

**A FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING FOOD RISK MANAGEMENT AGAINST  
PHILLIPS' LESSONS**

**Executive summary**

1. In 2001 the Board discussed how the lessons to be learned from the BSE Inquiry should be taken forward in the work of the Agency. As agreed by the Board, this paper presents a framework for measuring the performance of the Agency against the Phillips lessons.
2. The Board is asked to:
  - **note** the framework and checklist at Annexes 1 and 2; and
  - **note** the ways in which the framework will be used.

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**Issue**

1. The development of a formal framework for measuring the Agency's food risk management against Phillips' lessons.

**Background**

2. In February 2001 the Board discussed how the lessons to be learned from the BSE Inquiry should be taken forward in the work of the Agency. It agreed that a framework should be developed for measuring the performance of the Agency against the Phillips lessons. This would entail considering the decisions of the Board as well as the work of the Agency's staff.
3. This paper, which takes account of comments made by the Board in earlier discussions, presents a framework and checklist for use for this purpose.

**The Framework**

4. As previously agreed, the framework at Annex 1 covers four key stages of action in the management of food risks, now supplemented by a fifth stage. These will, in practice, not necessarily occur in a linear progression. The stages are identified as:
  - (i) identifying a risk for attention;
  - (ii) assessing the risk;
  - (iii) deciding what action to take;
  - (iv) implementing the decision; and
  - (v) monitoring and reviewing the impact of the decision.

5. Five general principles, relevant to the Agency's work and drawn from the 'Phillips' lessons are then applied to each of these stages. The five principles are:
  - (i) getting the facts right;
  - (ii) keeping an open mind;
  - (iii) applying rigour;
  - (iv) acting openly; and
  - (v) involving stakeholders.
  
6. A fuller checklist of specific questions, which might be posed at each of the five stages of food risk management, is provided at Annex 2.

### **Use of the framework**

7. The framework will be used in two ways:
  - (i) for external monitoring of the Agency's performance in specific policy areas by consultants with relevant public health or other expertise; and
  - (ii) as a key part of the core module of the Agency's management training scheme, which is designed for all managers in the FSA, to help them better understand our core values and how these can be lived out in our day-to-day work.

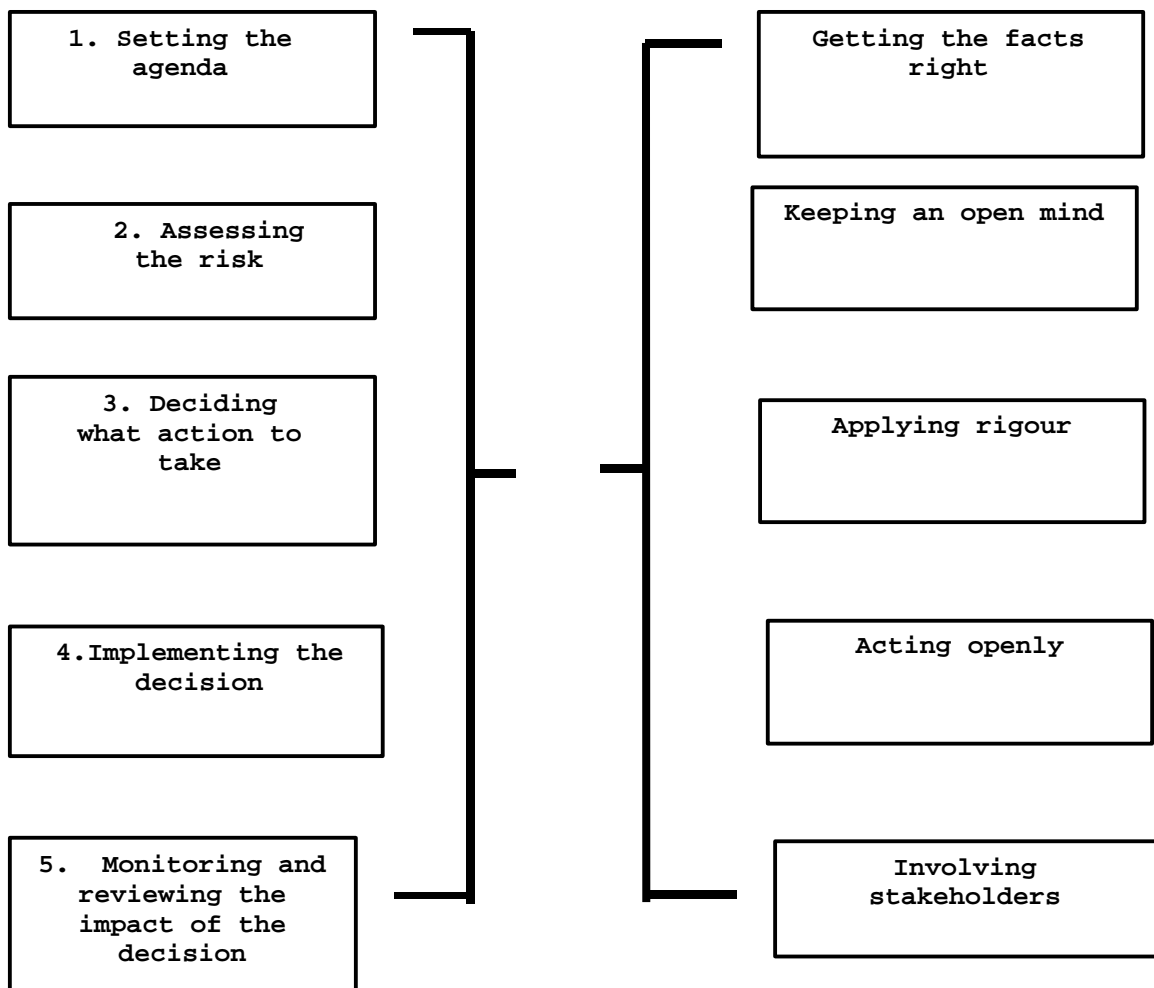
### **Board Action Required**

8. The Board is asked to:
  - **note** the framework and checklist at Annexes 1 and 2; and
  - **note** the ways in which the framework will be used.

# APPLYING BSE LESSONS TO FOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

## THE STAGES OF FOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

## APPLYING KEY PRINCIPLES



## THE CHECKLIST

**NB** Not all questions are applicable to every situation. On each occasion the question “Is this question appropriate to this particular issue/incident?” should be asked.

### Key

1. Getting the facts right
2. Keeping an open mind
3. Applying rigour
4. Acting openly
5. Involving stakeholders

### Identifying a risk

1. Are we being slow in identifying new risks?  
Are we adequately tracking emerging information on known risks?
2. Are we taking account of those with different views to our own?  
Are we prepared to reopen issues where new facts emerge?
3. Are we assessing priorities for attention, and allocating our time sensibly between them?
4. Are we being open and honest about our agenda?
5. Are we checking with relevant stakeholders what information they have?

### Assessing the risk

1. Are we using our in-house scientific expertise?  
Are we consulting scientific experts representing all major viewpoints?  
Are we taking steps to clarify areas of scientific uncertainty?
2. Are we taking account of conflicting views?
3. Are we undertaking a formal risk assessment?  
Are we distinguishing adequately between known risk and areas of scientific uncertainty?
4. Are we publishing our risk assessment, and the facts underpinning it?  
Are we being open and honest about areas of uncertainty?
5. Are we asking stakeholders to contribute to the risk assessment?

### **Deciding what action to take**

1. Do we have all the relevant (including economic) facts available?
2. Are we listening to all interest groups – consumers, enforcement agencies, producers, special interest groups – before deciding what action is appropriate?  
Is there a case for reconsidering our decision? Do we need to do so?
3. Are we considering all the relevant options for action?  
Are we weighing up their costs and benefits rigorously?  
Are we considering their practicality and enforceability?
4. Are we publishing our decision, and the assessments underpinning it?
5. Are we explaining to stakeholders why we have decided on the particular action?

### **Implementing the decision**

1. Are we taking steps to find out about the impact of our decision?
2. Are we allowing for changes in light of experience?
3. Are we following through our decision rigorously and effectively?  
Are we ensuring that it is clearly understood by consumers, producers and enforcers?
4. Are we publishing our implementation plans?
5. Are we allowing for feedback from stakeholders?

### **Monitoring and reviewing the impact of the decision**

1. Is the decision having the intended effect?  
Do we need to review it?
2. If it is not having the intended effect, is that now important?  
Have the circumstances which led to the decision changed since it was made?
3. Is the implementation of the decision being rigorously enforced if appropriate?
4. Are we publishing the results of the enforcement?  
Are we being open about the impact of the decision?
5. Are we obtaining feedback from stakeholders on the impact of the decision?  
Are we consulting stakeholders on any review of the decision?

**NB** At the end of any review in which this checklist is used, the question “What lessons (if any) have we learnt which might affect our future management of food risks?” should be asked.