Minutes of the Food Fraud Contact Points Web Conference 8 June 2016

Participants : CZ, DK, DE, FR, HU, GR, IT LV, HR, IE, MT, PL, PT, RO, SK, FI, UK, ES, CY, SI, NO, IS
DG SANTE : P. Loopuyt, E. Marin, J. Baele, F. Abruzzo, A. El Khoury, H. Vanhonacker

1)   **Debriefing of the joint meeting of the MS networks on RASFF and Administrative Assistance and Cooperation (AAC) of 13th May 2016**

- **Key topics and conclusions**

  rasff-aac.ppt

  No questions raised.

- **Management Board**

  Revision of
  Governance Model RA

  P. Loopuyt asks for volunteers from 7 different MS for the Operational Management Board. Candidates can send an e-mail to the SANTE-882-FoodFraud mailbox. A mail from DG SANTE will be sent to all after this meeting.

  Questions :
  Q : Italy : would it be a problem if a member of the Board is part of more than one network?
  R : no problem at all. Stability in the availability and in the commitment are the main conditions to be member of the Board.

  Q : France : What kind of decisions will be taken by the Board ? Why is the number of members from the MS limited to 7 whereas there will be more members from the Commission?
  R : Technical and tactical decisions will be taken among the Board members. Strategic decisions will be taken with the full FFN. The purpose of the Board is to

share own experiences, assist with the drafting of SOPs and with the development of an appropriate classification structure, etc.

There is no particular reason why there would be 8 members from the Commission and 7 from the MS. The Commission members will be people from the various services involved : RASFF/AAC/FFN/TRACES and the technical unit. There is no problem in having more than 7 members from the MS. Until now, however, only two members from the RASFF community have applied.

France confirms that it is a candidate for the Board.

Q : F : is it understood correctly that the every FF contact points will have access to all the information and when they are also liaison body, be able to create cases in both the AAC and the FF systems?

R : the AAC system will have two components : AAC issues (no health impact, no food fraud component) and FF issues. These will be two separate databases because the FF issues require a more secure way of access and it is likely that the food fraud community will feel more comfortable to introduce more information. It will be possible for actors in one system to have a read-only vision on the other systems, except for the FF issues, which will not be accessible to the other systems. A slide to clarify this point on visibility will be introduced in Circabc.

Q : DK : Can you confirm that it will not be a problem if within the same national service, the 3 systems are managed by one and the same person?

R : Confirmed.

2)   FFN : a specialised network using the AAC tool

Now that the 3 systems (RASFF, AAC, FFN) will be separate tools and the tasks of the 3 networks have been made clear during the recent meetings, DG SANTE will send a letter to the Permanent Representations (copied to the FFN) inviting the MS to review the nomination of the AAC liaison bodies and the FF contact points to have more specialised services dealing with food fraud matters. The latter services should be able to deal with more sensitive information and have investigative powers. In some MS, such a service is already in place.

3)   Possibilities for EU-coordinated cases (art. 40 Reg. 882/2004)

EUcoordinatedCASES.
ppt

Questions following first set of slides on Hazelnuts Georgia:

Q : UK : has any consideration been given as yet to how cases receiving co-ordination will be prioritised if maximum capacity for co-ordination is reached?

R : until now, this kind of prioritisation has not been considered yet. In DG SANTE, we deal with the cases as they come to our attention and try to deal with them. At MS level, cases that are not priority nr. 1 should be dealt with according to the capacity of the different services to act. It is up to the MS to decide on the priority. However, not all cases require action. The hazelnut case, for instance, was forwarded to all MS just for information.

There will be 2 separate networks (FFN and AAC) and the kind of cases that are quite broad and of interest for control plans in certain MS and in which there are no names mentioned would be available in RASFF and in AAC. It could be decided, for specific problems, to have EU coordinated control plans. This will need to be discussed all together. When we think there is a real need for action, the MS will receive a request for action. At the moment, only such request was sent by the Commission.

Q : Poland (and similar question from Slovenia) : to what extent this EU-coordinated actions can be some kind of substitution for Coordinated Control Plans?. **R :** see answer above. An EU-Coordinated action is only possible following a strong analysis from the side of the MS showing that a problem is a priority. Then it can be decided, in a specialised meeting, how to proceed together.

Q : SI : will the hazelnut case give rise to the following coordinated control plan for all countries and will it be co-financed?

R : This is not foreseen, but it will depend on the feedback from the MS.

Q :UK : has any consideration been given to ensuring AAC-remit considerations are viewed alongside fraud issues, in case a broader response or consideration is required. There have been identified issues with aflatoxins in hazelnuts from Georgia as well.

R : In the case of hazelnuts, the source of the problem was very different. Germany proposed reinforcement of controls at BIPs for **ground** hazelnuts under Reg. 669/2009. Such reinforced controls currently exist for **shelled or unshelled** hazelnuts. After reflection, it was decided not to link these issues because the products are different.

Q : FR in some cases in the AAC launched at the initiative of the Commission, it is not clear what was expected from the MS. It should be made clear when a case is for information only and no feedback is expected. Furthermore, **France** thinks that it is not a good idea to launch the same case both via RASFF and via AAC. Not always the same persons are handling both networks and it will not be clear who will have to react. For cases in Rasff, action is expected. Would it not be up to the Commission to decide in which network a case has to be uploaded, since the Commission has all the information and can decide on the priority level?

R : In the AAC and FF network, when something is sent for information, there is no need to answer. In case of a request, an answer has to be given. As to uploading a case in 2 different networks, the visibility of a case is important. We could decide, in case of a public health issue, to only have the case in RASFF. If no public health issue is involved, we could publish in the AAC only, and when some specific names or specific actions are requested in a case of suspicion of fraud, the case would be uploaded in the FFN system only. This is still under reflexion. Clear SOPs will soon be provided on that subject.

Questions following second set of slides on Red Sudan

Q : FR : when will the direct access to the RASFF system from the AAC platform be effective? The link is currently not working.

R : DG SANTE will make sure that all the users concerned will get the access very quickly.

Q - UK : question regarding the security of the FFN side of AAC for this request, and for others. While the requests and responses will not be visible to non-FFN users, the responses from other recipients of a request are visible to the other recipients of a request. Are MSs aware of this and is this the intended visibility of this information as planned by the Commission?

R : yes, it must be clear that **e**verybody will see the answer of the replying MS in case a request has been sent to all MS. This will be mentioned in the SOPs.

Q : FR : information in the AAC is not visible to all. For example, it is not possible to see to whom a request has been sent. Could this information be put in the request itself (who has been requested to do what ?).

R : this is a known behaviour in the system. A request becomes visible only when a MS has answered. In the future, the system will be adapted so that it will be up to the creator to decide who sees what.

Conclusions

E. Marin concludes by thanking all for their cooperation and announces that an EU survey will be sent to all for feedback on the technical aspects of the web conference and suggestions on how to improve things. This tool will be used, in different ways, for future meetings. When sensitive information will be shared, there will be no audio registration.

P. Loopuyt announces that a physical meeting of the FFN in Brussels is scheduled for the last trimester of the year. The minutes of today's meeting will be circulated soon.