



# Guidelines for Management and Communication during Food and Feed Safety Incidents



This report was elaborated under the Heads of European Food Safety Agencies (HoA) by a working group of 17 Member States, chaired and coordinated by the Spanish Agency for Consumer Affairs, Food Safety and Nutrition (AECOSAN) SPAIN.

**BELGIUM**, Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC); **BULGARIA**, Bulgarian Food Safety Agency; **CROATIA**, Veterinary and Food Safety Directorate. Ministry of Agriculture; **CYPRUS**, State General Laboratory Food Safety Council. Ministry of Health; **DENMARK**, Danish Veterinary and Food Administration. Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries; **ESTONIA**, Veterinary and Food Board, Ministry of Agriculture; **FINLAND**, Finnish Food Safety authority (EVIRA); **FRANCE**, French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES); **GERMANY**, Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) and Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL); **GREECE**, Controls Directorate. Hellenic Food Authority; **IRELAND**, Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI); **ITALY**, Directorate General of Food Hygiene Safety and Nutrition. Ministry of Health; **NETHERLANDS**, Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA); **Norway**, Norwegian Food Safety Authority; **POLAND**, Chief Sanitary Inspectorate (GIS). Ministry of Health; **SPAIN**, Spanish Agency for Consumer Affairs, Food Safety and Nutrition (AECOSAN); **SWEDEN**, National Food Agency; **UNITED KINGDOM**, Food Standards Agency (FSA).

**Publisher**

©Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality

Spanish Agency for Consumer Affairs, Food Safety and Nutrition (AECOSAN)

NIPO: 690-14-001-8

# Contents

1. Introduction	5
2. Common terminology and definitions	6
3. Food/feed safety incidents	6
3.1 Incident Warning	7
3.2 Incident Information File	9
3.3 Incident Classification	9
4. Management and internal communication of incidents	
levels ii and iii	11
4.1 Incident Management level II	11
4.2 Incident Management level III	13
4.3 Incident Preparedness	14
5. Strategy of communication to media and consumers	14
5.1 General Guidelines for Communication during Level II	
and Level Incidents	15
5.1.1 Communication channels	16
5.1.2 Communiqué Content	16
6. Evaluation and recommendation report	17
7. Legal basis and references	18
8. Annexes	20
8.1 Annex I. Heads of European Union Food Safety Agencies Members	20
8.2 Annex II. Information File	22
8.3 Annex III Classification System	23
8.4 Annex IV	24

**Abbreviations**

COM: European Commission

ECDC: European Centre for Diseases Prevention and Control

EFSA: European Food Safety Authority

EWRS: Early warning Response System

INFOSAN: International Food Safety Authority Network

MS: Member State of the European Union.

SOPs: Standard Operation Procedures

WHO/FAO: World Health Organization

## 1. Introduction

All Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU) have protocols to assist in the response to food/feed incidents or crises the general purpose is to optimise the management of the incident, provide adequate information to consumers and minimise health and economic impacts. Given the diverse nature of MS`s national food safety systems within the EU, the harmonisation of response protocols for food/feed incidents around common general guidelines would be highly beneficial. With this aim a study was conducted under the Heads of European National Food Safety Agencies group throughout 2012-2013. The subsequent report named *“Sharing protocols, experiences and knowledge on management and communication during food/feed crisis”* represents views, experiences and perspectives of eighteen organizations from seventeen MS regarding their management and communication protocols.

Compiling and analysing the information used in preparing the report led to some conclusions and recommendations for the management of and communication process during food/feed crises. Some of the needs identified by in the report are- further harmonization of protocols through the use of common terminology, common definitions, criteria and tools; greater distinction between “incidents and crises”, the definition of a crisis, the lack of sufficient definition of tools for rapid risk assessment and greater collaboration with laboratories.

As public perception of the management of a food/feed incident was shown to be a keystone of public confidence in regulatory authorities, protocols should be modified in order to improve communication between national bodies and media, and also to provide clear and appropriate information. Evaluation of the incident once it is over is essential. A common understanding of the components of an evaluation would be useful. These include indicators for assessing the incident management, harmonizing the incident assessment using template reports, promoting transparency by the publication of best practices, developmental issues and recommendations, and encouraging the use of external observers.

Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and the Commission Decision 2004/478/EC are reference documents to help MS in their establishment of protocols. MS however, are of the view that these general plans or protocols are not sufficiently harmonized and in practice many of the tools that protocols provide are not used.

The Heads of European National Food Safety Agencies, in the light of the report, decided to work further in the establishment of a general guidance documents to be used for the updating and elaborating protocols for the management and communication during food and feed severe incidents, using the knowledge and recommendations achieved in the previous report. This work is conducted by a Working Group of 18 MS, with EFSA and the Commission as observers and collaborators.

For these guidelines to be valuable routine exercises and training should be conducted by all competent authorities in each MS. This will allow testing of the protocols and modifications accordingly if needed. Therefore these guidelines, together with the tools

and templates included, should be considered a living document to be shared by all MS and modifications resulting from regular reviews will ensure it remains practical and suitable.

## 2. Common terminology and definitions

Most of the terminology used in this document is already legally defined. For the purpose of this document the definitions included in Regulation (EC) 178/2002 and in Regulation (CE) 16/2011 apply e.g., food, feed, risk analysis, risk assessment, risk management, risk communication, risk, traceability.

The following newly agreed terminology and definitions are proposed:

- **Food/feed incident.** Any event where, based on the information available, there are concerns about actual or suspected threats to the safety of food /feed that could require intervention to protect the health of consumers.
- **Classification of incidents.** Incidents are classified as Level I, II or III. Definitions for each classification are included in Point 3 of this document. To classify the incident a classification matrix could be used and an example of factors contributing to its severity is shown in Annex II.
- **Note:** It is the responsibility of the competent authorities for food/feed safety to ensure that each incident is adequately categorized in order to use the proper tools to manage the response. The use of a classification matrix can help as guidance.
- **Communiqué.** Information issued in any format by the competent authorities, giving it an official status.
- **Food/feed safety communication.** The exchange of information and opinions, related to factors associated with food/feed safety.
- **Economic impact.** The effect that a food/feed incident event will have on the European and international sales or potential sales of the product and possible related products.
- **Risk perception.** The judgment that people make about the characteristics, likelihood and severity of a specific risk.
- **Incident national protocol.** A standardized procedure or general plan established for the management of food/feed safety incidents that involve serious direct or indirect risk to human health.

## 3. Food/feed safety incidents

When a food/feed incident is suspected or identified and, until information is gathered, it may not be clear if it represents a serious threat to consumer health. An incident can

also start with a complete lack of knowledge of the nature of the risk. First notice of an incident may come from many different sources. Therefore getting the first notice as soon as possible to allow a prompt response is crucial. To be properly prepared for emergent or sudden incidents all food safety authorities should have response plans already in place.

Once an incident is recognised, the magnitude of the risk to consumers should be evaluated. At this stage the main goal will be to collect in a timely and effective manner all the information needed to evaluate the situation. The management and communication measures that will need to be taken will depend on the level of risk and possible negative effects on the consumers' health, economy, trade or media response. For these reasons, at this stage a classification of the incident will greatly help in the decision making process.

The experience of MS after recent incidents shows the need to have a well-established communication strategy throughout the management of the incident. Furthermore during the incident and soon after it is over, an assessment of all steps taken to manage it should be conducted.

This section outlines the steps and tools that may be used at the different stages of a food safety incident taking into account different management and communication needs to minimize the health, economic and media impacts.

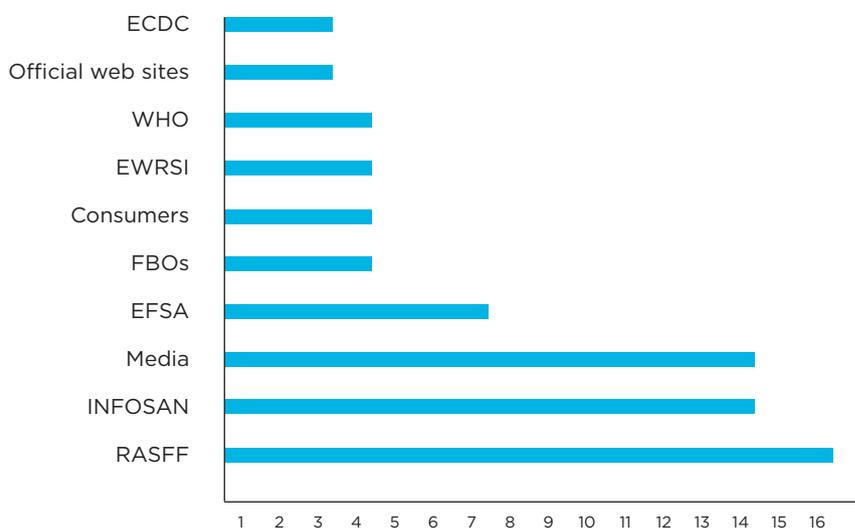
### 3.1 Incident Warning

The first notice of the incident may come for multiple sources:

- Alert notifications such as
  - National alert networks for food/feed
  - EU Rapid Alert networks for Food and Feed,
  - International Alert networks such as INFOSAN
- Information from
  - MS (other types of notifications, information given for the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed, etc.);
  - EFSA
  - EU epidemiological network (EWRS);
  - World Health Organization (WHO),
  - World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)
  - non-Community countries or international bodies
  - Reports from the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO);
  - non-Community countries or international bodies;
  - Consumers,
  - Food industry
  - Media

In spite of the diversity of these sources, official and non-official, the experience of and advice from the MS is to use them all so as to get the first notice of the incident as soon as possible.

### MS most trusted Information Channels



**Source** Sharing protocols, experiences and knowledge on management and communication during food crisis.

### Management and Internal Communication

In order to get the information from all sources in a timely manner it is necessary:

- Have adequate procedures to allow an efficient collection of information from RASFF, EFSA and other incident information sources.
  - Implement Commission Decision on serious cross -border threats to health (22th October 2013 To) to allow an adequate flow of information between health and food/feed sides.
  - EFSA network emergent risk and any other tool for emergent risk detection.
  - Website search IT engine.

### 3.2 Incident Information File

Access to data is critical in order to evaluate the risk involved with the incident. For an effective and fast collection of information a harmonized approach to the creation of an information file is proposed in Annex I.

The file should include the following information:

- ✓ The health effects on consumers; severity, symptoms, illness description...
- ✓ Risk assessment.
- ✓ Possibility of spreading along the food/feed chain and the possibility/probability of spreading to other MS or non-EU countries.
- ✓ Traceability.
- ✓ Images/photos of food or feed items/batch numbers/labels.
- ✓ All relevant data from the information sources (see 3.1.1).
- ✓ Relevant scientific information.
- ✓ Consumer reactions; risk perception, complaints.
- ✓ Effect on media.
- ✓ Information gathered from the stakeholders involved (food/feed sector, ...).
- ✓ Information on similar cases and the actions taken in those situations.

Once all relevant available information on the food/feed is analysed, the process of determining the level of risk to consumers of the incident should follow.

#### Management and Internal Communication

In order to collect all the information, the internal communication system should be highly organised with the proper tools that will allow the required flow of information to all parts involved. These tools should be already on place and included in the incident national protocols.

Internal communications tools can include:

- National Food/feed safety incident contact list.
- Laboratory national networks.
- Audio and conferences facilities.
- Access to online electronic data bases of journals and literature analysis.
- Channels for communication with stakeholders for incidents.

### 3.3 Incident Classification

The classification of an incident relies on several factors both scientific and strategic. Some MS use scoring systems in order to quantitatively assess the factors contributing to the severity of the incident. Although a quantitative and harmonized classification of incidents could provide consistency and uniformity of response it is difficult to implement

as organization of food/feed safety is very heterogeneous. In addition there can be significant differences in MS in key factors such as public perception, impact on national media, number of affected people, consumption habits. Accordingly although all these factors should be used to assess the risk, the final categorization of the incident or the (escalation and de-escalation of its status may vary with time and location. It should be regularly reviewed by the national competent authorities for food/feed safety and updated as appropriate

The example of classification matrix based in scientific and strategic factors included in these guidelines is a tool that can be used when an incident need to be assessed in depth, in other words in “suspect cases” which are likely to become emergencies. The national organization for food/feed safety can use the classification matrix as a guide to identify the best management level for the incident.

With the aim of uniformity of actions, exchange of view between MS / Commission during multistate incidents is crucial to achieve the goal of consistent management and adoption of fair measures at EU level.

#### Establishment of the classification system

A proposed classification matrix, taking into account different factors and considering real and potential is described in Annex II. The factors include:

- Effects on consumer health.
- Number of affected people/vulnerable groups affected.
- Risk assessment.
- Public perception.
- Impact on the media.
- Distribution along the food/feed chain.
- Extension /complexity.
- Reputation of the MS or the Organization.
- Economic Impact.

Each one of these factors can contribute to the escalation of an incident, and can also be used as part of a scoring system to quantify the status of the incident.

This guideline defines an incident as *“any event where, based on the information available, there are concerns about actual or suspected threats to the safety of food/feed that could require intervention to protect health of consumers”*. For the purpose of the guidelines incidents are classified into 3 levels based on different factors as follows:

**Level I:** Incident with effects on consumer health that can range from mild to require hospital care; public perception of risk is low; media has limited attention to this incident. (i.e.: violation of legal limits: mercury, micotoxins, allergens, mild salmonella outbreak... Routine management within the food/feed safety organization.

**Level II (severe incident):** Incident with effects on consumer health that require hospital care/ with a medium-high number of people affected or even deaths/ /public perception of risk is medium/high/ some media impact. (i.e.- violation of legal limits: mercury, mycotoxins, allergens, salmonella outbreak). This level require additional tools for coordination internally and cross-organization/departmental collaboration namely a TASK FORCE.

**Level III (emergency):** Incident with serious health effects involving hospitalization and deaths/ high number of affected/ public perception of risk is high/ high media impact/ complex/ economic impact. A level III incident situation cannot be handle within the food/feed safety organization and it require extraordinary tools suc as anEMERGENCY UNIT.

The concurrence of all these factors is not necessary to produce a severe or emergency situation, for example the dioxin incident was due mainly to economic losses with no effect on health. Therefore the final classification of the incident will ultimately rely in the additional management measures that the proper management of the incident requires.

## 4. Management and internal communication of incidents levels II and III

These section deals only with the management and communication during level II and III incidents as level I incidents are considered as routine/serious incidents that do not required extraordinary management or communication.. The assignment of the roles and responsibilities in food /feed safety incident are crucial for the effective management of the situation, and are describe below in detail. In case of multi-sectorial incidents (health/ food safety/bioterrorism) where a cross-government response is required a leading organization should be appointed for the purpose of coordinating the response.

### 4.1 Incident Management level II

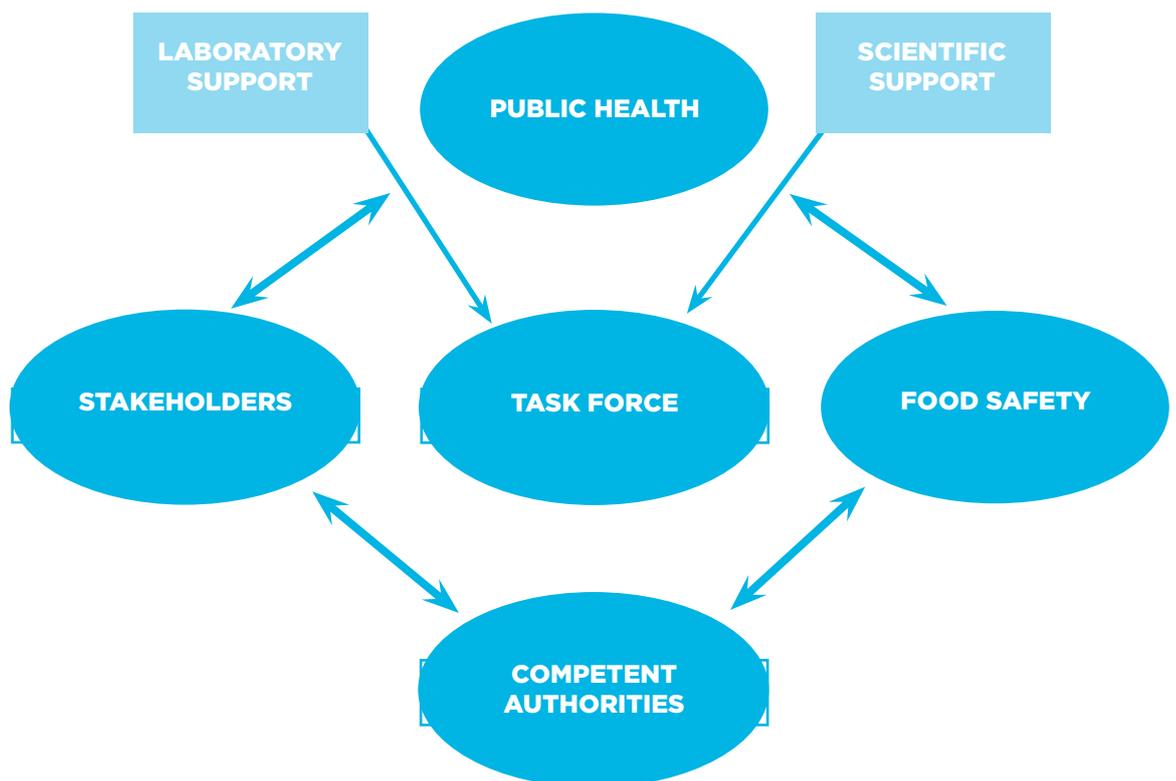
A level II incident can be managed internally, however it requires additional tools for coordination internally and cross-organization/departmental collaboration. The Task Force has a specific mandate and it is conceived as an internal tool, within the food/ feed safety organisation in charge of dealing with the incident, in order to become more repsonive, more coordinated, and as a centralized unit for dialogue and coordination. Led by the food/feed safety organization in charge, the task force will implement efficient coordination and collaboration with all parts involved in the particular incident as other competent authorities, stakeholders, laboratories, scientific support or any other.

**Task force.** The decision to set up a Task force will be taking internally by the national food/ feed safety organization in charge of the management of the incident and will coordinate this unit. The decision making and managing of a level II incident resides within the food/ feed safety organization in charge.

The composition and terms of reference of the Task force could vary depending of the nature of the risk, but some basic duties should be defined in the incident national protocols.

The main activities of the Task Force are:

- To centralize the collection of data and monitoring relevant information sources such as: scientific literature, rapid alert systems for food and feed, trade data and official bulletins, laboratory results.
- Situation reports.
- Traceability.
- Promoting internal communication.
- Sharing information with stakeholders.
- Website posting.
- Quality based Information management (decisions, measures taken, monitoring, conclusions.....). Crucial for the elaboration of the *“Evaluation and recommendation report”* (lesson learnt).
- Risk Assessment coordination.
- Coordination of Scientific and laboratory support (techniques, sampling methods...).
- Dialogue with European or international organizations: EFSA, ECDC , Early Warning and Response System( EWRS), COM, MS.
- Continuous monitoring of the management measures by the use of indicators and written reports, quality standards of the recording all relevant information...
- Design the communication strategy to media and consumers.



## 4.2 Incident Management level III

A level III incident situation cannot be handled within the food/feed safety organization and it requires additional response. The decision making and managing resides within an Emergency Unit which is a multi-disciplinary and multi-organization group that will act as the designated focal point for incident management and communication.

During these incidents it may be necessary to create awareness amongst consumers, so special care should be taken in external communication. As consumer perception and media attention become very important, the Unit will allow the use of efficient communication policies with consumers. The centralization of the decision making within the Unit will avoid the the potential for diverging messages.

Emergency Unit composition and function must be specified within the protocols. The composition of the Emergency Unit should allow a fast and efficient decision process. Therefore its members should have a high level of responsibility in the food/feed sector.

Composition of the Emergency Unit:

- Head of the Unit: A single head will be appointed.
- Representatives of competent authorities within the food/feed chain: i.e.: primary production,
- Representatives of competent authorities for public health.
- Representatives of competent authorities in border controls for food/feed.
- Representatives of the scientific and laboratory committees.
- Representatives of competent national/regional authorities.
- Communication expert.
- Legal advise.
- Any other expert; police, military authorities, civil defence etc...

Function:

- ✓ Recognition of an emergency situation and communication to the Commission.
- ✓ Ensuring scientific support (committee or risk assessment organization).
- ✓ If necessary request to EFSA for rapid risk assessment.
- ✓ Establishment of laboratory support unit,
- ✓ Establishment of an "investigational tracing unit" (for food flow analysis of supply chains within outbreak clarification activities): batch-precise trace-back in combination with epidemiological information on food preparation practices using adjusted "Ad hoc" templates.
- ✓ Ensuring the involvement of all competent organizations involved in the response to the food/feed incident and in the coordination of the overall response arrangements.
- ✓ Ensuring an optimal flow of information: increased communication channels (audio conference, videoconference, periodical meetings...).
- ✓ Design the communication strategy to media and consumers.
- ✓ Situation reports.
- ✓ Continuous monitoring of the management measures by the use of indicators and written reports, possibility of dedicated staff.

- ✓ Collecting additional resources if needed (administrative unit....).
- ✓ Dialogue with European or international organizations (EFSA, ECDC, COMMISSION...).
- ✓ Quality based Information management (decisions, measures taken, monitoring, conclusions.....). Crucial for the elaboration of the *“Evaluation and recommendation report”* (lesson learnt).
- ✓ Official declaration that the emergency situation has ceased should be decided by the head of unit.

### 4.3 Incident Preparedness

MS should update their existing protocols and supporting tools for food/feed safety incidents in order to be prepared in case of severe or emergency situations. For this reason is essential to conduct preparedness exercises involving all national the food and feed safety authorities. In addition to national exercises, globalization of food/feed markets and previous experiences points to the need for these exercises to be intersectorial and multistate, and also to involve European organizations (COM, ECDC, EFSA, EWRS).

During normal operations is important to ensure that tools that could be used to manage food/feed safety incidents are ready and available. Some of these tools include:

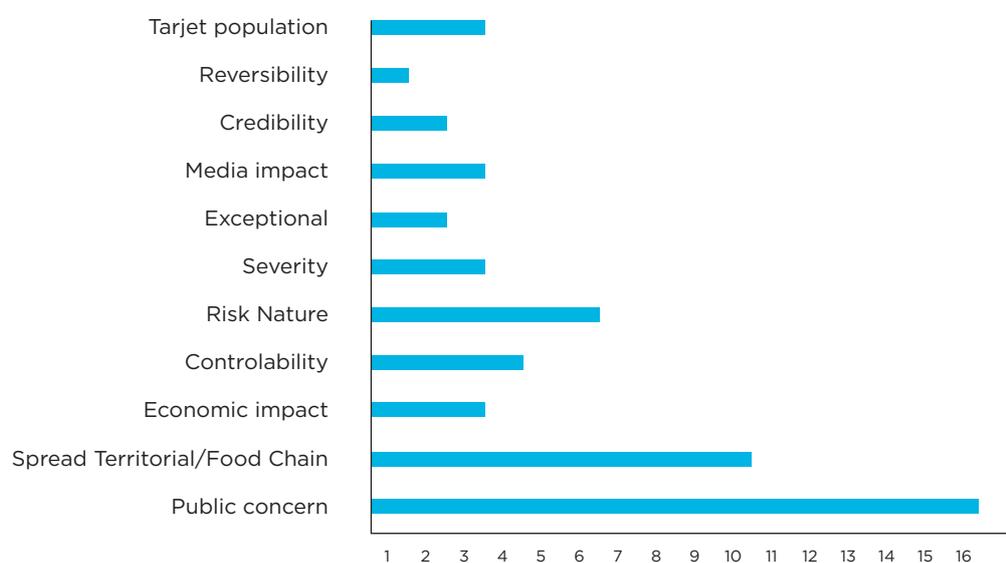
- ✓ National food/feed safety incident contact list.
- ✓ Templates (tracking and tracing).
- ✓ Risk ranking/risk maps.
- ✓ Food/feed organization WEBSITE listing.

A specific space in a common website for *“Management and communication of Food and Feed incidents”* could be a tool for sharing information, tools and experiences.

## 5. Strategy of communication to media and consumers

Consumer perception of an incident is a key factor that could trigger emergency situation by itself without any health implications.

### Food Incident Triggers



**Source** Sharing protocols, experiences and knowledge on management and communication during food crisis.

During normal operations and in level I incidents, communication policies are designed to create trust and provide transparency to the work of the national competent authorities. No specific protocols for these incidents are needed. EFSA and some other international organizations such as FAO provide general guidelines for risk communication. Once a food/feed incident appears, however, that represents a serious health issue, good communication tools are essential to create awareness. Therefore communication should be used at all times, in keeping with the principle of transparency, and special communication strategies should be part of protocols to deal with food/feed safety incidents.

Protocols for communicating with media and consumers in level II and III incidents need to be harmonized with some common basic guidelines to avoid mistakes that may lead to more economic losses or loss of consumer confidence.

## 5.1 General Guidelines for Communication during Level II and Level III Incidents

The protocol for communication will be activated either by the Coordinator of the Task Force or by the Head of the Emergency Unit. Some basic general guidelines that should be taken into account in the protocol are:

- ✓ The communication strategy should be agreed in close collaboration and under the coordination of the leading Task Force or Emergency Unit.
- ✓ Coordination and collaboration in the communication strategy to avoid diverging messages.

- ✓ As risk perception could trigger emergency situations some tools to measure the possible impact in consumer perception, e.g., the BfR Risk Profile.
- ✓ Feedback from stakeholders and consumers: Food/feed safety risk communication is a two way process. Messages need to be transmitted and checked if they are well received and understood. In order to assess the efficacy of the message some direct surveys of consumers should be conducted and also a risk perception assessment tool could be used (this can identify non-emergency situations that may require emergency like communication policies due to a very high risk perception).
- ✓ Specific care for communicating uncertainties: lack of scientific evidence or variability should be communicated together with the incident, but do not justify withhold of information if consumers are at risk and need to be informed.
- ✓ Timely communication: Although it is always advise to keep openness and transparency, communication on level II incidents will need to be evaluated case by case and the strategy decided by the task force. For emergency situations, incident level III, communication starts with the declaration of emergency. Afterwards it is important that communication is regularly done during the emergency, above all when new information arises that it is essential for the protection of consumers. Communication of the end of the emergency should be done, together with the final outcome, possible improvements and any other measures taken.

### 5.1.1 Communication channels

No one channel of communication may be adequate in getting a message to target audiences or achieving the goal of risk communication. Therefore, it is important to combine various methods as much as possible. These channels could be:

- Active posting and advice on websites.
- Official press release and conferences.
- In addition, the option should be considered of contracting space (column, editorial...) of a temporary nature in order to keep the public permanently informed during the emergency situation and of so required by the existing social demand.
- Use of social media (Facebook, Twitter...).
- Partners/stakeholder network.
- Meetings, workshops, focus groups.
- Information days/meetings.
- Open consumer information phone "*hot line*".

### 5.1.2 Communiqué Content

In times of severe incidents or emergencies special care should be taking in the elaboration of the messages to consumers or media. Transparency and confidentiality should be kept balanced. The contents of the Communiqué should allow creating awareness to the consumer without generating excessive alarm. For this the statement should contained enough information that will allow the consumer to take the right choices:

- Description of the risk: nature, characteristics, etc.
- Description of the product affected as images/photos/batch numbers/labels of the product, and distribution channels.
- Description of health effects on consumers or users: risk population or groups involved, where applicable, and possible health effects on these groups, sources, (e.g. national authority official, independent expert).
- Measures already taken and those planned for the forthcoming hours.
- What to do if the product is in your possession.
- What to do if you have consumed or used the product.
- Telephone numbers, Web page, e-mail address, fax number, etc. to permit an adequate exchange of general information (queries, document referral...) as necessary.

## 6. Evaluation and recommendation report

Once the incident level II or III has been closed, a report that reviews and analyses all the process should be conducted, including recommendations for any necessary identified improvements. In order to properly review and analysed an incident, it is imperative that during the incident a detail record is kept using a quality based information management system.

A partial assessment of management and communication activities should be done while the incident is ongoing (included in Task Force and Emergency Unit tasks); this will greatly facilitate the final analysis in the evaluation and recommendation report. In addition the use of indicators throughout the incident management and their analysis will greatly contribute to the elaboration of the report.

Examples of issues that should be included in the document and possible indicators:

### 1. Assessment of Information file:

- ✓ Sources accuracy.
- ✓ Information on time.
- ✓ Sufficient information.
- ✓ Type of information sources.
- ✓ Risk assessment: sufficient scientific evidence; similar cases taking into account.

**Analysis of indicators:** Diverging scientific assessments, joint risk assessments (i.e. ECDC/EFSA, other Risk Assessment Organizations...), withdrawal of alerts, incomplete RASFF templates...

### 2. Assessment of incident management.

- ✓ Incident classification accurate and useful.
- ✓ Time and efficacy of the information flow

**Analysis of indicators:** number of patients or deaths; media impact; time needed to get back to normal, economic losses, trade impact, consumer trust, stakeholder complaints...

### 3. Assessment of Communication to media and consumers:

- ✓ Adequate frequency and time of communication activities.
- ✓ Reception of messages by the target audience.
- ✓ Media coverage of the organization messages.
- ✓ Accuracy of the media report following organization's messages.

**Analysis of indicators:** diverging messages by competent authorities, risk perception assessment; stakeholder's responses to the communication policy, significant differences with other stakeholders in the information being communicated...

### 4. Conclusions and Recommendations:

- ✓ Modification or elaboration of new national or EU legislation.
- ✓ Traceability exercises.
- ✓ Modification of internal procedures.
- ✓ Incident management exercises.

## 7. Legal basis and references

- ✓ REGULATION (EC) No 178/2002 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 28 January 2002, laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety. (DOUE L 31, 01.02.2002).
- ✓ REGULATION (EC) No. 183/2005 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 12 January 2005 laying down requirements for feed hygiene.
- ✓ REGULATION (EC) No 882/2004 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules (DOUE 191, 28.05.2004).
- ✓ COMMISSION DECISION of 29 April 2004 concerning the adoption of a general plan for food/feed crisis management (2004/478/EC).
- ✓ Food Standards Agency Incident Management Plan, 2014.
- ✓ EFSA Procedures for responding to urgent advices.
- ✓ EFSA Proven recipes for risk communication.
- ✓ Spanish Management and Communication Protocols.

- ✓ Manuale procedure interne gestione emergenze “rev1”.
- ✓ A handbook on risk communication applied to food safety (FAO).
- ✓ Sharing protocols experiences and knowledge on management and communication during food crisis.
- ✓ Commission staff working document Lesson learnt from the 2011 outbreak of shiga-toxin producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) O:104:H4 in sprouted seeds.
- ✓ Crisis management key themes for success strategic decision -making. (2013). Steelhenge Consulting Ltd. 10.Garrick Street London WC2e 9 AX.
- ✓ BfR Risk profiles: [http://www.bfr.bund.de/en/bfr\\_risk\\_profile-186391.html](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en/bfr_risk_profile-186391.html).

## 8. Annexes

### 8.2 Annex I. Heads of European Union Food Safety Agencies Members

Heads of European Union Food Safety Agencies			
Country	Agency	Country	Agency
Austria	AGES, Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safet	Latvia	Food and Veterinary Service
Belgium	Belgian Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain	Lithuania	State Food and Veterinary Service.
Bulgaria	Bulgarian Food Safety Agency	Luxembourg	OSQCA Organisme pour la securite et la qualite de la chaine alimentaire
Croatia	Ministry of Agriculture	Malta	
Cyprus	State General Laboratory, Ministry of Health	Montenegro	Veterinary Directorate
Czech Republic	Czech Agriculture and Food Inspection Authority (CAFIA)	The Netherlands	Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA).
Denmark	Danish Veterinary and Food Administration	Norway	Norwegian Food Safety Authority
Estonia	Veterinary and Food Board	Poland	Chief Sanitary Inspectorate
EU COM	European Commission, Health and Consumers (SANCO), Safety of the Food Chain	Portugal	Autoridade de Seguranca Alimentar e Economica ASAE
Finland	Finnish Food Safety Authority (Evira)	Romania	National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Food and Veterinary Agency	Serbia	MPSV (Ministry of Agriculture)
France	Ministry of Agriculture, The Food Processing Industry and Forestry	Slovakia	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
Germany	Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL)	Slovenia	Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Food Safety, Veterinary Sector and Plant Protection
Grece	Hellenic Food Authority	Spain	Spanish Agency for Consumer Affairs, Food Safety and Nutrition
Hungary	Ministry of Rural Development	Sweden	National Food Agency
Iceland	Icelandic Food and Veterinary Authority (MAST)	Switzerland	Federal Office of Public Health
Ireland	Food Safety Authority of Ireland	Turkey	Directorate of Food and Control
Italy	Ministry of Health, V-Giorgio	United Kingdom	Food Standards Agency (FSA)

## 8.2 Annex II. Information File

Information	Data	Sources
Health effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Symptoms</li> <li>• Illness description</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospital reports</li> <li>• Patients</li> <li>• ECDC</li> <li>• National Health system</li> <li>• EWRS</li> </ul>
Affected people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People sick/deaths</li> <li>• Epidemiological reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Health system</li> <li>• Hospital information</li> <li>• ECDC</li> </ul>
Risk Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laboratory reports</li> <li>• Scientific opinions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EFSA</li> <li>• National Scientific Committee</li> <li>• National Risk assessment Agencies</li> <li>• Other Relevant scientific information.</li> </ul>
Risk perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Reports</li> <li>• Risk perception profiles</li> <li>• Queries to the competent organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Consumer associations</li> <li>• Consumer complains</li> <li>• Social Media</li> </ul>
Media impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media and press articles</li> <li>• Searches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media (print and electronic..9</li> <li>• Websites</li> </ul>
Distribution along the food/feed chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traceability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RASFF</li> <li>• National Alert System</li> <li>• TRACES</li> <li>• INFOSAN</li> <li>• FBOs</li> </ul>
Extension/complexity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food/feed Item/Batches</li> <li>• Location (local, regional national, European or international)</li> <li>• Industries</li> <li>• Traceability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RASFF</li> <li>• National Alert System</li> <li>• OIE, TRACES</li> <li>• INFOSAN</li> <li>• FBOs</li> </ul>
Economic impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade</li> <li>• Sales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FBOS</li> <li>• WTO</li> <li>• Economic statistics</li> </ul>
Other information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information gathered from the stakeholders involved (food sector, consumers, ...)</li> <li>• Information on similar cases and the actions taken in those situations</li> </ul>	??????

### 8.3 Annex III. Classification System

Item	No effect	No doctor appointment	Doctor appointment	Hospital appointment	Hospitalization	Death
<b>Affected people</b>	0	1-5	Few (5-10)	>10-50	>10 Vulnerable population	All consumers
<b>Risk assessment</b>	No risk	Minimal risk	Medium Risk Short term effects. Mitigation measure feasible	High Risk Long term potential effects	High Risk Long term confirm effects	High Risk Acute effect
<b>Risk perception</b>	No risk	Very low risk	Low risk	Medium risk	High risk	Very high risk
<b>Media impact</b>	No impact	Very Low Impact (1-2 days, only in specialized media, regional-national)	Low impact (>2 days, restricted media sources, national)	Medium impact (<1 week, several media sources, national)	High impact (1-2 week, all general sources, national-European)	Very high impact (>2 week, all general media sources, wide world)
<b>Distribution within food/feed chain</b>	No health effect. Distribution no relevant	All products identified, not in the market or withdrew	All Products identified, presence in the market, traced, withdrawal in process	All Products identified, presence in the market, incomplete Traceability data, incomplete withdraw,	Products not completely identified, incomplete Traceability data, incomplete withdraw,	Products not identified or widely distributed. Lack or Traceability, no withdrawal
<b>Extension/complexity</b>	Single product/ Single location/single food/feed business operator	Single product/ multiple locations/single local authority	Single batch/ multiple Food/feed Business operators	Multiple batches/ multiple competent Authorities	Multiple products/single batch/ multinational and MSs Authorities	Multiple products/ multiple batches/ multinational and MSs international Authorities
<b>Economic impact</b>	None	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high

8.4 Annex IV

