



## 'Name and shame' proves popular with consumers

Over 120 food outlets appeared in the first two months of the NSW government's new 'name and shame' register, drawing wide media attention and over 79,000 visitors to the Food Authority website.

The online register, unveiled by Primary Industries Minister Ian Macdonald on 1 July, had the details of 57 NSW food businesses that had breached food laws in the first month.

New laws enabling the publishing of offenders' details came into effect in NSW on 3 May.

By the end of July, the website had listed nearly 100 separate offences in 27 NSW council areas – averaging 17 new listings a week.

State-wide media paid close attention to the website's first month with over 60 separate news items, prompting an unprecedented spike in traffic to the Food Authority's dedicated 'name and shame' website.

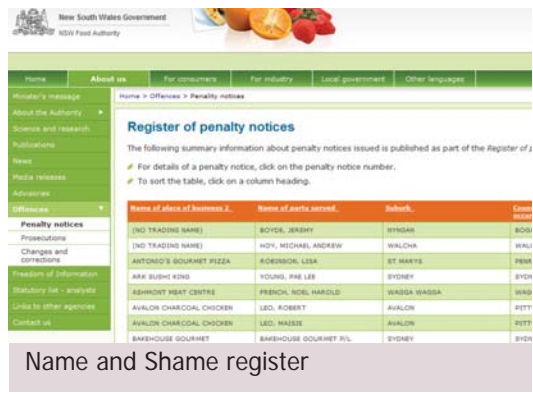
Mr Macdonald said the early figures showed that the website is achieving its aim of giving families better access to food business performance.

"The website publication system is simple to use and effective – it delivers specific information about those few food businesses that aren't up to scratch," he said.

New laws enacted in July also gave local councils formal responsibility in food safety monitoring and regulation.

"Councils play an important role in this new initiative and I congratulate them for their work in making food outlets safer and helping consumers to become better informed," Mr Macdonald said.

"While improving consumer information, the new website also provides a powerful incentive for the food industry to boost its performance."



Name and Shame register

## Vigilance the key for crisis management

Planning, preparation and communication were the key concepts emerging from the inaugural Issues and Crisis Management in the Food Industry conference hosted by the NSW Food Authority in Sydney in June.

While food safety in Australia ranks as one of best in the world, speakers at the conference urged delegates to constantly revise and refine crisis plans right down to the finest detail.

Not only should organisations have a comprehensive, tested crisis management plan in place, but a thorough 'book end' communication strategy should accompany it.

An example of how much importance some organisations place on communication came from

the UK Food Standards Agency, which devotes a third of its annual budget on communication.

Crisis case studies such as the food extortion events, the UK's mad cow disease outbreak and the NSW experience of equine influenza were some crises examined by speakers.

The positive and negative aspects of how these crises were handled were examined.



Guest speaker Prof Robert Chandler, Communication Division Chair, Pepperdine University, California USA.



Guest speaker Ellen Morrison, Director, Office of Crisis Management, US Food and Drug Administration



## NEWS

### Food safety focus shifts to Shanghai for 2010

The Food Authority's expertise as a respected food safety advisor is again being sought for another international mega event, the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai, China.



'Haibao' World Expo 2010 cartoon mascot character

China's biggest city will host the World Expo from May to October 2010 and is expected to attract a record 70 million visitors.



George Davey presents at a Food Safety symposium in Shanghai

Under the theme 'Better City – Better Life', Expo authorities will again be looking to outside food safety experts to ensure plans and processes are in place to ensure safe food.

Authority Director-General,

George Davey, who attended a symposium on food safety in the host city in May, said the Authority's experience in advising on food safety at major events such as the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, the Rugby World Cup, APEC, World Youth Day and most recently the Beijing Olympics, was well respected.

Mr Davey was one of a group of international experts who advised the Beijing Olympics organisers on how to deliver food safety during the Games just completed in August.

The two-day Shanghai symposium looked at improving food safety controls and assurance systems for the six-month long event.

### Record prosecutions

The Food Authority continued its unbroken prosecution success rate in June with two judgements handed down in the courts for a record \$174,000 in fines.

The former owner of a chain of Sydney poultry meat shops was fined \$132,000 for 22 food law offences, while a Port Macquarie man was convicted of five offences relating to the harvest and sale of unsafe oysters and fined \$42,000.

Following Food Authority inspections, five chicken meat shops in Sydney's west amassed a range of offences under the Food Act including having unhygienic premises, substandard maintenance and poor pest control. The shops are no longer operated by the defendant.

In an unrelated action by the Authority, the same defendant was fined nearly \$12,000 for illegally adding sulphur dioxide



A Food Authority officer (right) and council officer monitor temperature

preservative to chicken mince. A Port Macquarie man was charged by NSW Food Authority officers with harvesting oysters from the Hastings River while all the harvest zones on the river were closed due to rainfall, between the 28 February and 3 March 2006.

Primary Industries Minister Ian Macdonald said most food businesses are doing the right

thing, but those that are not will be caught and pay the price. "Consumers in NSW are protected by the most robust food regulations in the nation. The system is there to ensure the NSW public is protected from a handful of unscrupulous operators," Mr Macdonald said. Full details of the prosecutions are published on [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au).

To ensure that food in NSW is safe and correctly labelled and that NSW consumers are able to make informed choices about the food they eat



## SURVEY/NEWS

### Bakery products surveyed

A NSW Food Authority safety survey of bakery products has revealed that one in four Vietnamese-style rolls tested scored either 'unsatisfactory' or had 'marginal' satisfactory levels for human consumption.

But some bakeries fell short in the Vietnamese-style rolls category with almost 20 per cent tested in the 'marginal' satisfactory category and almost six per cent of these type of rolls in the 'unsatisfactory' category.

The survey was prompted by two food poisoning incidents in Australia since 2005, where more than 400 people were affected and had been linked to contaminated bakery products.

Samples tested from each bakery included custard and

fresh cream-filled products, non-dairy baked goods, meat-topped breads, Vietnamese-style rolls and sundry items such as cheesecakes and quiches.

The results for custard filled products saw one item testing as potentially hazardous to human health – that was the only item in this category out of 696 samples tested.

All unacceptable samples were followed up by either the Food Authority or local councils which included inspection and provision of educational material, and the businesses in question were told to lift their game in these areas.

Printed materials in Vietnamese were provided to bakeries as part of the follow up action.

The full *Microbiological Quality of High-risk Bakery Products* report is available at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au).



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### Sydney maintains unblemished food safety record for major events

Tens of thousands of visitors left Sydney after World Youth Day 2008 having sampled a range of unique food experiences – but not on the menu were bouts of food poisoning, thanks to the NSW Food Authority.

There were no reported cases of foodborne illness during the week-long mass pilgrimage, a result of meticulous planning and coordination between government agencies and private organisations.

While the public focus was on transport and security during WYD, the general public gave little thought to what's been done to protect visitors from foodborne illness.

This important work happened behind the scenes with a small group of Food Authority and local council inspectors who made sure that tens of thousands of meals served at WYD events were safe.

Authority officers spent a total of 444 hours conducting around 250 inspections of food stalls at WYD events at Barangaroo, The Domain, Cockle Bay and Randwick Racecourse.

As well as monitoring catering at WYD events, Food Authority officers and council inspectors spent months prior inspecting food outlets likely to cater for large numbers of pilgrims on an ad-hoc basis.

The Authority also provided expert advice during the planning stages of WYD to ensure all food safety risks of the catering operation were minimised.



Angela Wong was one of sixteen Food Authority officers at WYD08



## NEWS/STAFF

### UK Dairy Tour

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Two Food Authority executive were part of a sixteen-person group to participate in a study tour of the dairy industry of the United Kingdom and Ireland from 20 June to 11 July.

Director-General, George Davey, and Director of Industry Liaison & Business Planning, Peter Sutherland (tour leader) participated in the twenty-day tour. The study tour was co-sponsored by Milk Marketing NSW and the NSW Dairy Industry Conference.

manufacturing sectors.

The study tour included farm, manufacturing/processing and retail/distribution site visits and meetings with industry leaders and dairy associations. This included work undertaken by dairy industry regulatory and extension services.

Members of the tour also participated in the IDF dairy climate change summit, presenting an opportunity to compare outcomes from the NSW industry climate change



UK tour party with host Jim Begg, CEO, Dairy UK (2nd from left, seated).

The aim of the tour was to establish networks with dairy industry leaders in the UK and Ireland, to study the UK dairy system from farm level through to retail from both industry and regulatory aspects, and observe the latest in dairy industry technology in the farm and

forum held in Sydney in June.

The tour included sixteen visits to dairy farms, processing plants, retail outlets, distribution centres and regulatory agency offices.



Tour party preparing for a farm visit

(L-R) Peter Sutherland and George Davey at Queen's University, Belfast

### Chinese delegation

The Authority played host to a delegation of ten senior officials from the Kunming City Bureau of Quality & Technical Supervision, Yunnan Province, China on 21 July.

Kunming is the capital of Yunnan Province, a city of six million people about 2100 kms south-west of Beijing. The delegation was on a study tour of eastern Australian regulatory agencies.



Chinese delegates with Peter Sutherland (centre left)

### Ed Kraa calls it a day

After a long and distinguished career in health and regulatory agencies, Ed Kraa retired from the Food Authority on 20 May.

Ed shared leading the Operations Branch from December 2006 and was responsible for the Compliance and Enforcement teams.



Craig Sahlin (left) thanks Ed for his work with the Food Authority



## NEWS/STAFF

### Corporate banners are revealed

The Authority recently commissioned a set of four new corporate banners for use at corporate events and public occasions.

Each banner depicts one of the Authority's major stakeholder groups. They are (L-R): Local Government, Industry, Consumer and Corporate.



The new banners are part of the launch of the Food Authority's new corporate branding guidelines in mid September.

The feedback received to date about the look and feel of the new banners has been very positive.

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### Allergy Aware collateral moves to phase two

The second phase of the Allergy Aware pilot program with two NSW councils shifted into second gear recently with the unveiling of collateral material for program participants.

In December 2007, the Authority launched an industry-consumer food allergy awareness training program, designed to help businesses better cater to the needs of people with allergies.

The pilot training program is a joint initiative between the NSW Food Authority, the Food Regulation Partnership, Orange City Council and City of Canada Bay Council.

Anaphylaxis Australia Inc. and Restaurant & Catering NSW/ACT are also supportive of the program.

About 40 employees from businesses in both council areas participated in the program,

which includes a half-day workshop covering labelling and traceability of ingredients, avoiding cross contamination during handling and preparation of food and methods for dealing with specific dietary allergens of customers.

Once program requirements have been met, all businesses will be able to display an Allergy Aware logo. Food businesses will also be given materials designed to reinforce allergy aware procedures among food service managers, kitchen and front-of-house staff.



Allergy Aware pilot manager Carmel Shanahan shows off materials that volunteer businesses can use after completing the program

### New staff gym opens

The Authority opened its staff gymnasium in July with fifteen staff members currently signed up to use it on a regular basis.

The aim of the new gym is to improve the health, wellbeing and fitness of staff at the Newington headquarters.

A gym committee has



Staff testing the new gym

been formed to coordinate management of the facility which has eight cardio and weight machines installed.

It follows a survey of staff who indicated they wanted to have access to gym facilities to improve their health and compliment other staff sports.