final report

Project code: A.MIN.0081

Prepared by: Clive Richardson

MINTRAC

Date submitted: June 2009

Define the need for food safety auditing and the development of RTO capacity

Contents

1 Background

National Food Safety Auditors competencies have been developed and accredited as part of the National Food Strategy with the aim of aiding a move to standardise food safety auditing. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), along with the State Food Authorities, were major players in the development of these competencies and are now pushing to see these competencies adopted by food processors including the meat sector.

These competency standards were included in the MTM07 Australian Meat Industry Training Package, but have not yet been fully implemented, and some potential issues in relation to hours of delivery, appropriate levels and materials have already been identified by NSW TAFE. In addition, the implementation guidelines subsequently developed by AFISC conflict with advice provided during the development of the MTM07 Australian Meat Industry Training Package and some adjustment may be required.

The High Risk Food Safety standards have now also been developed and accredited by DEST, but as yet no assessment of their potential impact on and application to the meat industry has occurred.

There is a need to work with regulatory authorities and meat industry companies to identify an appropriate implementation strategy for these competency standards in the meat industry, and to ensure that RTOs receive appropriate training and resources for their effective implementation in the meat industry.

Industry reference group (IRG)

Eric Middledorp OTEN NSW

Gary Keys OTEN NSW

Peter Horchner Symbio Alliance

Tom Collyer Regency Institute

Terry Richards Australian College of Training

Carol Sherridan AQIS

Andrew Little AUSMEAT

Peter Day NSW Food Authority

2 Milestone requirement 1

Summary of project activities and findings

2.1 Work Plan

The project work plan was developed at the onset of this project (Attachment One) and involved as a first step the establishment of an industry reference group to identify the priorities in this area and to provide feedback to training material developers.

MINTRAC sought to involve representatives form the more significant bodies responsible for food safety auditing in the meat industry as well as the larger training organisations providing auditing training into the industry.

The members of the IRG are listed below.

2.2   Key issues relating to implementation of standards within MTM07

The IRG met and identified the principle issues associated with the delivery of the audit Units and identified the need to:

- introduce a generic audit Unit that does not relate specifically to food safety and can be used to train those auditing non food safety aspects of the meat industry.
- The development of audio-visual support materials for the delivery of the audit Units.

2.3   Impact of high risk standards identified

There are 4 specialised Food Safety Auditing Units that cover high risk food processing activities and these include

- the preparation of meats ready to eat
- processing of molluscs and bi-valves
- heat treatment of products including canning and pasteurization
- cook and chill processes.

The Industry Reference Group has indicated that there has been little or no demand for these Units on a regional basis mainly because:

- RABQSA do not require registered audits to have these Units of competency to be accredited to audit in these areas
- Auditors specializing in these areas usually have higher education in food technology and do not need these units
- Potential student numbers in each State would not warrant running training courses.

2.4   Contract for materials development

Agreement was reached with Des Bowler of Management for Technology to produce the audio visual support materials for training auditors which will combine footage from audits and power point slides to be used in the delivery of the Unit Conduct Food Safety Audits.

2.5   Materials development

The development of the interactive CD has been completed. A Beta version of the interactive training has been circulated and feedback received and incorporated into both the CD and supporting trainee notes. The final version is now available for release to industry.

The training and assessment support materials for the three food safety auditing Units have also been developed by MINTRAC. These are also available to be released to industry and RTOs.

3 Milestone requirement 2: outcomes of trial

The CD and training materials were piloted by Symbio-Alliance with meat industry trainees at courses in both Brisbane and Dubbo. Feedback was received from both sites and the training materials and activities adjusted accordingly. The existing CD and materials will continue to be trialled at MINTRAC funded auditing training programs over the coming 12 months and any further industry feedback will be incorporated as part of MINTRAC's in-house continuous improvement program.

4 Milestone requirement 3: recommendations for future action

It is recommended that MINTRAC continue to monitor the development and implementation of the food safety auditing standards at a national level, and their potential impact on the Australian

5 Other matters or issues relating to this project

There are no other matters or issues relating to this project.

6 Attachment 1

Project Work Plan – 2008/9

Work Plan: July – September 2008

Task	Completion by	Achieved
Define industry auditing requirements in consultation with industry steering group	Sept 30	
Identify existing training Units advantages and disadvantages of utilising them in the meat sector.	Sept 30	
Consult with DAFF re progress with national auditing standards implementation	Sept 30	
Materials developer identified	Sept 30	

Work Plan: October - December 2008

Task	Completion by	Achieved
Units identified by the Steering group	30 October	
Training materials developed and reviewed by RTOs and Steering group	1 March	

Work Plan: January – March 2009

Task	Completion by	Achieved
Training materials developed and reviewed by RTOs and Steering group	1 March	
Submission for Units included in Meat Industry Training Package	1 February	

Work Plan: April – June 2009

Task	Completion by	Achieved
Pilot training delivered	30 April	
Materials modified according to feedback	1 June	
Units included in Training Package	1 June	

7   Attachment 2

Minutes from Industry Reference Group teleconference
Date: Tuesday 28 October 2008
Time: 1pm – 2.30pm (Eastern Summer Time)
Agenda Item

1. Attendance

The following people participated

- Tom Collyer (Regency Institute of TAFE)
- Peter Horchner (Symbio Alliance)
- Terry Richards (Australian College of Training)
- Eric Middledorp (OTEN)
- Gary Keys (OTEN)
- Clive Richardson (MINTRAC)
- John Fallon (NSW Food Authority)
- Tony Jedroszkowiak (AQIS)

Apologies from Andrew Little from AUSMEAT

2. Purpose of the FSA project

a) auditor training needs of the processors : The IRG identified that the meat industry processing companies' auditing train ing requirements were those associated with internal auditing

b) regulator training needs of the processors : AQIS and NSW FA confirmed that training of their own staff as auditors would utilise the national food safety auditors units and may involve RABQSA accreditation. As far as their requirements of companies registered with them they require evidence of training of internal auditors but do not specify the type of training undertaken.

c) The requirements of customers and assurance systems for internal audit training of meat company personnel : These companies and third party assurance schemes require evidence of training of internal auditors but do not specify the type of training undertaken.

3. *Purpose of the industry reference group*

The purpose of the industry reference group is to

• Identify training Units appropriate to the industry's auditors

• Identify training materials needs

• Incorporate feed back from industry QA managers into the Training

Package content

• Oversee the development of auditing training materials and industry consultation

4. *Existing Units (see Attachment)*

a) Issues with the existing Units

The lack of a generic auditing Unit was pointed out as a limitation to the existing Training Package MTM07. This it was agreed could be overcome with the introduction of the old internal auditing Unit from MTM 00 or importing a generic auditing unit from the Business Services Package. ACT has provided a mapping exercise of auditing Units.

In addition it was observed that the overlap between FDFFSCFSAA Conduct

Food Safety Audits and FDFFSACA Assess compliance with food safety programs was significant and there was little to deliver once the Assess Unit has been delivered to complete the Conduct food safety audits Units.

b) Prerequisite Units

The two Units FDFFSCHZA and FDFFSCOMA are pre-requisites for both FDFFSCFSAA Conduct Food Safety Audits and FDFFSACA Assess compliance with food safety programs. These perquisite Units are best delivered at the same time as the audit units.

c) What Units are required for internal versus external auditing.

The internal auditing requirements are best meet by the Unit FDFFSACA

Assess compliance with food safety programs. The external auditing requirements are met by FDFFSCFSAA Conduct food safety audits. However, it was again pointed out that there was very little difference between these two Units.

d) Identify the overlap with existing Units in MTM08 eg MTMP 3073A Implement a food Safety Plan and FDFFSCHZA Identify, evaluate and control food safety hazards.

This overlap was acknowledged but was not considered a major issue as this was the situation with a number of Units in the Training Package MTM07.

5. Survey of what training materials exist already

The Registered Training Organisations on the whole had adequate training materials. However, all parties agreed that some audio visual support material was needed and should be developed as part of this project.

6. Benefit of a meat industry auditing skills set.

This subject was a source of considerable discussion and while it was acknowledged that this may be useful in sourcing State and industry funding it would be necessary for the industry not to detract from funding for full qualifications such as the Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Quality Assurance). MINTRAC will put up a draft skills set for an industry internal auditor.

7. Where to from here

a) Defining training material needs

Subsequent to the meeting Peter Horchner has volunteered to develop a draft story line/concept paper for the audio visual training material. This will be circulated next week for comment

b) Identifying a training materials developer Again subsequent to the meeting MINTRAC has contacted a range of contractors to discuss timeline and availability and will gain quotes once the concept paper has been agreed to.

8. Reporting to the IRG

The Group will be consulted on the

- overall training material content

- a skills set content

- any proposed changes to the auditing Units included in the Meat Industry's Training Package

- the feedback from the industry's QA and training managers network meetings

- the final draft of the auditing materials

9. Pre requisite Units for auditing high risk processes

- relevance

- industry demand

- training materials

The Group recommended that no materials be developed for these specialist Units as there was little or demand for this training. However MINTRAC undertook to canvas the smallgoods industry to ascertain if a national training program had any potential support.