The use of artificial intelligence for compliance assessment

Artificial intelligence (AI) is helping the Food Authority assess food safety compliance of vehicles and vessels used by licensed food businesses.

Why is the Food Authority using AI?

Using AI for compliance assessment significantly streamlines the process to apply for, add or replace vehicles and vessels on a NSW Food Authority licence.

Where an onsite inspection of a vehicle or vessel would typically be required, taking around 6 weeks to finalise, AI helps us determine compliance much quicker.

Waiting times and the regulatory burden for businesses are reduced, and the Food Authority can reallocate resources to higher-risk activities.

Who is eligible to use it?

New applicants

Anyone applying for a new Food Authority licence who uses a vehicle or vessel in their business will have the option to use the AI function when they complete our online Apply for a Food Authority Licence form.

Relevant businesses include those that transport plant, dairy, egg and seafood products, meat (including game meat and animal food harvesters) and live poultry.

Existing licensees

Those who already have a NSW Food Authority licence can use the AI function when updating information about vehicles and vessels on their licence through the Apply to vary vehicle and vessel information online form.

How does it work?

Instead of waiting for a food safety officer to inspect your vehicle or vessel, applicants upload photographs of it to our online form, which is linked to an AI tool. This tool uses machine learning to determine whether the photos demonstrate compliance with food safety regulations.

Once analysed, data is forwarded to a Food Authority officer for review and determination.

How do I participate?

To participate you will need to be able to take clear photographs and upload them to the relevant form using a computer, tablet, phone or other smart device.

What you need to photograph depends on the nature of your application. The required photographs are outlined below, as well as in the form.

If you're unable to submit suitable photographs after starting the form, you can save your progress and come back to it later. You may also opt out of using the AI assessment at any time.

Table 1: Required photographs.

Facility type	Required photographs
Food transport vehicle	current registration plate
	seals on the food transport compartment (2 photos) (if applicable)
	internal surfaces
	rails for hanging meat (if applicable)
	refrigeration unit (if applicable)
	storage compartment temperature below 5°C (if applicable)
Vehicle for the collection of raw milk from a dairy farm	current registration plate
Vessel	the vessel identification (for example, LFB/UVI)
	each hold or product storage area (including protective cover/lid)
	ice hold or storage area (if applicable)
	product landing area
	sorting area (if applicable)
	each refrigeration unit (if applicable)
	refrigeration unit temperature displays (if applicable)
Game meat or animal food harvesting vehicle	current registration plate
	cross bars showing position and spacing (with measurements) of pelvic spikes (2 photos)
	whole rack
	water storage and discharge point for hand washing (2 photos)
	bump sanitiser location
	hooks and slides
	knife box location
	dog box (1 wide angle, 1 close-up) (if applicable)

Facility type	Required photographs
	lighting used during harvesting (2 photos)
	what is used for hand drying
	sanitiser and rack cleaner labels (2 photos)
	current training record (if applicable)
	shooter's accuracy test results (if applicable)
	gun licence (if applicable)

What data will be collected and who will have access to it?

The information and images you supply will be used to process your application and will be retained in a secure format for reference by the Food Authority. Only Food Authority officers who need the information for processing applications or compliance will have access to it. Information is not shared with any other parties unless authorised by law.

Images and limited data that identifies them will be retained by our technology provider Wild Mouse for continuous improvement of the AI. The images will be deleted when they are no longer required for the purposes for which they were collected.

Your privacy is protected under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*. Visit our Privacy webpage for more information about how we manage your personal information.

What happens if the AI fails my application?

The AI does not 'pass' or 'fail' an application. The data will be processed by a Food Authority officer, who will contact you if more information is needed or if there are any concerns.

Can I have the onsite inspection carried out instead?

Yes. If you would prefer an onsite inspection you can opt out of using the AI assessment in the online form and continue completing your application. Please note, an audit or inspection by an authorised officer can take around 6 weeks. Applications using AI can be finalised much sooner.

More information

If you cannot use the online form, or have other queries about changes to your licence, contact the Food Authority's Licensing & Accreditation Services on 1300 552 406 or email bfs.admin@dpi.nsw.gov.au.