

Seafish Regulation Alert Monitor 11/03/16 - 18/03/2016

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Food Fraud

How to communicate during a food crisis – EFSA shares guidelines – Source – EFSA

During a food related crisis or incident, rapid, concise and clear communication is essential to manage the crisis and protect consumers. EFSA, which was set up in response to a series of food crises in the late 1990s, has now published recommendations for communicating during a crisis that can serve as a reference for the national food safety authorities of EU Member States.

EFSA created the guidelines together with EU Member States based on best practices gained from previous food-related crises. Developed in cooperation with members of EFSA's Advisory Forum Communications Working Group, this document will help ensure consistency and coherence when communicating in a crisis.

The guidelines can be viewed [here](#)

New research reveals levels of consumer trust in seafood labelling – Source - MSC

Early results from the MSC's latest survey of more than 16,000 seafood consumers show that more than half (55%) doubt the seafood they consume is what it says on the packet.

Across the 21 countries surveyed, 65% of those purchasing seafood say they want to know their fish can be traced back to a known and trusted source, with six in ten (63%) saying they look to ecolabels as a trusted source of information.

The MSC carried out DNA testing of MSC labelled product and found very little mislabelling.

For the full report and stakeholder comment see [here](#)

Tackling fake foodstuff, beverages and agricultural products - Source - Europol

Foodstuff and beverages are among the main categories of products seized by EU customs, reaching over 2 million of articles seized according to the latest EU customs report released in October 2015.

Products for daily use and products that would be potentially dangerous to the health and safety of consumers, such as fake food and beverages, accounted for a total of 28,6% of the total amount of detained articles in 2014.

In that perspective, OHIM, through the European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights, Europol and Eurojust, gathered investigators from customs and police, public prosecutors, private sector - and policy makers, to exchange experiences and best practices in relation to IP crime in the sector of foodstuff, beverages and agricultural products. The event, part of a series of similar events organised since 2013, is being co-hosted by these three EU bodies in Alicante, from 16 to 18 March, providing an opportunity to reinforce operational ties between enforcement authorities and businesses and identify new challenges in the fight against counterfeiting in these sectors.

For more information see [here](#)

Official Controls Review

Report back on ongoing interinstitutional negotiations on Official Controls Review - Source: European Parliament Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

At the beginning of the March 16th meeting of the European Parliament's ENVI committee, the Chair, Giovanni La Via (EPP, IT), informed members about the state of play of the inter-institutional negotiations on the Official Controls Regulation. He explained that the 5th trilogue was held on the 1st of March, where the three institutions recalled their respective positions on the question financing, and discussed the political issue of the control of imports (Articles 42-75). The chair noted that the negotiations were conducted in a constructive atmosphere, and a compromise was found for most problematic issues. However, the issue of the delegation of powers remains open, and it will be tackled in the wider context.

For the [Meeting documents](#) see item 4 and for background of discussions see [Legislative observatory](#)

Conservation

Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the progress in establishing marine protected areas (as required by Article 21 of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2008/56/EC) - Source: European Parliament Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Documents: [Meeting documents](#) (item 7)

On March 16, the European Parliament's ENVI committee held a discussion about the Commission report on the progress in establishing marine protected areas (MPAs). For a summary of the debate contact f_wright@seafish.co.uk

Ethics

Question to the Commission for written answer on Cases of slavery in the fishing sector in Thailand – Source EP register

Written question E-004593/2015 of 24 March 2015 expressed concern over abusive social and working conditions in the fishing sector in Thailand. The term ‘abusive social and working conditions’ was perhaps not the most apt to describe the gravity of the situation, as the question was in fact referring to cases of forced labour, people trafficking, slavery and death. When controversy first arose over the Thai Government’s pilot project to recruit prisoners to work in the fishing industry, the project was condemned by at least 45 international human rights organisations, and also by other parties such as the British newspaper ‘The Guardian’ and the US State Department in its annual report on people trafficking.

We have now heard of a new report, published by the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) and Humanity United, which once more draws attention to the scourge of slavery in connection with the fishing sector in Thailand.

Does the Commission know about this new report?

Will it continue to ignore this situation or is it planning to take steps of some kind, particularly with reference to the EU’s trade with Thailand?

Does it believe the EU’s trade interests should come before human rights?

The answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission can be viewed [here](#)

EP recommendations on environment standards, human rights and CSR - Source: European Parliament Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

On March 16, the EMPL Committee adopted its opinion on the report on the implementation of the 2010 recommendations of Parliament on social and environmental standards, human rights and corporate responsibility. The Committee adopted the opinion with 44 votes in favour, 4 against and 1 abstention .

Meeting document can be viewed [Meeting Documents](#) (Point 12) and background here [Legislative Observatory](#)

Third Country Trade

Exchange of views with the European Commission on the TTIP negotiations – Source - European Parliament Committee on the International Trade (INTA)

On March 16, the European Parliament’s ENVI committee held an exchange of views on TTIP with the EU Deputy Chief Negotiator, Hiddo Houben. The debate largely focused on the main issues in the remit of the committee, such as chemicals, GMOs, antibiotics and food safety, and how EU

standards on those issues would be affected. For a summary of discussions contact f_wright@seafish.co.uk

CONSULTATION views wanted on a FTA with the Philippines – source European Commission

On 22 December 2015 the European Commission announced the launch of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with the Philippines. Bilateral negotiations with the Philippines are the 5th to be launched with a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – following the launch of negotiations with Singapore (2010), Malaysia (2010), Vietnam (2012) and Thailand (2013).

The Philippines is one of the 10 members of the ASEAN and, with a GDP of €260 billion in 2014, the fifth largest economy in the region. The Philippine economy has more than doubled its size in the last decade and consolidated itself as one of the fastest growing economies in Southeast Asia (6.1% GDP growth in 2014). With a population of over 100 million it is also the second most populated country in ASEAN. As part of ASEAN, the Philippines has concluded five regional FTAs (China, India, South Korea, Japan, and Australia and New Zealand) and has, in addition, one purely bilateral FTA with. In the past couple of years, the Philippines has also reached out to EFTA and the EU to negotiate bilateral FTAs and has expressed an interest in joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) once it is open to new members. The Philippines is the EU's 6th largest trade partner in ASEAN. In 2015, the EU exported goods worth €6.2 billion to the Philippines, while the EU imports from the Philippines amounted to €6.8 billion. Data for 2015 reflects a substantive increase in Philippine exports to the EU that can partly be explained by the Philippines becoming a GSP+ beneficiary in December 2014 (from earlier GSP status). DG Trade has prepared two questionnaires to give stakeholders and interested parties the opportunity to provide information on trade matters in the agreement between the EU and the Philippines (FTA): one general for Industry and one specific on fisheries issues. Your reply to these questionnaires will be important in establishing priorities and taking decisions throughout the negotiating process and we thank you in advance for your contribution.

The general questionnaire is divided into the following sections:

- Trade in Goods.
- Trade in Services and Investment
- Regulatory Issues (Intellectual Property Rights, Competition, Government Procurement)
- Other issues

In addition, where possible, we would appreciate receiving as specific information as possible (substantiated where possible by economic indicators and/or data) of respondents' interests, prioritization within sectors, and any proposals for solution, where problems have been identified. The Commission, subject to the application of the EU's rules on access to documents (Regulation No 1049/2001), will treat the information that you provide as confidential. EU rules on access to documents allow the Commission to withhold access to a document where disclosure would undermine the commercial interests of a natural or legal person or harm the EU's relations with

third countries, unless there is an overriding public interest in disclosure. The Commission would welcome your input and comments on these questionnaires by 30th April 2016. For any question you can write at the following e-mail address: trade-industry@ec.europa.eu

For more details or to respond see [here](#)

UK Alerts

Shipping container weight verification

Following concerns raised by the shipping industry regarding the misdeclaration of the gross mass of packed containers, international regulations have been amended to require the declaration of the verified gross mass of each container to be shipped. The mandatory amendments are in the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Chapter VI, Part A, Regulation 2. They come into effect on 1 July 2016. Shippers are already required by UK law to provide the owner or master of a vessel with the gross mass of cargo units, so a change to UK legislation is not required.

The main effect of the amendment is that the shipper will have to weigh the packed container using calibrated and certified equipment. UK ports are working to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure and procedures are in place by 1 July.

Containers carried on a chassis or trailer which are driven on or off a ro-ro ship engaged in short international voyages are excluded from the requirement.

There is extensive guidance on the website of the British International Freight Association (BIFA) [here](#).

A Marine Guidance Note on weight verification issued by the Maritime and Coastal Agency (MCA) is available [here](#).

Waste duty of care guidance

Defra have published a Waste Duty of Care Code of Practice applicable in England and Wales <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/waste-duty-of-care-code-of-practice>

A [review of local authority regulation](#) has been launched as part of the Cutting Red Tape programme. It is calling for business' thoughts and experiences and how local authority regulation can work better for industry needs.

The review will take into account burdens imposed by planning and building control, construction regulations, food safety, standards and hygiene, environmental protection and health and safety amongst others.

Now that the government is reviewing more broadly the implementation and enforcement of regulation by local authorities, it will build on the existing review of Trading Standards, going beyond

that current review and present all findings and the government response to the findings on Trading Standards, alongside the rest of this review.

We will also build on and complement issues and evidence in relation to local authorities that emerged from the Cutting Red Tape reviews. We will seek evidence on everything from how inspections and visits are conducted and how data is requested, through to guidance, advice and how accountable and responsive local authorities are to business needs. However, the scope of the review will not include fees and charges.