human Health & Nutrition (MF)  
Dr Cliodhna Foley-Nolan, Director, Human Health & Nutrition (CFN)  
Ms Fiona Gilligan, Director Marketing & Communications (FG)  
Dr Gary A. Kearney, Director, Food Science (GK)  
Dr David McCleery, Chief Specialist Microbiology (DMcC)  
Dr Michelle Moore, **safe food** Fellow (MMO)  
Dr Aileen McGloin, Scientific Support Manager (AMcG)  
Ms Erin Brennan, Minute Secretary (EB)

**APOLOGIES:**

Dr John Egan (JE)  
Prof Seamus Fanning (SF)  
Dr Brian Gaffney (BG)  
Dr Robert Houston (BeH)  
Dr Derval Igoe (DI)  
Mr Gerry McCurdy (GMcC)  
Prof David McDowell, Vice Chairperson (DMcD)  
Dr Emer Shelley (ES)  
Ms Catherine Foye (CF)  
Dr James McIntosh (JMCI)  
Mr Peter Dewhurst (PD)

## **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

*The Chairperson welcomed all members to the eleventh meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). Dr Aileen McGloin was introduced as the Scientific Support Manager taking over from Dr Geraldine Quinn.*

## **2. MINUTES OF THE TENTH MEETING OF THE SAC HELD ON 7<sup>TH</sup> FEB 2008.**

The minutes were agreed and adopted.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

No matters were arising.

## **4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (oral)**

No questions arose regarding the declaration of interests.

## **5. ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE IN FOOD PAPER (SAC/2008/13)**

A final draft of the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and Food Safety paper was circulated to members prior to the meeting. Members were asked for their feedback:

**Noted:** SF sent recommendations to DMcD for further comment.

**Noted:** Suggested amendments for Chapter 8 (Conclusions and Recommendations) included emphasizing human health implications before animal health, and also to expand upon the recommendations.

**Noted:** Dissemination and a related conference/launch will hopefully occur in the autumn.

**Action:** An in-house planning committee will be organised for a potential conference in September/October 2009.

**Noted:** JB would like to see the environmental impact included in the recommendations.

**Noted:** MM congratulated the team on their work. MM noted that future ownership of this project must be decided. This paper presents both a challenge and opportunity for **safe food** to build upon this work.

**Noted:** BS noted that the Department of Health in NI will be pushing for AMR research in humans.

**Noted:** Feedback from members was noted for consideration and MH thanked all for their contributions.

**6. CONSUMER FOCUSED REVIEW PRESENTATION – DR MICHELLE MOORE**

MMO presented the latest in a series of consumer reviews entitled "Where Does Our Food Come From?"

- Noted:** Imports to the ROI are ten times that of imports to Northern Ireland. MH noted that a possible reason for this disparity may be because goods from the United Kingdom are considered imports if they are going to the ROI, whereas the same is not true for NI.
- Noted:** KB noted that the report should mention that imports into the country can then be exported as 'Irish' produce. The paper should present figures for total imported goods (including imports that are exported from the island).
- Action:** CFN recommended that KB's note be explicitly outlined in a footnote.
- Noted:** BL noted that price differentials and consequential cross-border shopping patterns in NI and the ROI should be noted.
- Noted:** WA noted that at the Beverage Council Conference a few weeks ago, they presented independently collected data on shopping patterns and **safefood's** results indicate a similar pattern.
- Noted:** WA noted that in Section 5.7 of the report (pg 81), the first sentence on imported foods needs to be adjusted, as the data do not support. Similarly, changes should be reflected in the conclusions (pg 122).
- Noted:** The report is completed and both the full report and a consumer summary document will soon be ready for publication.
- Noted:** The next CFR will focus on 'changing food behaviour'; it's currently in the early stage of development.
- Noted:** BL congratulated **safefood** for taking on this next CFR topic, and offered her support.
- Noted:** BS noted that the National Dietetic and Nutrition Survey is monitoring food intake through ongoing field work.
- Noted:** BL noted that socioeconomic status (SES) is an important determinant in food choices. Priority exists in targeting individuals with lower SES.
- Noted:** Given the depth of this work, the project will consist of two consumer reviews.
- Noted:** The Chair wished AMcG and her team luck for the next CFR.

## 7. RESEARCH/FUTURE ROLE

- Noted:** This paper is a result of discussions from last October's mini conference.
- Noted:** The current SAC term has not formally been extended by the North-South Ministerial Council, but this will hopefully occur in June.
- Noted:** MH noted that the Advisory Board does not have the same diverse scientific background as the SAC; this highlights the importance of having the SAC for **safefood**. Furthermore, a uniform governing board for all North-South Bodies has been suggested, but there has been no guidance on this as of yet. The NSMC is responsible for appointments to advisory committees for all North-South bodies.
- Noted:** MH invited members to comment on how they think the SAC can be enhanced (through email correspondence).
- Noted:** BH commented on the final bullet point in the 'Observations' section; individuals not involved in sports centres need to be reached and introduced to the idea of physical activity.
- Noted:** An All-Island Obesity Action Forum (AIOAF) is currently being facilitated by **safefood** and is endorsed by the NSMC.
- Noted:** JB noted that **safefood**'s work with the AIOAF should be highlighted and made more visible.
- Noted:** AMcG suggested featuring alumni in the AIOAF newsletter.

## 8. COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

FG provided an update of current activities in the Marketing & Communication Directorate at **safefood**.

- Noted:** Little Steps Obesity Campaign
- This is a healthy eating campaign in partnership with the Health Service Executive in the ROI.
  - The Health Promotion Agency (HPA) in NI has had to recently back-out of the campaign. It has not been established if or when they will come back on board.
  - The campaign was re-launched on 30<sup>th</sup> March for 3 weeks; this included 3 weeks of television and 2 weeks of radio.
  - The website has recently been repurposed and now includes new elements such as a healthy meal planner, a [www.daysout.ie](http://www.daysout.ie) resource, and a calendar of activities.
  - The campaign will roll out again in June with summer messages.
  - In September, the television and radio adverts will run again.
  - The campaign will be extended to other stakeholders, and plans are currently ongoing.

**Noted:** Speak Out

- This is a two-pronged food safety campaign for consumers and industry.
- 140 restaurants have currently signed up; trade media will be increasingly targeted in June.

**Noted:** Food Hygiene Campaign

- This is a new 2-year campaign.
- The campaign is based on research from the University of College Dublin (UCD) that looked at test kitchen scenarios and resulting consumer behaviour. Food safety risks and common behaviour were identified.

**Noted:** Tastebuds

- Tastebuds is an educational resource for primary schools.
  - i. Training for primary school teachers in the ROI will occur in the summer.
  - ii. There is a similar program taking place in NI and plans for possible collaboration are ongoing.

**Noted:** When Sammy Met Sally

- Preschool book developed and produced by Bartletts.

**Noted:** Safe Food for Life

- Extended to 100 youth reach centres in the ROI

**Noted:** Food for Sport Leaflet

- Leaflet developed in conjunction with the INDI.
- Targets a teenage audience.
- Will be rolled-out to focus groups in the next 2 weeks.
- Final draft is expected at the end of May.

**Noted:** Powdered Infant Formula Leaflet

- In partnership with the HSE
- Has been revised and has gone to print
- Will be distributed through midwives and hospitals

**Noted:** Susie Moo

- This resource targets children in primary schools who are visiting open farms.
- Leaflets were distributed at the Balmoral Show.

**Noted:** The Balmoral Show

- The focus was handwashing on the farm.
- Did not share a stand with the FSANI this year.

**Noted:** National Food Safety Week

- Partnered with Age Concern; the theme was food safety for the elderly.
- The resource is a bingo game that has been focus tested and accepted.

- Noted:** All Island Obesity Action Forum
- A conference was held in June in Belfast.

- Noted:** Allergy Training Workshops
- Targets EHO's and third level caterers.
  - Was piloted in the border regions and has now been rolled-out on an all-island basis.

## 9. SAC PROGRESS REPORT

- Noted:** Members were given the updated SAC Progress Report document for information.

## 10. CHALLENGING AND EMERGING ISSUES: *TOUR DE TABLE*

The CEO invited members to identify issues that they considered to be of note. These included:

- ✓ Congratulations were offered to **safefood** for the Allergy workshops.
- ✓ NI is currently undergoing a major structural change that will be seen in a variety of different agencies and sectors. Until the new mandates have been resolved, contacts will be difficult to maintain. It will be important to maintain personal relationships with individuals in order to maintain organisation relationships.
- ✓ There will be a growing emphasis on biosecurity and its application in food control.
- ✓ The transfer of momentum to the next SAC should be addressed.
- ✓ Due to the recession, there is a greater emphasis on price and less pressure on the food industry with quality; food safety standards must be maintained.
- ✓ With more people from the ROI shopping in NI, foods that should be temperature-controlled in the car need to be addressed.
- ✓ The FSA corporate strategy for the next 3/5 years is currently out for consultation.
- ✓ It is important to maintain the organisation's momentum in this current economic climate.

- Noted:** MH thanked all for their input.

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Noted:** MH noted that MP will be resigning from the SAC. She has been involved with the committee since the organisation first began. MH

will be meeting her tomorrow and will make a small presentation on behalf of the **safefood** staff and SAC.

**Noted:** The Chair thanked members for their contribution and closed the meeting.