

Food Standards Agency: Information released under the Freedom of Information Act

Date released: 30 January 2018

Request

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information:

Please provide a list of all facilities for Food Standards Agency staff members to make written feedback or suggestions to senior management. As general examples, this answer could include (but would not be limited to) physical feedback systems like suggestion boxes, and electronic resources such as internal intranet forums (including 'rumour mills'), and dedicated feedback email addresses.

Response

As an organisation, the Food Standards Agency(FSA) is committed to open dialogue between all members of staff and encourages feedback from staff to senior management. There are a number of formal mechanisms in place for staff to make written feedback or suggestions to senior management which are detailed below. However, there are also informal channels within the 'business as usual' working of teams for staff to provide feedback, even if it is not written. The FSA continues to review and improve the mechanisms in place in the light of staff feedback and business best practice.

Staff are encouraged to email their managers and directors directly with suggestions. They can also provide feedback and suggestions directly to senior leaders, including the Chief Executive Officer, through the internal social media platform, 'Yammer'. These suggestions can be sent privately or, as is the case in most instances, they are sent publicly so all staff can see what has been written.

The FSA regularly undertakes staff surveys at team, directorate and organisational wide level using electronic tools such as Survey Monkey. In particular the FSA conduct the annual Civil Service People Survey, the results of which are examined in great detail by senior management to see how the organisation can improve.

In 2017 the FSA introduced 'Strat Chats'. These are quarterly, face-to-face chats with FSA directors and the Chief Executive Officer in all FSA offices. Staff are encouraged to ask questions and give their feedback to the Chief Executive Officer/directors, directly.

All business areas have regular team meetings in which they are encouraged to give feedback and suggestions. They also give feedback in their regular 'one-to-one' meetings with their managers.

Most staff give feedback verbally in their 'one-to-one' meetings but some teams provide a paper feedback form for staff to discuss their suggestions. In some parts of the business there are also physical feedback systems such as anonymous staff suggestion boxes.

In 2017 the FSA also introduced open Question & Answer sessions at evening forums for staff working in Field Operations.