

COMMUNICATION

Food and Controlled Drugs Branch

To: Environmental Health Officers (EHOs)

Title: Preparation of potentially hazardous food in domestic kitchens ('home-based' businesses)

Purpose

To provide consistent information about the preparation of potentially hazardous food in domestic kitchens (home-based businesses).

Background

Traditionally only small food businesses, which produce low risk foods, such as cakes, biscuits and jams (P3 & P4) are predominantly operated from domestic kitchens. Due to the small scale and low risk nature of food operations conducted by these businesses, they are generally able to manage their risks and comply with the requirements of the *Food Safety Standards*.

More recently, there has been an increase in the occurrence of P1 and P2 food businesses producing higher risk potentially hazardous foods (PHF) from domestic kitchens without adequately assessing the food safety risks and suitability of the premises.

Domestic kitchens are generally not designed and equipped for commercial food production and therefore the safety and suitability of food being produced for sale may be compromised.

Assessing the suitability of food businesses' producing food from domestic kitchens:

Below are some of the risks and common non-compliance with the *Food Safety Standards 3.2.2 and 3.2.3* identified with home-based businesses:

Risks

- inadequate space and layout of the premises
- lack of provision of adequate and separate refrigeration and storage areas for the volume of PHF being produced
- risk of pets and children entering the kitchen
- higher risk of cross contamination



Non-compliances

- inadequate hand washing facilities
- inadequate facilities for washing and sanitising
- lack of validation of process controls
- unsuitable food transport vehicles.

All food businesses, regardless of what premises they are operating from, are required to comply with the requirements of the *Food Safety Standards*. EHOs should inspect all food businesses that operate from, or propose to operate from, a domestic/ home kitchen to assess the suitability of the premises with regard to their classification, size, the types food produced and the processes they undertake; and whether the above issues can be effectively managed – with particular focus on the risks and non-compliances.

It is recommended that all P1 and P2 food businesses operate from a commercial kitchen, whereby the food safety risks can be adequately managed, unless the business can demonstrate compliance with the *Food Safety Standards*.

Approval for exemptions by the appropriate enforcement agency, as per *Standard 3.2.3 clause 14*, is a viable option for P3 and P4 food businesses; however this exemption is not suitable for P1 and P2 food businesses due to the high risk nature of food handling activities conducted by these businesses.

Consistent interpretation, surveillance and enforcement across all councils is required to manage this emerging risk.

Where can I get more information?

- <http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/c30973804209353ab856bdf8b1e08c6d/131213+Food+Business+Risk+Classification+Final.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=c30973804209353ab856bdf8b1e08c6d>

For more information

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