

JEGs Internal Review 2022

The Joint Expert Groups (JEGs) have been internally reviewed by the FSA, following the Cabinet Office '[Guidance for the Review of Public Bodies](#)'. A Self-Assessment Model (SAM) was used to assess the efficacy, efficiency, governance and accountability.

The FSA has concluded that the results of this SAM indicate that the JEGs will require a full-scale review and will undergo a deep review as part of the next cycle of FSA SAC reviews in 2025. It has been recommended that the deep review of the JEGs is postponed until 2025 because they have not been functioning long enough for a deep review to produce quality recommendations for future ways of working.

The conclusions and recommendations of the SAM are summarised below.

Conclusions

Efficacy

There is no complaints procedure published for the JEGs. This does not appear relevant as there are no public facing services. Policy departments at the FSA and other risk management colleagues are where complaints should be received and dealt with.

Performance of the JEGs is appraised annually by the members, Secretariat and the FSA's Chief Scientific Advisor. This adheres to the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory committees ([CoPSAC](#)) and, therefore, is deemed suitable for the JEGs.

Efficiency

The JEGs do not produce an annual report; there should either be a published statement on why this is the case, or there should be annual reports produced.

Governance

The JEGs do not publish their own roles and responsibilities of Chairs and members but sit underneath the SACs as a 'parent' committee and abide by their roles and responsibilities.

There are no published guidelines for JEGs members on lobbying and political activity. Members receive these when they are inducted into the JEGs.

The JEGs do not publish minutes or attendance records for their meetings.

Diversity and inclusion is a topic of particular interest for the FSA within the SACs. The FSA should continue its focus on encouraging diversity of applicants to all FSA SAC memberships.

Accountability

The JEGs do not operate with a fixed Chair model. However, if in future they were to function with a fixed Chair, that person should be given opportunities to meet with the FSA Board and CSA, as is stated in the CoPSAC. The FSA Board should also in this case send an annual 'Chair's Letter' to any JEGs Chair setting out the FSA’s short-term priorities and expectations.

Results

Table 1: The major indicators for concern for the JEGs.

Conclusion Sub-Areas Majors

Efficacy 2/8

Efficiency	1/2
Governance	7/26
Accountability	1/14
Total	11/50

Table 1 provides a summary of the binary and data questions only, and is not fully representative of all answers given in the SAM.

The SAM has shown few areas of concern for the JEGs.

The model for the JEGs was set up in response to a fast-paced change during EU Exit. This model is being reviewed by the Secretariat at the FSA to allow them to be best utilised. The AFFAJEG received confirmation in 2022 that they will be reformed into the FSA's original 'parent' committee, ACAF (Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs), therefore, the function and remit of the AFFAJEG will be changed to allow full risk assessment advice to be carried out. The FCMJEG and AERJEG will continue in their current model.

Recommendations

1. The JEGs should have more information on their websites to allow transparency and openness.
 - a. The JEGs should consider publishing a complaints procedure on its website.
 - b. The JEGs should explain how they align with the FSAs policies and good practice guidelines for SACs, as well as which terms of reference and code of practice they follow.
 - c. The JEGs should publish a register of the declaration of interests for their members.

- d. The JEGs should consider publishing meeting minutes and attendance records for their meetings.
2. The JEGs and FSA could consider publishing performance data to show transparency.
3. The JEGs should consider publishing rules on lobbying and guidelines for political activity for JEGs members to ensure compliance with any restrictions.
4. The JEGs should publish annual reports or there should be a published statement on why they do not produce them.
5. Each JEG should consider their current working model and whether they could benefit from a fixed Chair.