



The Hon Gayle Tierney MP

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Dr Anne Astin
Chair
Dairy Food Safety Victoria
2/969 Burke Road
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Dear Dr Astin,

STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS FOR DAIRY FOOD SAFETY VICTORIA

I am pleased to provide you with my expectations for Dairy Food Safety Victoria (DFSV) to guide the regulator's business planning processes.

As Minister for Agriculture, I am responsible for administering the *Dairy Act 2000* and this guidance should be read in the context of the objectives, obligations and functions outlined in this Act, as amended. This guidance should also be read in the context of any other legislative and non-legislative obligations on DFSV and in the context of, but in addition to, your core business activities.

To begin, I would like to acknowledge the essential role DFSV plays in Victoria's strong and productive agriculture system. The expectations I have outlined below focus on building on DFSV's strengths to better deliver on government priorities, address emerging risks and capture new opportunities for the dairy sector.

To achieve this, my expectations are that DFSV deliver on the following three thematic priority elements:

1. Risk based regulation and food safety culture
2. Regulatory responsiveness
3. Supporting system wide improvement

The initiatives and actions outlined below describe how I expect DFSV to address these priorities:

1. Risk based regulation and food safety culture:

I expect DFSV to continue to develop a regulatory system that expects and acknowledges food safety cultural maturity as key to achieving food safety outcomes.

Specifically, I expect DFSV to:

- Continue to refine the dairy regulatory assurance system in collaboration with stakeholders, to ensure it remains appropriate to risk and cost effective.
- Identify and implement incentive-based approaches to compliance where appropriate. This may include rewarding a track record of compliance with a less frequent, and in turn less burdensome, audit inspection cycle or rewarding investment in risk-mitigating processes.
- Drive and lead innovative business improvement, such as through the Dairy RegTech program, including through sharing, collaborating and mentoring others to adopt similar approaches.
- Provide me a report by the end of 2023 on your efforts to implement the Dairy RegTech program, including an assessment of industry uptake of the program, efforts to adapt the program to small dairy businesses and how the program is assisting and informing broader compliance efforts.
- Lead and support whole of government efforts to better understand the role of regulatory culture and how it impacts and changes the broader approach to compliance.

2. Responsive regulation:

To ensure efficient delivery of regulatory functions I expect DFSV to:

- Demonstrate proportionate and situation appropriate use of food safety regulatory tools, including the effective use of education and extension services and enforcement where necessary.
- Genuine engagement and consultation with stakeholders to support effective decision-making and problem solving.
- Engage in open and regular discussion with the Department and other food safety regulators on emerging issues, priorities and approaches to regulation.
- Identify opportunities and collaboratively support the Department to manage the risk of emergency and other animal diseases.
- Support small businesses (less than 20 staff) by identifying and annually reporting on: the number of small business licensees, the regulatory burden of general, direct and indirect costs they experience, and their satisfaction rating of DFSV.

3. Supporting system wide improvement:

I expect DFSV to work with the Department to help ensure Victoria's food safety system is able to manage risk and respond to new challenges, as well as support the agriculture sector to seize on emerging opportunities. Specifically, I expect DFSV to:

- Provide regular updates on your progress and efforts to use digital tools and analytics within regulatory activities, including opportunities for co-investment or partnerships with industry and broader government.
- Continue to engage openly and constructively with opportunities to improve both DFSV and the broader Victorian food regulatory system.
- Provide leadership alongside the Department to deliver a whole of government approach to food safety and regulatory practice. Identify and support opportunities for regulatory improvement across Victoria's agriculture sector.
- Support Victorian Government initiatives in the preparedness and response to exotic animal diseases.

I request that DFSV incorporates the three priorities identified in this Statement into the current work program and in corporate planning. Please identify milestones and appropriate review points for this work. Please advise me when the Statement needs to be updated or reviewed.

Yours sincerely



The Hon. Gayle Tierney MP

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Training and Skills
Minister for Higher Education

Date: 12 October 2022