REGULATORY FOOD
SAFETY AUDITOR SYSTEM

Food businesses can apply to use the Regulatory Food Safety Auditor System to conduct audits of facilities licensed under *Food Act 2003* (the Act)

Licensees of a food business are responsible for having a food safety program (FSP) to identify and manage food safety risks.

The Act requires a licensee to make sure their FSP is:

- prepared
- implemented
- maintained
- monitored, and
- audited at a set frequency.

Audits of food businesses are necessary to:

- protect public health and safety
- confirm that a business is supplying food that is safe
- confirm that a business is complying with the Food Regulation 2015.

Role of regulatory food safety auditors

Audits can be conducted either by:

- an **authorised officer** employed by the NSW Food Authority (Food Authority), or

- if the facility has been approved for audit under the Regulatory Food Safety Auditor System, then a **regulatory food safety auditor** (also known as third-party auditor or TPA) can also be used.

Regulatory food safety auditors must meet the standards outlined in the *National Auditor Framework*. Details of these standards and required auditor competencies can be found in the *Regulatory Food Safety Auditor Manual* on the Food Authority website.

Benefits of using a regulatory food safety auditor are:

- audits are scheduled at a time that suits the food business
- the same auditor can perform all audits
- once an auditor becomes familiar with the business' systems, it may take less time to conduct the audit

- a large business group may contract one auditor to do all of its audits
- there may be reduced costs associated with audits.
- the regulatory audit can be conducted at the same time as other third party compliance audits

Powers of regulatory food safety auditors

Regulatory food safety auditors do not have the same powers of an authorised officer employed by the Food Authority but they can rate an audit as 'unacceptable'.

Details of all audit results conducted by a regulatory food safety auditor are provided to the Food Authority and any results that are rated as 'unacceptable' are followed up. The Food Authority also runs a verification program for the system.

Regulatory food safety auditors only audit a food business at the level for which they (the auditor) is approved, e.g. general audits or high risk audits with approved scopes.

An approved auditor must not audit food businesses outside their approved scope and they may only

audit food businesses (facility) approved to use the system.

Applying to use the Regulatory Food Safety Auditor System

Food businesses must apply to the Food Authority for approval to move to this system. The Food Authority will then assess the business' eligibility against the application criteria.

Application criteria

A food business must meet the following criteria as a minimum:

1. have received an A or B rating at their previous two audits

2. have a satisfactory compliance history, and

3. have no outstanding enforcement action against the facility.

4. Operate in an industry approved by the Food Authority to move to the RFSA System

   Note: Export registered establishments cannot move to this system. For information on export requirements please contact the Department of

Agriculture and Water Resources (DoAWR)

Application form

Food businesses need to apply to the Food Authority in writing using the TPA006 form on the website.

After assessing the application, the Food Authority will write to the food business to advise whether their application has been successful.

Where can I find an approved auditor?

A list of approved auditors can be found on the Food Authority's Auditor Register located at www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au

More information

- visit the website at www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au

- phone the helpline on 1300 552 406

- **Regulatory food safety audits**

  – Download the Guidance on audits (FI257/1601)

  – download the factsheet Audits in the food industry (FI004/1511)

- **Regulatory Food Safety Auditors System:**

  – download the Guide to implementing a regulatory food safety auditor system (FI058/1607)

  – download the Regulatory food safety auditor manual (FI057/1607)

About the NSW Food Authority: The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure NSW food is safe and correctly labelled. It works with consumers, industry and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

Note: This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).