THE EMIRATE OF ABU DHABI

ABU DHABI FOOD CONTROL AUTHORITY

CODE OF PRACTICE

No. (3)/2009

FOOD INCIDENTS AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

جهــاز أبـوظـبي للرقابة الغذائية
ABU DHABI FOOD CONTROL AUTHORITY

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1. Introduction

All food businesses in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi are obliged to ensure that the food they produce is safe and that their food operations are in compliance with the Food Law and its regulations. This Code of practice, produced by Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority (ADFCA), specifies guidance to compliance with Abu-Dhabi food regulations, and ensures high degree of consistency with UAE regulations and Gulf Standards.

Abu Dhabi Food Law No. (02) of the year 2008 requires all food business operators to have a traceability system in place that will enable them to withdraw and, where necessary, recall food products from the market, identified as posing a risk to consumers.

In most circumstances, food incidents will be identified by food businesses themselves, who will normally initiate a product withdrawal/recall. There will in other instances, for example, through ongoing food inspection by ADFCA's officers in charge, consumer complaints, as a result of investigation of illnesses, outbreaks of infectious disease, or through the testing of foods that incident(s) can be identified.

The arrangements in this Code of Practice ensure food business operators, ADFCA and official entities have a co-ordinated approach in ensuring that food products identified as being a risk to consumers are withdrawal/recall from the food chain.

Food incidents can be categorised into 3 levels:
- Routine (Level 1) food incidents have limited food distribution, low risk characteristics and are likely to be easy to control by one or more official entity.
- Major (Level 2) food incidents have wider food distribution, medium to high risk characteristics and more than one official entity is likely to be involved in managing the investigation and control measures. There is also the potential for level 2 incidents to cause some disruption to normal activities as resources are diverted to deal with the incident.
- Crisis (Level 3) food incidents have high risk characteristics, are likely to have wide scale food distribution and the capacity to control the incident is beyond the normal capabilities of ADFCA. A food crisis has the potential to cause significant disruption to routine work activities and there is the likelihood that the incident will take some time to control and will need extra resources allocated to deal with it.

Part 1 of this Code of Practice 'Food Incident Management Plan' sets out arrangements for managing level 1 & 2 food incidents and includes the administrative and cooperative measures food business operators, ADFCA and official entities must take to manage these incidents.

Part 2 of this Code, "Crisis Management Plan", sets out a framework for initiating a response to a large scale level 3 food incident. This plan will be initiated by ADFCA when a situation is identified that involves a serious direct or indirect risk to human health deriving from food and which cannot be managed adequately by existing provisions.

2. Purpose

The objectives of this Code of Practice are to:
- Categorise food incidents for management purposes.
- Provide instructions for communicating food incidents details to, and between, food businesses, official entities and ADFCA.
- Detail the arrangements for issuing, communicating and actioning the Food
- Crisis management Plan (Part 2).

3. Scope

This Code of Practice applies to Food Incidents and Crisis Management in relation to food. This document is intended for use by food businesses operators, official entities and ADFCA.

4. Definitions
The following definitions are used for the purpose of this document

Food Incident
The circumstances surrounding the identification of a hazard which poses a risk to health and can be considered as (but not exclusively):
- An event which had potentially harmful implications to the public resulting from the consumption of food.
- The identification of contaminated food, that if consumed may lead to illness.
- The identification of serious human illness that may be linked to contaminated food.
- The identification of unhygienic practices in a food business of such a degree as to present an immediate danger to consumers' health.
- The identification of irregular or illegal practices in any food business or in the distribution network that could pose a threat to consumers' health.
- Biological or chemical contamination resulting from deliberate tampering or a terrorist event.

Rapid Alert System

A notification system which is operated by ADFCA for information exchange on identified food hazards between the official entities.

Food Notifications

are either:

- food alert notifications where there is an identified direct or indirect risk to health, or;
- food Information notifications which relate to information on a food product which is unlikely to pose a risk to health, but which may be of interest to other of official entities.

Food Alert

A notification issued by ADFCA to official entities and food businesses, relating to an identified hazard. A Food Alert may result from, but not be limited to, information received by another official entity crisis/emergency or contingency plan in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, information received from ministry of environment and water, notifications from International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) or other international food alerts, a problem identified by a food producer, a problem identified by an enforcement authority through food testing or investigative work.

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Risk Assessment

The evaluation of the likelihood and severity of adverse effects on public health arising. It is a scientifically based process consisting of the following steps: (i) hazard identification, (ii) hazard characterization, (iii) exposure assessment, and (iv) risk characterization.

Risk Management

The process, distinct from risk assessment, of weighing policy alternatives, in consultation with all interested parties, considering risk assessment and other factors relevant for the health protection of consumers and for the promotion of fair trade practices, and, if needed, selecting appropriate prevention and control options.

Risk Communication

The interactive exchange of information and opinions throughout the risk analysis process concerning risk, risk-related factors and risk perceptions, among risk assessors, risk managers, consumers, industry, the academic community and other interested parties, including the explanation of risk assessment findings and the basis of risk management decisions.

5. Related Documents

The following lists of legislations and guidance documents are relevant to this Code of Practice:

5.1 Legislation

- Law No. (02) for the year 2008 in respect of Food within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
- Regulation No. (1) for the year 2008 in respect of Description of Violations related to food and its handling.
- Regulation No. (3) for the year 2008 in respect of the Traceability and Recall of Food.
- ADFCA regulation no. (5) for the year 2010 "Food Sampling for Official Control".
- Regulation No.(6) for the year 2010 in respect of food hygiene throughout the food chain.

5.2 Guidance document

- Code of practice no. (1) for the year 2009 in respect of food traceability and recall.

Part 1: LEVEL 1 & 2 FOOD INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

6. Background

The aim of this section of the Code of Practice is to set out the arrangements for responsibility of managing **level 1 & 2 food incidents** in the Emirate of Abu-Dhabi involving food hazards as identified by food businesses operators, ADFCA's officers in charge, official entities or other countries. The objective of this is to have a coordinated approach to ensure that food products identified as being a risk to consumers are controlled or withdrawn/recalled from the food chain.

7. Responsibility for management of level 1& 2 food incidents

7.1 Role of the Official Entities

Where the scale and complexity of an incident is such that some degree of other official entity co-ordination and support is necessary, ADFCA will be responsible for the overall management of the food incident, and the various official entity (-ies) will support the role of ADFCA.

Depending on the type of incident, official entities will:

* identify the hazard giving rise to the incident.
* assess and characterize the risk.
* gather and issue information on the food incident for ADFCA.
* communicate with ADFCA.
* communicate with public to ensure adequate information transfer and provide clear instruction.

For more information on the role of each official entity in managing food incidents see part 2 (section 14.2) of this code.

7.2 Role of food business operator

Food business operators should be aware of their legal obligations set out in Food Law Number (02) of the year 2008 regarding the handling of unsafe food, the tracing of food, and the withdrawal/recall of unsafe foods from the market within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

Where a food business operator considers or has reason to believe that a food which it has imported, produced, processed, manufactured or distributed may be injurious to human health or is not in compliance with the relevant legislations he shall withdraw the unsafe

food from the market place without delay and notify ADFCA. Where the food product may have reached the consumer, the food business operator shall initiate procedures to recall the food from the consumer. It is important that food business operators' use effective and accurate means to inform the consumer about food recalls.

Regulation no. (1) for the year 2008 in respect of Description of Violations related to food & its handling outlines the offences and violations for handling food which does not comply with the specific regulatory controls and provides delegated officers with judicial powers to seize, detain, and condemn food which do not comply with the relevant legislation.

In summary food business operators shall :

* Take all necessary measures to protect public health.
* Maintain and test an effective and efficient recall and traceability system.
* Maintain all process documentation and product testing and traceability documents.
* Notify ADFCA of incidents or potential incidents without delay.
* Initiate the withdrawal and/or recall of food products as necessary.
* Provide all necessary assistance and co-operation to ADFCA.
* Ensure timely release of information relevant to an investigation.
* Review and update information as it becomes available and ensure ADFCA is notified during incidents.
* Prevent the sale of food which does not comply with the provisions of any regulation applicable to that particular food.
* Prevent the misuse of the recalled items.

**Figure (1) below summarizes the role of food business operators.**
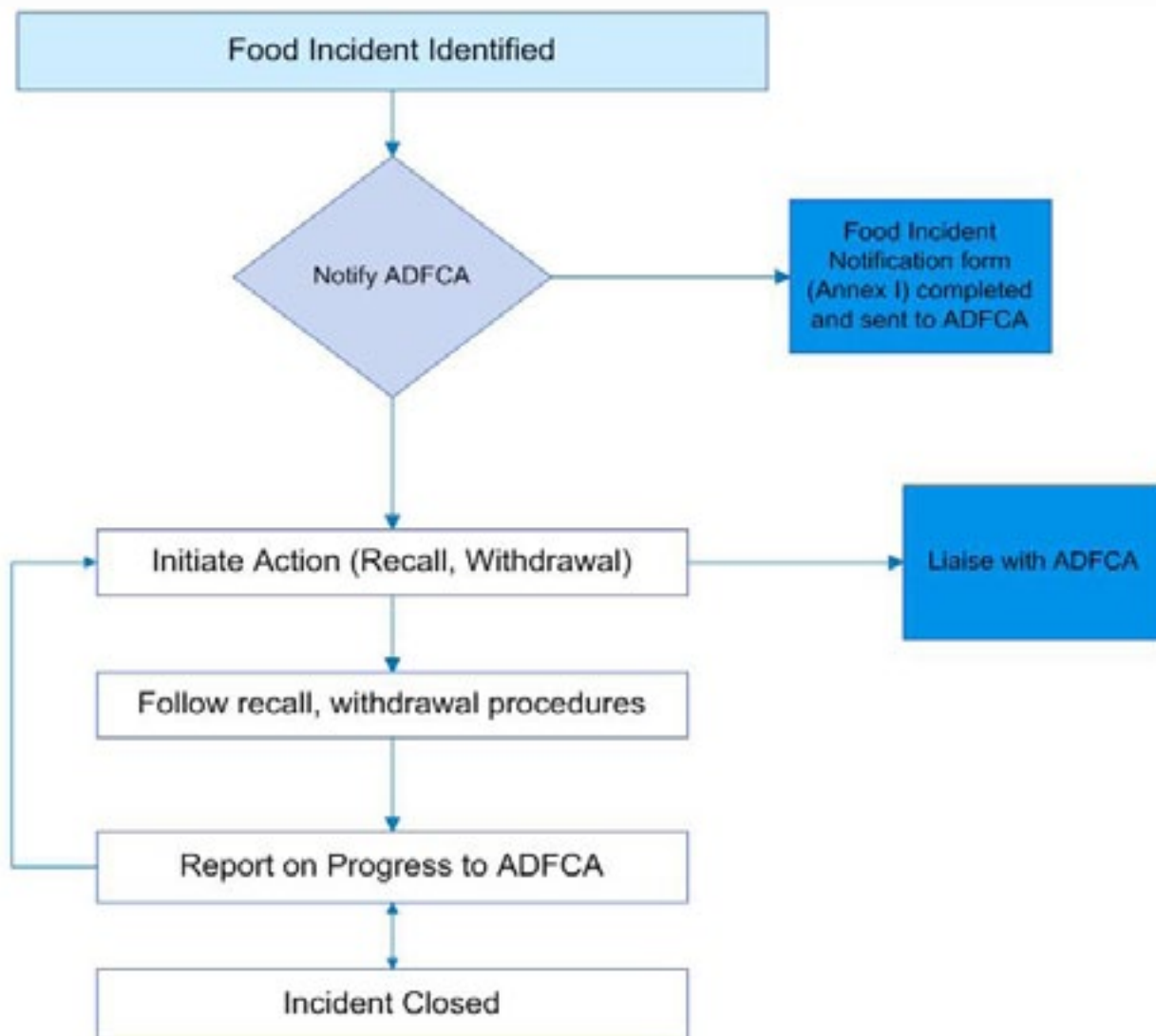
7.3 Role of Food alert team in ADFCA

In managing level 1&2 food incidents, ADFCA will take the lead role in investigating all food incidents. The Food alert team in ADFCA is the focal point in dealing with food incidents and responsible for managing this process.

The key functions for Food alert team will:

1. Receive and record all information and data on reported food incidents and crises.
2. Open a 'file log' related to the reported food incident or crises and make sure that all updates are documented and ensure all food incidents or crises are closed immediately after they are contained.
3. Notify the Crisis Management Team Coordinator on the incident status and its preliminary information of details and provides update on the progress of the investigation in accordance with the procedure adopted for this purpose.
4. Provide support and coordination with the technical team who follow-up the reported food incidents and crises cases.
5. Prepare the progress reports related to the reported food incident case in coordination with the technical team and update the periodic review reports for the high management and Crisis Management Team.
6. Coordinate and communicate with the entities at local, federal and international level, where required by Crisis Management Team.
7. Contribute to the development of the food alert notifications database and make it available to various stakeholders.

Figure (2) below summarizes ADFCA's role process.
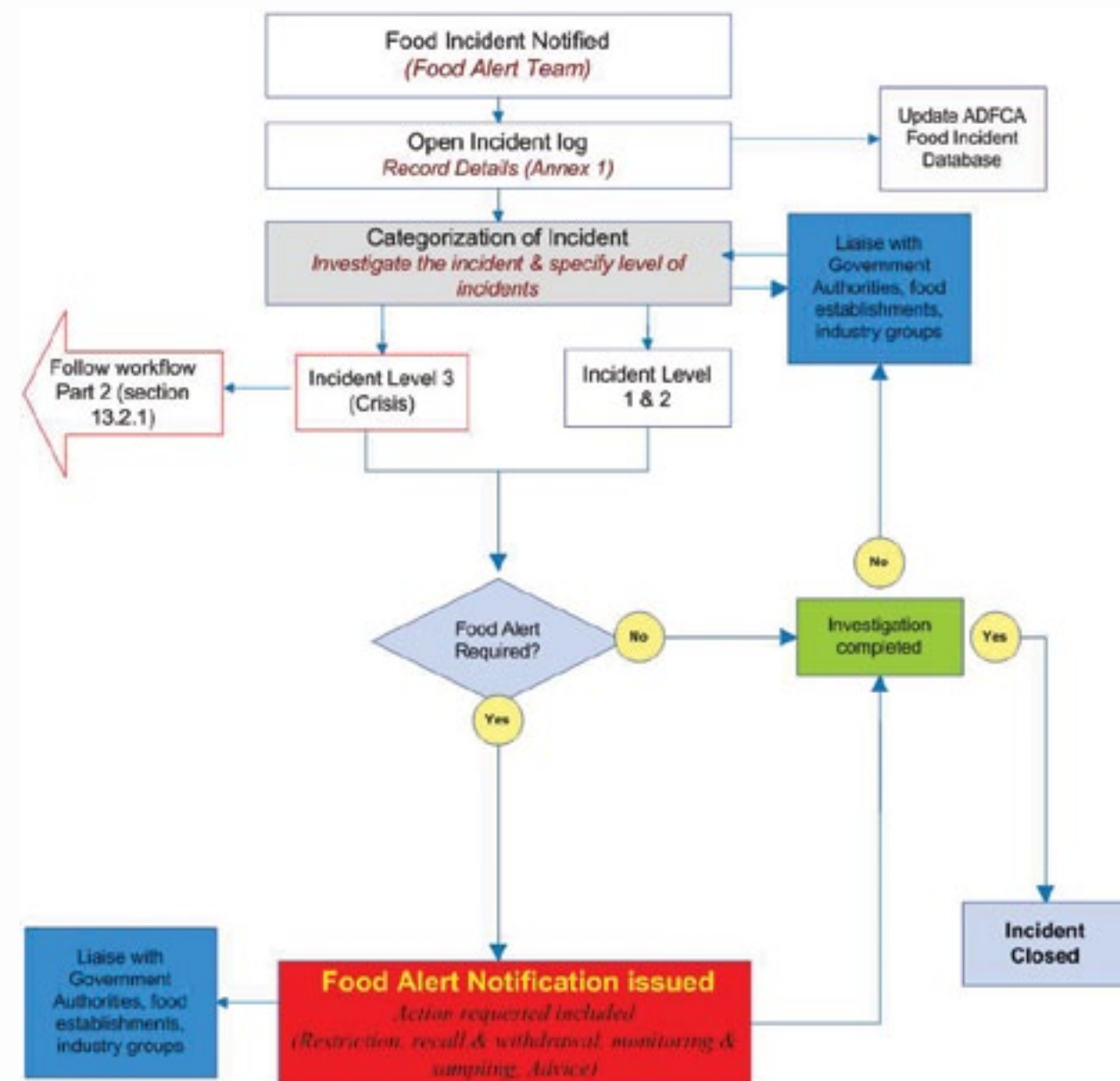
7.3.1 Food Incident Notification

Food alert team may become aware of a food hazard through reported food related illnesses, food alert notifications (e.g. INFOSAN, MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT etc.….) directly from food business operators in Abu-Dhabi, consumer complaints or from official entities. These notifications are assessed for possible implications based on:

- Known distribution of the food within Abu Dhabi.
- Possible distribution of food into Abu Dhabi from another Emirate in the UAE or Gulf country known to have received the food.
- The type of food.
- The possible uses for the food (e.g. Food used in retail sale or as an ingredient in processing).
- The nature of the risk.
- Other potential implications for consumers.

Where the implications are unclear, ADFCA shall consult with the appropriate representatives of food business operators, official entities and other experts in order to inform on the correct course of action and reach an adequate decision.

Where there is a need for action to be taken in order to restrict the placing on the market or the withdrawal or recall from the market of the food in question or to convey the information to other Emirate in the UAE or Gulf country, the Food alert team will issue a Food Alert (Annex 2).

7.3.2 Notifications from food business operators.

Notifications for Food incidents shall be sent to The Food alert team (FAT) in ADFCA "foodalert@adfca.ae"foodalert@adfca.ae and shall contain the necessary details as possible (template shown in Annex 1,).

It is essential that prior to sending notification to ADFCA a telephone call be made to the Food alert team to advise that such a notification is being sent in order to ensure receipt.

FAT operates 24 hours a day 7 days a week through the Abu-Dhabi Government toll free number : **(800 555)**

8. Planning and Co-ordination

Official entities will have arrangements or procedures in place to deal with the receipt of incident notifications and will investigate and communicate with ADFCA accordingly.

ADFCA will have arrangements or procedures in place to deal with the receipt of food incident notifications and will investigate accordingly by identifying the hazard, assessing the risk and deciding upon and initiating the appropriate course of action.

In order to categorise food incidents for management purposes, consideration will be given to the, hazard characterisation and the distribution of food associated with the incident.

8.1 Risk analysis

The risk analysis approach to reducing, eliminating or avoiding risk to health provides a systematic methodology for the determination of effective proportionate and targeted measures or other actions to protect health and consists of the three components: risk assessment, risk management and risk communications.

ADFCA will need to take into account the results of a risk assessment when deciding on appropriate action.

In carrying out the risk assessment, it is recommended to follow the Codex Alimentarius model for risk assessment which consists of the following steps: hazards identification, hazard characterization, exposure assessment and risk characterization.

1. Hazard Identification: the identification of known or potential health effects as sociated with a particular agent.
2. Hazard Characterisation: the qualitative or quantitative evaluation of the nature of the adverse effect associated with the hazard including a dose-response model.
3. Exposure Assessment: the qualitative or quantitative evaluation of the degree of intake likely to occur.
4. Risk Characterisation: the integration of hazard identification and exposure as sessment into an estimate of the risk and its associated uncertainties.

8.2 Hazard characterisation

The hazard characterisation can be classified as High, Medium or Low:

High : where the adverse health effects are likely to be severe and immediate (e.g. E. coli 157, Cl. Botulinum, acutely toxic and caustic chemicals, presence of allergens...etc)

Medium : where the health effects are likely to be less serious or related to continuous long-term exposure or consumption of large quantities of food (e.g. chemical contamination)

Low : where the health effects are minimal or not observed (e.g. chemical residue levels which are above statutory limits but which do not pose a health risk of foreign object contamination)

8.3 Distribution of food

The distribution of food can either be:
Limited: where the food is distributed in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi only and is under the responsibility of ADFCA, or
Wide: where the food is distributed inside and outside the Emirate of Abu Dhabi such that more than one official entity has responsibility.

In considering where the responsibility for managing an incident lies the following outline should be used:

The distribution of food can either be:

Distribution	Hazard Characteristic	Responsibility of managing an incident
Limited	Low	ADFCA
	Medium	ADFCA in collaboration with other official entities in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
	High	ADFCA in collaboration with other official entities in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
Wide	Low	ADFCA in collaboration with other official entity-ies.
	Medium	ADFCA in collaboration with other official entity-ies and GCC Secretariat.
	High	ADFCA in collaboration with federal official entity-ies and GCC Secretariat.

9. Communication of Incidents and Alerts Notifications

ADFCA shall operate a communication system for the exchange of information on food incidents within Abu-Dhabi with food business operators and official entities. The communication of food incidents at a federal level will be the responsibility of The Ministry of Environment and Water.

There is a need for official entities, industry groups and food establishments / food business operators to have their own communications structures and protocols in place, which must include the maintenance of key contact lists.

9.1 Food Notifications

Food notifications will be communicated to official entities, to public health representatives, food establishment's representatives, or other concerned groups, organisations in the Emirate who have requested ADFCA to be on its circulation list.

While food notifications will also be sent by fax where requested, email will be considered as an official means of communication, in addition to the email notification, there will also be the option of receiving the food notification by SMS text message on their mobile device.

Once issued all Food notifications shall be placed on ADFCA's website: www.adfca.ae

The Food notification will be issued according to one of the two following categories:
Category 1 (For Action)
Food alerts from this category will be issued where there is an identified risk to consumers and an immediate action is required to be taken. Ensuring the removal from sale at retail premises of a food identified with a high pathogenic bacterial loading is an example of the type of alert which would fall in this category.

The detail contained in the alert will clearly set out what is known about the food (including batch/production codes, size of containers, quantities affected, durability dates, etc), the nature of the hazard, the risk and the type of specific action required. This will enable ADFCA's officers in charge, official entities and food establishments / food business op

erators to act in an appropriate, consistent and co-ordinated manner to control the risk.

Food alerts notification from this category will be issued in a standard form, identified by a unique, sequential number and the year of issue (see example in Annex 2).

Category II (For Information)
Food notifications from this category will be used for passing on information relating to food safety, but not detailing or requiring any action to be taken. Where a product recall has been initiated by a food producer and there is no further action being required, would be an example of such a notification. Category II food notifications are a means of making officers in charge in ADFCA and food establishment's representatives aware of food safety issues where there may be, for example, enquiries from the public or trade organisations on a particular food safety matter.

The decision to issue a Food alert notification will be taken in view of the nature and details known about the hazard and risk. Where an incident has been notified to ADFCA by an official entity, the decision to issue an alert will be taken in consultation with the specific official entity and the alert will include a summary of details of any action which has already been undertaken

9.2 Media Management

9.2.1 Incidents managed by ADFCA
The press release will be or an information dissemination mechanism will be managed by ADFCA and through which copies of releases will be circulated to the concerned entities in the Emirate.
ADFCA will nominate a spokesperson responsible of all communications concerning the incident with the media.

9.2.2 Incidents managed by Official Entities in collaboration with ADFCA
Where there is collaboration on the management of an incident, the responsibility of issuing the press release will remain with ADFCA, this will be carried out in consultation with the official entity and a copy of the release provided to that Entity.
A nominated spokesperson should be identified by the official entity and where appropriate ADFCA may also nominate a spokesperson.

9.2.3 Food Business establishments / food business operators issuing press releases
Food business operators issuing press releases, public notices and/or recall or withdrawal notifications should provide copies to ADFCA, along with contact details of any nominated spokesperson.

10.Closure and Reporting
Incident Closure
Once investigations into a Food incident have been completed or all possible action has been carried out to ensure food products have been recalled or withdrawn, all parties involved shall be notified that the incident is closed, whether the action has been initiated by a food establishment, an official entity or ADFCA.

A summary record (from annex 1) of the outcome should be made for reference purposes and in the case of food withdrawals/recalls details of quantities returned/destroyed should be identified.

Part 2: FOOD CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

11. Background
This part of the Code details best practice in dealing with a Food Crisis. It outlines the crisis management procedures, the risk assessment process and media communications, which shall be followed when ADFCA is notified about a level 3 food incident or detects a serious food safety hazard involving food products manufactured and marketed in Abu Dhabi. These procedures are supported by adequate action sheets for the Crisis Team Coordinator, Crisis Team administrator, Press and Public Relation (PR) Officer and the Information Officer.

The "Abu Dhabi Crisis Management Plan" will be initiated when Incidents which have high risk characteristics and likely involve wide scale distribution occur. The capacity to control the incident is beyond the normal capabilities of ADFCA and there is the potential for significant disruption to routine work activities (Level 3 incidents). There is the likelihood that

the incident will take some time to control and will need extra resources allocated to deal with it.

ADFCA may become aware of a large scale food crisis through food related illness, directly from a food producer in Abu Dhabi, any of the official agencies in the Gulf region, food control laboratories or any other source.

12. Scope

This crisis management plan sets out the responsibilities and necessary arrangements for dealing with food crises.

The situations giving rise to activation of the plan include:
- large scale chemical contamination of food.
- large scale physical contamination of food.
- serious microbiological contamination of food.
- intentional/malicious contamination of food on a large scale.
- investigations into a food incident that indicates a larger scale problem.
- activation of another official entities emergency/crisis plan.
- food notifications from World Health Organisation's INFOSAN (International Food Safety Authorities Network) or other international food alerts notification.
- any circumstances which in the view of a crisis team coordinator necessitates the activation of the plan.

13. Crises Management Plan

The key elements that comprise the plan are:
- activation of the plan.
- establishing responsibilities for management of the crisis.
- clear, structured communications.
- 'scale down', review and reporting arrangement.

13.1 What is a Food Crisis (Level 3 Food Incident)?

Food Incidents which have high risk characteristics and likely involve wide scale food distribution or are of such circumstances as making it necessary to consider them in the same way. The capacity to control the incident is beyond the normal capabilities of AD-FCA and there is the potential for significant disruption to routine work activities. There is the likelihood that the incident will take some time to control and will need extra resources allocated to deal with it.

13.2 Activation of the Plan

The Food alert team in ADFCA shall be notified on large scale food crisis through:
- MOH official reports of food illness, food poisoning;
- Food alert notification (INFOSAN, Ministry of Water & Environment ...etc);
- Food notifications received from food producers in Abu Dhabi, other official entities or food control laboratories in other Emirates;
- consumer complaints.

Where the Food alert team in ADFCA responding to an emergency call finds the need to activate the crisis plan, the 'Crisis Management Team Coordinator' will be notified immediately.

The Flow-chart below (fig.3) shows the procedure of managing a food crisis.
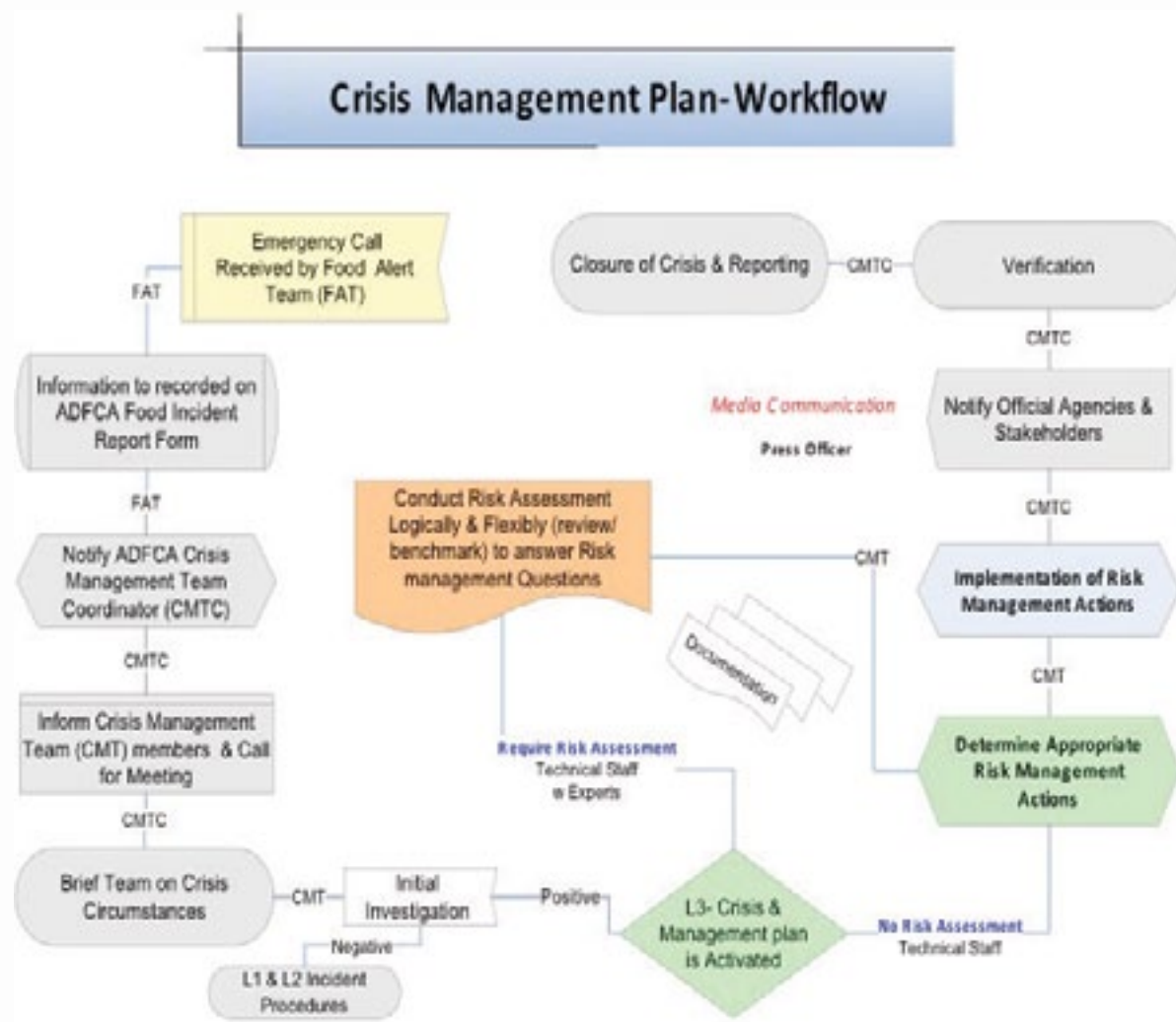

Figure (3) Crisis management workflow

14. Establishing responsibilities for management of the Crisis

The primary responsibility for managing a food crisis rests with ADFCA

14.1 Role of the Crisis Management Team Coordinator:

The Crisis Management Team Coordinator is the person who is authorized in ADFCA to activate the crisis plan. Arrangements will be made to delegate the responsibility of the coordinator to alternative persons as necessary. Once the crisis management team coordinator decides to activate the plan, key personnel will be notified immediately

The role of the Crisis Management Team Coordinator is to:
- Initiate / activate the plan.
- Contact all Crisis Management Team members.
- Arrange the first meeting of the Crisis Management Team by specifying the details of the meeting (time, venue…) in ADFCA headquarters or a specified alternative venue and ensure adequate recording for the meeting findings.
- Provide adequate administration support to the crisis management team.
- Brief the Crisis Management Team on the circumstances of the crises.
- Notify relevant government authority's officials of the activation of the plan and arrange for the briefing of the crisis as appropriate.
- Ensure that all the information related to the crisis is recorded in the food Incident Report Form (Annex 1).

Once the first meeting of the Food Crisis Management Team is held, management of the food crisis transfers to the Food Crisis Management team for action.

14.2 Role of the Stakeholders

In managing a food crisis, the Stakeholders of ADFCA can include the following, but not limited to:

- Ministry of Health (MOH)
- Ministry of Environment and Water (MOEW)
- National Crisis and Emergency Management Authority (NCEMA)
- Ministry of Interior
- Federal Customs Authority
- Health Authority of Abu Dhabi (HAAD)

- Department of Municipal Affairs
- Abu-Dhabi Health Services (SEHA)
- Environment Agency of Abu-Dhabi (EAD)
- Abu Dhabi Electricity and Water Authority (ADWEA)
- Finance Department- Abu Dhabi Customs
- Abu-Dhabi Police- GHQ

Their role can be summarized as follows:

1. **Ministry of Health (MOH) -** Inform ADFCA on any Outbreak/Illness cases(s) associated with food.
2. **Health Authority of Abu Dhabi (HAAD) -** Inform ADFCA on any Outbreak/Illness cases(s) associated with food.
3. **Department of Municipal Affairs Abu Dhabi –** responsible for slaughterhouses inspection. Inform ADFCA on any food safety implications arising from disposal of condemned foods/animal wastes including withdrawal times & residue.
4. **Ministry of Environment and Water** – Provide information on:
   - National and international food alerts and any rejection of imported food.
   - International Trans boundary animal and plant disease being the OIE & IPPC focal point.
   - Imported banned food products.
   - Animal diseases & contaminants (pesticides, fertilizers, Vet medicine & Feed) with harmful impact on foods.
5. **National Crisis and Emergency Management Authority (NCEMA)** – coordination for all the efforts related to food crisis/emergencies activities on the federal level.
6. **Abu Dhabi Health Services (SEHA)** – Provide information/data on food borne diseases; provide resources and health care services for the reported cases.
7. **Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi (EAD)** – Provide information/data on potential risks arising or generated by industrial pollution and risks associated with food contamination.
8. **Abu Dhabi Electricity and Water Authority (ADWEA) -** Provide information/data on potential risks arising or generated by potable drinking water.
9. **Finance Department Abu Dhabi Customs** – Provide information on quantity & types of imported foods, with Access to shared databases. Ban cargos at border of entry.
10. **Ministry of Interior - Abu Dhabi Police** – Executive Enforcement Arm and Resources support.

14.3 Role of Crisis Management Team

The crisis management team is formed by a decision from the Chairman of Board of Directors of ADFCA and includes members from the different concerned official entities, as listed in part 14.2 above.

14.3 .1 The Crisis Management Team shall:

- Appointment of the Chairman of the Crisis Management Team.
- Consider the briefing needs for stakeholder groups and review which stakeholders will need to be provided with information as the crisis develops
- Identify the role of each team member as per their expertise or area of competence.
- Identify the official spokesperson representing the team in different media communications.
- Gather and evaluate available information related to the food incidents and food crisis Identify hazards and assess risk.
- Identify the technical expertise needed in the team from various areas in Food Safety.
- Direct and guide the adequate references needed to Initiate risk assessment & /or Investigation of the food crisis, as needed.
- Decide upon initiating the crisis management plan with relevant authorities and supervise and coordinate the implementation of the enforcement actions necessary to control the food crisis.
- Provide guidance to various teams responsible of the enforcement actions in the food crisis.
- Request any information from relevant authorities in the State, as necessary.
- Identify the stakeholders to be involved in the update of the crisis management activities and ensure an adequate communication process between the stakeholders.
- Develop a unique Strategic plan and identify the preventive measures needed to comprise and control the food crisis.
- Provide the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee in ADFCA, and the stakeholders with the Crisis Briefing and the control measures undertaken.
- Record and compile all the information related to the planning, developing, and executing of the crisis plan, and prepare all adequate reports.
- Consider the information needs of stakeholders and who should be provided with information when the crisis arises.

Fig.4 below summarizes the role of the crisis management team

14.3.2 Secretariat of the crisis management team

The Crisis Management Team Administration will be provided by senior administrative assistants who will act as a Secretariat for the team. This secretariat will be responsible for arranging the meetings of the crisis management team, and shall :

- Ensure all necessary equipment is available in the Crisis Control Centre.
- Ensure Operation of all communications equipment in Crisis Control Centre (liaising as necessary).
- Ensure that the contact details of the crisis management team members are collated and circulated to all other members and updated periodically.
- Ensure that all bookings for the use of the Crisis Control Centre are cleared, (involving liaison with other administration staff as required).
- Record the Minutes of all Crisis Management Team meetings and note all actions points arising.

14.3.3 Food Crisis Control Centre

The Food Crisis Control Centre shall consist of a large meeting room used for the Crisis Management team meetings and shall used only by the nominated members contain the following equipment:

- meeting table
- AV equipment
- IT equipment, preferable with internet access
- telephone
- fax
- whiteboard/Flip Charts
- markers, pens
- maps (UAE, Gulf Region and World)
- video conference facility.

14.3.4 Risk Assessment

During a food crisis the following are the factors to be considered for risk assessment :

- impact on human health
- hazard characterization
- nature of food
- scale of distribution
- consumption rate
- targeted consumers
- time pressure.

Risk assessment may be necessary to inform risk management decisions made by the Crisis Management Team. It is most likely that this will be an iterative process that will need to be as flexible as possible. Whenever possible the risk assessment and risk management activities should be functionally separated and structurally linked within the Crisis Management Team.

In initiating a risk assessment the Crisis Management Team will determine how this is to be carried out.

Even in a crisis situation the starting point of any risk assessment is a clear statement of the question that the Crisis Management Team would like to be answered.
This should be written down by the crisis management team in as much detail as possible as it constitutes the terms of reference for the risk assessors. This question may be refined or even changed completely as the crisis goes on.

There will not be time in a crisis situation to conduct a formal detailed risk assessment as set out by the Codex Alimentarius. However, the following rules should apply to the process:
* Appoint a leader for the risk assessment. This will be a member of the Crisis Management Team who will conduct the assessment with a group of people (from within or outside the ADFCA) with the appropriate expertise, reporting back to the crisis management team.
* Conduct the assessment in a logical manner.
* Structure the assessment around the headings of hazard identification, hazard characterisation, exposure assessment and risk characterisation.
* Gather as much information as time will allow (consult internal experts, Scientific Committee members and external organisations where necessary).

* Document the risk assessment irrespective of time pressure and record expert opinions and assumptions as such.
* Ensure that the risk management question(s) have been answered as far as possible.
* Assess the level of uncertainty in the assessment, where possible, and communicate this clearly to the crisis management team.
* Constantly review and update the risk assessment during the crisis as information becomes available. Communicate any changes in the risk estimate or uncertainty of the assessment to the crisis management team.
* When the crisis is over, conduct a formal review of the risk assessment and the process by which it was conducted. This should contribute to the overall crisis review and will lead to any required amendment of the crisis plan from the lessons learned.
* At the end of the crisis, the crisis management team should consider whether it is necessary to commission a more formal risk assessment than possible during the crisis to establishing appropriate food safety controls.

14.3.5 Media/Communications:
The crisis management team will appoint one official spokesperson and a deputy. Once the plan has been activated, only those identified by the crisis management team should deal with the media.
All communications with the media shall be coordinated with the Communication and Community Service Director or Head of Information and Media Programme in ADFCA.

Statements should be prepared and agreed in advance between the crisis management team spokesperson and ADFCA's Communication Director, with frequent updates provided on the situation.

The role of the Communication and Community Service Director in communicating the crisis will be to :
* act as spokesperson for ADFCA.
* prepare statements for the crisis management team on the incident.
* brief the crisis management team on information requests and coverage.
* report to the crisis management team on communication needs.
* liaise with the press and media on the crisis.
* coordinate the preparation of information for dissemination.
* advise Crisis Team on the need to place a public notice in national press and/or a press briefing;
* draw up a draft press release and circulate to all members of the crisis management team for approval.
* once the press release has been approved, agree on the time of issue of the press release.
* where necessary, prepare responses for all potential queries or follow-on questions;
* establish availability and appropriate contact numbers of spokespersons for all media enquiries.
* manage all media enquiries and keep crisis management team up-to-date on the press queries.
* update ADFCA's staff on press releases and media issues.
* update and brief ADFCA's advice Line on Q&A's, resulting from media queries raising new questions.
* issue updating press releases / public notices where necessary.

14.3.6 Information Management

It will be necessary to convey information on the crisis to various stakeholders, which in addition to press and communications described in section 13.3.1 above, may require establishing a dedicated advice or Helpline (Toll free).

- **The role of the Communication and Community Director is to:**
  - establish dedicated advice or Helpline.
  - report to the crisis management team on information needs and strategy.
  - prepare information and updates for dissemination through the Helpline and web site.

- The Information on the crisis will be conveyed to stakeholders via ADFCA's website, or the Help Line.

- **Website**

  The Information on the crisis to be published on the website will be prepared and updated by the crisis management team in conjunction with ADFCA's IT Coordinator and uploaded to the web site.

- **Help Line**

  A decision will be made by the crisis management team in conjunction with ADFCA's Public Relations & Communication Director as to whether a dedicated advice-line needs to be established or if the existing advice-line is sufficient.

If the existing advice-line is to be used for this crisis :
- Check the phone routing system is working properly.
- Ensure all phones are manned.
- Ensure the voice-message is updated should a consumer need to leave a message
- Ensure advice-line operators are fully briefed on the crisis.

If a dedicated advice-line is to be set up :
- Ensure adequate phones are looped.
- Ensure all phones are manned.
- Ensure the voice-message is updated should a consumer need to leave a message.
- Ensure advice-line operators are fully briefed on the crisis.
- Ensure the Public Relations & Communication email is monitored continuously for messages.

Briefing
- Briefing will be provided by the Public Relation & Communication office for all advice-line and associated staff:
- A meeting will be called for all advice-line staff, support and back-up staff and the Communication and Community Service Director will assign staff to these core and support activities.
- Staff will be briefed on the crisis as fully as possible, by the Communication and Community Service Director and appropriate members of the crisis team.
- A 'Questions and Answers' (Q&A) information sheet on the topic will be drawn up for advice-line staff. The Q&A document will be drafted by a member of the information group and signed agreed by the Communication and Community Service Director and crisis team.
- A staff rota will be drawn up to ensure the advice-line is adequately manned at all times.
- All staff, especially those on reception, will be informed that all queries on the crisis should be transferred to advice-line with the exception of media enquiries which will be referred to the Press Officer.
- All queries on the crisis will be logged on an Food Incident Database, if possible.
- If this is not possible due to the volume of calls, a manual record will be written by advice-line staff, and the data should be inputted into the Food Incident Database at a later stage, as soon as possible.) Advice-line staff are informed which category related queries should be logged into, and if any other additional information needs to be recorded.
- Queries will be monitored, if possible, and the crisis team kept up-to-date with the volume of calls received and their content. Q&A's will be updated accordingly .

- **E-mail Communications**

  The dedicated e-mail account (foodalert@adfca.ae) will be used for all electronic communications relating to the incident.

14.3.7 External Interactions

- **Stakeholder Information**

  In addition to managing media and information, the crisis management team will need to inform the key stakeholders of matters related to the crisis.

- **Operational Teams**

  Depending on the circumstances of the crisis, it may be necessary to establish operational teams to coordinate activities and establish lines of communication in order to inform the crisis management team.

  The crisis management team will consider this need according to circumstances and designate relevant team coordinators and team membership as appropriate.

15. Closure and Reporting

- **Incident Closure**

  The crisis management team will decide when a crisis is over and 'deactivate' the plan, advising all those involved of the fact.

  While there may be ongoing work as a result of the crisis situation, unless there is a need for the crisis management team to continue to meet, the crisis may be declared over.

- **Reporting**

  After each crisis, the crisis management team will review the activities of the team and other stakeholders during the management of the crisis.

  A report will be prepared on the outcomes and activities. The report should be available to all those involved in dealing with the crisis.

  This will be reviewed by ADFCA management and contribute to the continuing development of the plan.

ANNEXES

ANNEXE 1:

ANNEXE 2: