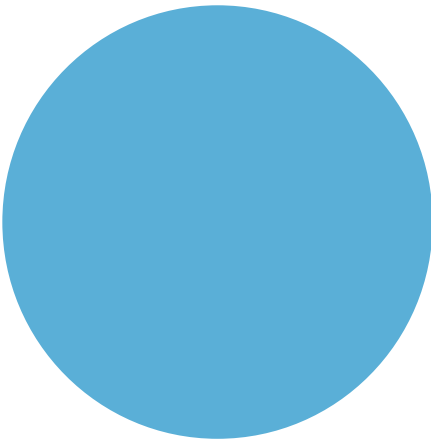
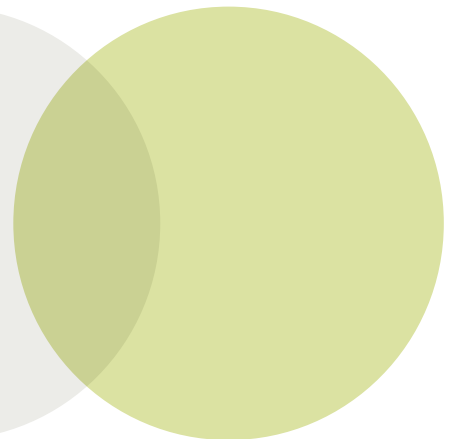




An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

# Annual Report

## 2023





Healthy,  
safe and  
productive  
lives and  
enterprises



# Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Report of the Chairperson of the Board to Neale Richmond, Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail                            | 2         |
| Report of the Chief Executive Officer to Neale Richmond, Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail                             | 3         |
| Abbreviations  | 6         |
| Role   | 7         |
| Strategy Statement 2022 – 2024   | 7         |
| Board and Executive  | 8         |
| Irish National Accreditation Board   | 10        |
| Report under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014  | 11        |
| Delivering on our Strategy in 2023   | 12        |
| <b>Key achievements:</b> Occupational Safety and Health Programme  | <b>23</b> |
| <b>Key achievements:</b> Chemicals Programme   | <b>31</b> |
| <b>Key achievements:</b> Market Surveillance Programme   | <b>33</b> |
| <b>Key achievements:</b> National Accreditation Programme  | <b>35</b> |
| <b>Key achievements:</b> Operational Effectiveness Programme   | <b>37</b> |
| <b>Appendix 1:</b> Extracts from the unaudited Financial Statements of the Health and Safety Authority for the year ended 31 December 2023 | 40        |
| <b>Appendix 2:</b> Inspections, Investigations and Prosecutions  | 64        |
| <b>Appendix 3:</b> EU and international representation 2023  | 74        |
| <b>Appendix 4:</b> Legislation and guidance finalised in 2023  | 77        |
| <b>Appendix 5:</b> 2023 Annual Report to the Minister on the Operation of the Chemicals Acts 2008 and 2010                                 | 79        |

Published by the Health and Safety Authority, The Metropolitan Building, James Joyce Street, Dublin 1, D01 K0Y8.

© All rights reserved.



# Report of the Chairperson of the Board to Neale Richmond, Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail

---

## Dear Minister,

On introducing the 2023 Annual Report, I would like to first and foremost recognise the excellent stewardship of my predecessor, Tom Coughlan, who completed his term in April 2023.

In my first six months as Chairperson, I have embedded myself in the work of the Authority. I have developed an understanding of the organisation's very broad mandate, with roles and responsibilities across occupational safety and health, chemical safety, market surveillance and accreditation. I appreciate the breadth and depth of the work being carried out by the Authority and the valuable contribution being made to Irish society. I also see the challenges for the organisation as it adapts to changes in the workplace and the wider economy. The Authority plays a key role in representing Irish interests at European level, and this is particularly important in the context of upcoming legislative reviews in areas such as chemicals and product market surveillance, all which impact Irish business.

The programme of work for 2023 marked a mid-point in our current Strategy Statement 2022-2024 and our reviews indicate that the strategy is broadly on track for a successful delivery by the end of 2024. This Annual Report provides a comprehensive account of the activities undertaken under the Authority's strategic priorities to regulate, promote and influence across our mandates, and to improve the Authority's ways of working. As I engage with the Board on developing our Strategy Statement for 2025-2027, I am encouraging a shift in our metrics to outcomes where practical.

I would like to express my condolences to the families, friends and communities of the 43 people who lost their lives in workplace accidents in 2023. Each life lost is one too many and as a learning organisation, we take all insights forward in our work programmes.

Sadly, we see a persistent trend over many years now in both the agriculture and construction sectors, where workers continue to lose their lives, working unaccompanied at height and often where more expert input or equipment is advisable. I will be seeking guidance from our sectoral advisory committees as to how we can make a significant step change in these areas as we develop the new strategy. I am pleased to confirm that the Board approved the establishment of a new Health and Social Care Advisory Committee in 2023 to provide a forum for stakeholders to advise and support the Authority in promoting best practice in occupational health and safety in the sector.

In conclusion I would like to thank the Department, the Board, the CEO and Executive, the staff and our wider stakeholders for their dedication, valued engagement and support throughout the year. It is much valued.

I am grateful to Minister Richmond for his support during his term and I look forward to working with Minister Higgins following her recent appointment.



**Patricia Byron**  
*Chairperson*

# Report of the Chief Executive Officer to Neale Richmond, Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail

---

## Dear Minister,

This is the Authority's second Annual Report under our Strategy Statement 2022-2024. This three-year strategic cycle commenced in a period of significant change for Irish workplaces as our economy and society emerged from the global COVID-19 pandemic. We are delivering this strategy through three annual work programmes against a backdrop of an expanding population and growing workforce. In addition, employee expectations are shifting in an ever more blended and digitised working environment. Our published Programme of Work for 2023 set out a wide range of objectives and actions to be delivered under our strategic priorities and legal mandates.

In April, in conjunction with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and with support from Ibec, the Construction Industry Federation and the National Irish Safety Organisation, we marked Workers' Memorial Day with a national commemorative event in Dublin. Workers' Memorial Day is an international day of remembrance for those who have been killed or seriously injured in work-related incidents. As we reflect on 2023 and the 43 people who lost their lives in work-related incidents in that year, we think, first and foremost, of families and friends who have tragically lost a loved one. A continued high level of fatalities was experienced in farming (16 fatalities) and construction (11 fatalities), with these sectors accounting for more than two-thirds of all fatalities in 2023. Last year's figures were higher than the previous year; however, 2022 had been the lowest year on record for work-related fatalities since the establishment of the Authority in 1989. Overall, we welcome the decrease in work-related fatalities rates in the past 10 years, from the rate of 2.8 per 100,000 workers in 2014 to 1.6 in 2023.

In relation to our regulatory activity, we carried out proactive and risk-based inspections across all sectors, with particular focus on high-risk and priority sectors – agriculture, construction, transport and storage, health and social care, and chemical production and storage.

We completed 9,995 proactive and 463 reactive inspections across all economic sectors. There were 225 investigations completed following incident reports received. A total of 83 investigations were undertaken into fatal accidents, of which 43 were deemed work-related. Nineteen prosecutions were concluded, with 15 prosecuted on indictment and four prosecuted summarily, resulting in fines totalling €1,377,500.

As a data-informed organisation, the Authority relies on statistical analysis as a foundation on which to build its programmes, initiatives, and supports. Based on recent patterns and trends, we undertook specific targeted inspection campaigns throughout the year, focusing on identified hazards in the high-risk sectors of construction, agriculture and quarries. We also launched an inspection programme targeting renewable energy installations, including wind farms, solar farms and anaerobic digestion facilities. New campaigns also focused on the health and wellbeing of farmers.

Throughout the year, the Authority continued its support for and engagement with key stakeholders through the Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee and the Construction Safety Partnership Advisory Committee. We also engaged with both employer and employee stakeholders in other sectors. A Quarry Safety Partnership Forum was re-established during the year, and the Board approved the establishment of a new Health and Social Care Advisory Committee, which will meet for the first time in 2024. This committee will provide a forum for key stakeholders to advise and support the Authority in promoting best practice in occupational health and safety in this sector.

We continued to support the Minister and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (the DETE) in the development of legislative and guidance proposals. New regulations for the safe use of all-terrain vehicles and quad bikes were introduced in November. The new regulations, which are the first of their kind in the EU, include the introduction of compulsory helmet wearing and training for all quad bike operators.



Minister Richmond at Workers' Memorial Day

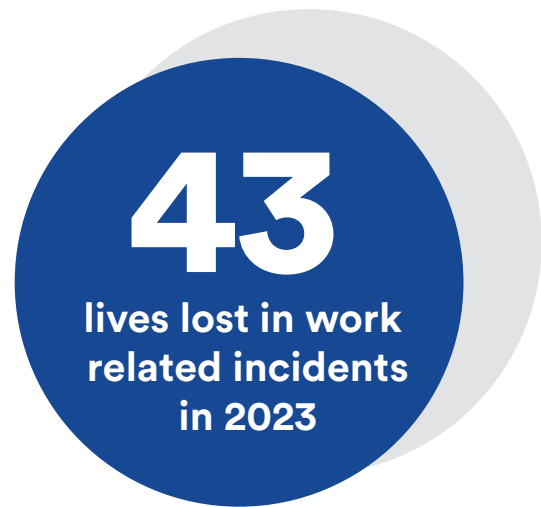
Following public consultation, and with the consent of the Minister, we published a *Code of Practice for Indoor Air Quality*, which came into operation on 26 May 2023. This code of practice is relevant to all places of work and aims to provide practical guidance on managing indoor air quality in the workplace.

In conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency, we hosted the EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability conference in October 2023, focusing on what the future may hold for EU chemicals legislation. This conference was well attended by international and domestic visitors. A diverse range of speakers, including those from the European Commission, European Chemical Agency (ECHA) and European Environment Agency, provided insight into actions under the strategy and what the future may look like for stakeholders.

As the central competent authority under the Chemicals Act, we finalised the European Union (EU) evaluation of a specific chemical substance, had three harmonised classification dossiers proposals agreed by the ECHA's Risk Assessment Committee, and as rapporteurs on EU committees we completed 10 scientific opinions. We also processed 347 technical land use planning requests.

Our market surveillance activities for chemical and industrial products saw 917 chemical products being assessed, along with 307 industrial products. A total of 182 non-compliant chemical products were removed from the Irish market as a result of our activities.

As part of our accreditation mandate, we delivered on year two of our Strategy for Accreditation, launched in May 2022. Throughout the year, the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) continued to award new accreditations and renew existing accreditations to support a wide range of businesses and services across the Irish economy. Following more than 550 assessment events, 13 new accreditations were awarded in 2023, along with 384 decisions on the renewal of existing accreditation. In November, the INAB hosted the 54th European Co-operation for Accreditation General Assembly meeting in Dublin, which was attended by delegates from national accreditation boards across Europe.



- 9,995** proactive inspections
- 463** reactive inspections
- 225** investigations following incident reports received

This was the first full year of operation under our new model following a comprehensive organisational development and change management programme, which we implemented in waves throughout the first year of our strategy. While all the structures of the new organisational design have been fully implemented, we operated throughout the year with a significant vacancy level in most areas as we continued to scale up to fill our sanctioned headcount. Our recruitment drives resulted in 67 new appointments in 2023.

Our new operating model includes a new division with a focus on occupational health, which allows us to enhance our focus on occupational health hazards such as those arising from exposure to chemical and biological agents and from psychosocial and ergonomic risks. This focus was visible throughout the year in our inspection efforts across all sectors and in how we provide guidance and advice to employees and employers.

Three internal strategies – focusing on people, communications and data – were set out during the year. These strategies will provide direction as we strive towards our vision of healthy, safe and productive lives and enterprises.

Throughout 2023, the Authority assigned significant resources to the development of an integrated platform to transform and optimise business processes across our occupational safety and health, chemicals, and market surveillance mandates. We completed solution design and build, system integration testing and environment readiness during 2023, with the platform ready for user acceptance testing at year end. Phase one of the new system, Córás, will be launched in 2024 to deliver more efficient ways of working, end-to-end case management, better work planning, improved customer experiences, access to accurate and complete data, and better insights.

A key task for our Board in 2024 will be the development of the Strategy Statement for the period 2025-2027. The Board will steer this process, and we will engage in wide and meaningful consultation with stakeholders, staff and the public. Our aim is to continue to take account of changing economic and societal factors and to develop a set of strategic priorities and goals that will drive high-level performance within all our mandates.

We are grateful to the Authority's staff, who continue to show great agility and flexibility in adapting to new structures and ways of working while continuing to deliver at pace. We thank all members of the Board of the Authority for their work during 2023 and their commitment to its vision. In particular, we would like to thank Mr Mark Cullen for his contribution as interim Chief Executive Officer, and Mr Tom Coughlan, who concluded his second term as chairperson in April 2023. We thank Ms Deirdre Cullivan and Mr Stephen Curran, who concluded their respective terms as Board members during the course of the year.

We would also like to share our appreciation of all employers, employees and self-employed workers who continue to put health and safety at the centre of how they work.

Finally, we thank Minister Richmond for his support for the Authority throughout 2023, and we look forward to working with Minister Higgins and her officials in the DETE to achieve the goals set out in our Strategy Statement 2022-2024 over its final year of implementation.



**Conor O'Brien**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

# Abbreviations

**ACSH** – Advisory Committee on Safety and Health

**ADR** – Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road

**CA** – Competent Authority

**CARACAL** – Competent Authority for REACH and CLP

**CLH** – Harmonised classification and Labelling

**CLP** – Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Substances and Mixtures

**COMAH** – Control of Major Accident Hazards

**CRU** – Commission for Regulation of Utilities

**DAFM** – Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

**DETE** – Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

**DFHERIS** – Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

**DNA** – Designated National Authority

**EA** – European Co-operation for Accreditation

**ECHA** – European Chemicals Agency

**EPA** – Environmental Protection Agency

**EU** – European Union

**EU-OSHA** – European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

**FSPAC** – Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee

**GLP** – Good Laboratory Practice

**HSE** – Health Service Executive

**ICSMS** – Information and Communication System for Market Surveillance

**ICT** – Information and Communications Technology

**IE** – Ireland

**INAB** – Irish National Accreditation Board

**LUP** – Land Use Planning

**MoU** – Memorandum of Understanding

**NPIC** – National Poisons Information Centre

**OECD** – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**OPCW** – Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

**OSH** – Occupational Health and Safety

**PFAS** – Poly- and Perfluoroalkyl Substances

**PIC** – Prior Informed Consent

**PPE** – Personal Protective Equipment

**RAC** – Committee for Risk Assessment

**RAPEX** – EU rapid alert system for unsafe consumer products and consumer protection

**REACH** – Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals

**REF** – REACH Enforcement Forum

**RiME+** – Risk Management and Evaluation Platform

**SDS** – Safety Data Sheet

**SEAC** – Committee for Socio-economic Analysis

**SEAI** – Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland

**SLIC** – Senior Labour Inspectors Committee

**TPED** – Directive 2010/35/EU – Transportable Pressure Equipment

**UK** – United Kingdom



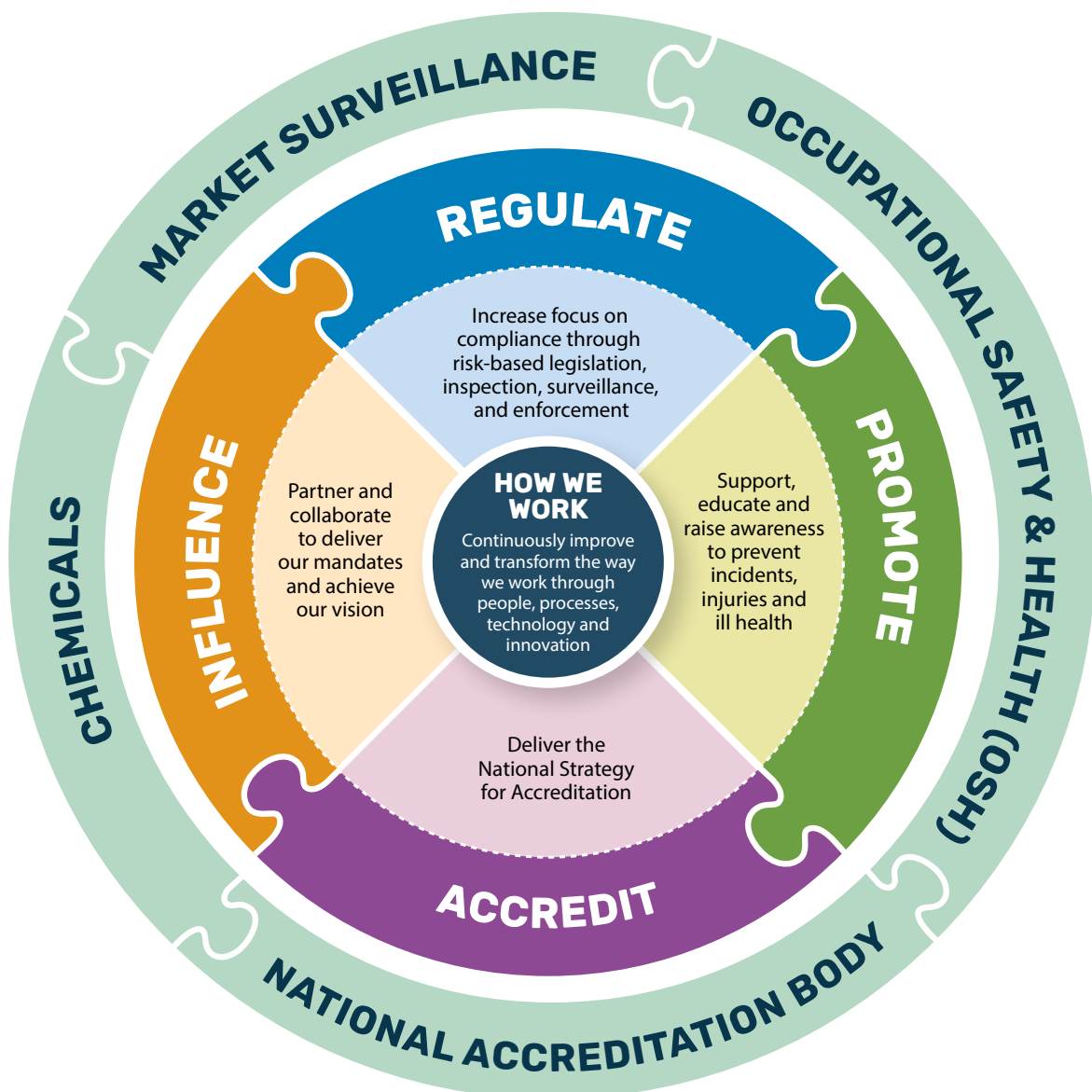
# Role

The Health and Safety Authority's mandate includes the following responsibilities:

- To regulate the safety, health and welfare of people at work and those affected by work activities.
- To promote improvement in the safety, health and welfare of people at work and those affected by work activities.
- To regulate and promote the safe manufacture, use, placing on the market, trade, supply, storage and transport of chemicals.
- To act as a surveillance authority in relation to relevant single European market legislation.
- To act as the national accreditation body for Ireland.

# Strategy Statement 2022-2024

The Health and Safety Authority Strategy Statement 2022-2024 sets out five strategic priorities, as shown below:



# Board and Executive

The Board determines the Authority's strategic direction. It comprises 12 members: a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and 10 ordinary members appointed by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The Minister appoints members nominated by organisations that are representative of interests associated with occupational safety and health, chemicals and market surveillance regulation. These interests include employees, employers and other bodies. Appointments are for a term of three years in a part-time capacity. Members may be invited to serve two terms.

## Board of Authority

| Board member                       | Position   | Board meetings attended in 2023                   |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Chairperson</b>                 |  |   |
| Patricia Byron                     | Former Chief Executive, Personal Injuries Assessment Board   | <b>4 of 4</b><br>Appointed from 30 June 2023      |
| Tom Coughlan                       | Former Chief Executive, Clare County Council (2009-2016)   | <b>4 of 4</b><br>Term ended 12 April 2023         |
| <b>Employer nominees</b>           |  |   |
| Paul Kelly<br>(Deputy Chairperson) | Head of Sectors and Director, Food Drink Ireland (FDI)   | <b>9 of 9</b>                                     |
| Padraig Somers                     | Non-executive Director   | <b>9 of 9</b>                                     |
| Frank Kelly                        | Construction Director, Walls Construction Ltd  | <b>7 of 9</b>                                     |
| <b>Employee nominees</b>           |  |   |
| Deirdre MacDonald                  | Former President of the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland   | <b>9 of 9</b>                                     |
| David Hughes                       | Former Deputy General Secretary, the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO)                                   | <b>7 of 9</b>                                     |
| Michelle Quinn                     | Deputy Chairperson, Sector Organiser Services Division, Services Industrial Professional and Technical Union (SIPTU) | <b>7 of 9</b>                                     |
| <b>Ministerial nominees</b>        |  |   |
| Brid De Buitléar                   | Information technology and business operations leader  | <b>9 of 9</b>                                     |
| Mary Coyne                         | Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (FCCA)  | <b>9 of 9</b>                                     |
| Ciarán Roche                       | Risk Manager and Company Safety Manager, FBD Insurance   | <b>9 of 9</b>                                     |
| Terry O'Niadh                      | Experienced Board member   | <b>4 of 4</b><br>Appointed from 30 June 2023      |
| Fiona Kilcullen                    | Principal Officer, Safety, Health and Chemicals Policy Unit, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment          | <b>3 of 3</b><br>Appointed from 25 September 2023 |
| Deirdre Cullivan                   | HR Consultant  | <b>3 of 3</b><br>Term ended 12 March 2023         |
| Stephen Curran                     | Principal Officer, Safety, Health and Chemicals Policy Unit, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment          | <b>4 of 5</b><br>Term ended 12 September 2023     |

**Chairperson**



Patricia Byron

**Employer nominees**



Paul Kelly  
*Deputy Chairperson*

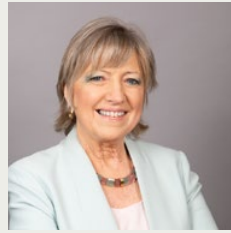


Padraig Somers



Frank Kelly

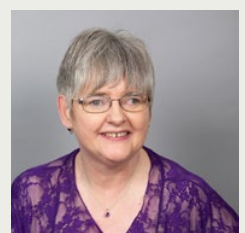
**Employee nominees**



Deirdre MacDonald



David Hughes



Michelle Quinn

**Ministerial nominees**



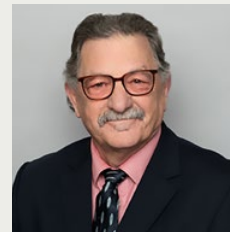
Bríd De Buitléar



Mary Coyne



Ciarán Roche



Terry O'Niadh



Fiona Kilcullen

The Chief Executive Officer, together with four Assistant Chief Executives, manages the implementation of strategy in line with the Authority's statutory responsibilities and policies as set out by the Board.

As of 31 December 2023, the Authority employed 261 staff (255.9 full-time equivalent (FTE)), including inspectors, professional and technical specialists, accreditation officers, administrators and clerical staff.

## Executive of the Authority

**Chief Executive**



Conor O'Brien

**Assistant Chief Executives**



Mark Cullen



Yvonne Mullooly



Dr Kevin De Barra



Dr Adrienne Duff

Mr Mark Cullen was appointed as Interim Chief Executive Officer of the Authority from 21 November 2022 until 28 May 2023. Mr Conor O'Brien was appointed to the role of Chief Executive Officer with effect from 29 May 2023.



# Irish National Accreditation Board

The Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) is a committee of the Health and Safety Authority. The Board of INAB, which makes decisions relating to the award of accreditation, has 12 members and is appointed by the Board of the Health and Safety Authority.

| Board member  | Position   | Board meetings attended in 2023    |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| <b>Dr Micheál Lehane,</b><br><i>Chairperson</i>         | Director, Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring                                | 7                                  |
| <b>Ita Kinahan</b><br><i>Chairperson (January–June)</i> | Former State Chemist, State Laboratory   | 3<br><i>(Term ended June 2023)</i> |
| <b>Rosemary Hayden</b>                                  | Programme Manager, INAB  | 7                                  |
| <b>Cecilie Laake</b>                                    | Director, Norwegian Accreditation  | 5                                  |
| <b>John O'Loughlin</b>                                  | Laboratory Manager, Rotunda Hospital   | 4                                  |
| <b>Dr David Graham</b>                                  | Chief Executive, Animal Health Ireland   | 6                                  |
| <b>Denise Barry</b>                                     | Consultant   | 6                                  |
| <b>Paul Scallan</b>                                     | Chief Executive, Private Security Authority  | 4                                  |
| <b>Gail Carroll</b>                                     | Director, Regulatory Affairs and Compliance Building, Food Safety Authority of Ireland               | 5                                  |
| <b>Rita Purcell</b>                                     | Deputy Chief Executive, Health Products Regulatory Authority   | 4                                  |
| <b>Barbara O'Leary</b>                                  | State Chemist, State Laboratory  | 3<br><i>(Joined June 2023)</i>     |
| <b>Joe Ryan</b>   | National Director of Operational Performance and Integration with the Health Service Executive (HSE) | 2<br><i>(Joined June 2023)</i>     |
| <b>Jim O'Toole</b>                                      | Chief Executive, Bord Iascaigh Mhara   | 2<br><i>(Term ended June 2023)</i> |

**Note:** As of 31 December 2023 one INAB Board position was vacant

# Report under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014

Under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, the Chief Executive Officer of the Health and Safety Authority is prescribed as a recipient of protected disclosures in relation to all matters associated with legislation enforced by the Health and Safety Authority. They are also responsible for accreditation of laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies through the Irish National Accreditation Board within the Health and Safety Authority. Internal disclosures relating to the Authority can also be made by relevant workers as defined by the Act.

Under Section 22 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, each public body is required to publish an annual report setting out the number of protected disclosures received in the preceding year and the action taken. The publication of the data in the report must be provided in a way that protects the identity of the disclosers.

From 1 January to 31 December 2023, the Chief Executive of the Health and Safety Authority, in the context of their role as a prescribed person under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, received 38 reports of alleged wrongdoing from parties external to the Authority related to third parties. Of these, 17 reports of wrongdoing were made directly and 21 were transferred from another prescribed person. Of the 38 reports of wrongdoing, 23 were deemed to be protected disclosures to be investigated under the Authority's remit. All disclosures were subsequently referred to Authority inspectors for investigation. Nineteen of the disclosures received in 2023 have been closed out and four remain under investigation. No internal disclosures were received.

The table below provides a breakdown of the protected disclosures received in 2023, the number of investigations that were opened as a result of the protected disclosures and the status and outcome of the investigations which have been concluded.

| Reports of wrongdoing received in 2023  | Number |
|---|--------|
| Reports made directly to the Authority  | 19     |
| Reports transmitted to the Authority from another prescribed person or the Protected Disclosures Commissioner | 21     |
| Investigations opened by the Authority following reports received in 2023                                     | 23     |
| Investigations and proceedings closed by the Authority following reports received in 2023                     | 17     |
| Investigations and proceedings closed by the Authority in 2023 following reports received prior to 2023       | 6      |

Investigations and proceedings launched by the Authority as a result of reports received in 2023, and which concluded in 2023, resulted in 28 Enforcement Orders being served, which included 17 Reports of Inspection and 11 Improvement Notices.

Six investigations, opened on foot of protected disclosures received in 2022 or previous years and still ongoing at 31 December 2022, were concluded during 2023.

Strategic Priority

# Regulate

We will increase focus on compliance through risk-based legalisation, inspection, surveillance and enforcement





## Inspection and investigation

Some 10,713 inspections and investigations were conducted by the Authority across all economic sectors and under all its legislative mandates.

The Authority carried out 9,995 proactive inspections across all sectors, with a particular focus on the construction, agriculture, health and social care, transport and retail, manufacturing, utilities, and quarrying sectors.

Of 83 investigations undertaken into fatal incidents, 43 were deemed work-related.

## Competent and Designated National Authority functions

The Authority has a significant European Union (EU) Competent Authority (CA) and Designated National Authority (DNA) mandate to fulfil (technical policy and inspection) in relation to EU chemicals, carriage of dangerous goods by road (ADR) and market surveillance legislation. Authority staff participated in 86 EU CA/DNA meetings (hybrid and in person) for Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), Classification, Labelling and Packaging of substances and mixtures (CLP), Seveso, Detergents, Prior Informed Consent (PIC) and ADR.

Ireland's substance evaluation conclusion document and report for the chemical 4-methylanisole was formally agreed and published by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). The Authority submitted harmonised classification and labelling (CLH) proposals to the ECHA for three substances (piperonal, O-isopropyl ethyl thiocarbamate and sodium chlorite).

Ten scientific opinions were prepared by our experts for ECHA scientific committees, one for a restriction dossier (poly- and perfluoroalkyl (PFAS) in firefighting foams), one for a substance classification and eight in relation to applications to the ECHA for authorisation to use substances listed in Annex XIV of REACH. We addressed 41 registration ECHA enforcement referrals relating to Irish REACH registrants. Three proposals brought by the Authority to the United Nations (UN) to amend ADR received unanimous support at a UN Joint Meeting. In addition, under the ADR Regulations, 11 authorisations were issued.

A total of 888 inspections targeting activities legislated for under the Chemicals Acts and the ADR Regulations were carried out. In addition to statutory inspections, there were 49 assessments carried out under COMAH (Control of Major Accident Hazards) legislation concerning COMAH notifications, safety reports and significant modifications, and 347 requests for technical land use planning (TLUP) were processed.

The Authority provided occupational safety and health (OSH) guidance at National and European Technical Committees relating to artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics.

## Market surveillance

EU Joint Action projects on circular saws, scissor lifts and asbestos in brake pads commenced and are ongoing. Other specific campaigns focused on safety data sheets, room fragrances and agricultural machinery. A total of 917 chemical products and 307 industrial products were assessed for regulatory compliance, and 182 non-compliant chemical products were removed from the Irish market. Thirteen product safety alerts were issued in 2023 for both chemicals and industrial products.

Authority staff participated in 31 EU meetings related to market surveillance of chemicals and industrial products.

## Support the Minister and the DETE

The Authority provided significant support to the EU Attaché and the DETE for all the EU Council Technical Harmonisation Working Group meetings for the revision of the EU Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulation (CLP) and the EU Detergents Regulation. Staff attended EU meetings as technical experts and provided technical briefings and formal written comments for the DETE.

Briefings were also prepared for the Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, for the European Parliament meeting on the update of CLP and also on other cross-cutting EU legislative developments not within the Authority's mandate but relevant to the area of chemical regulation and the EU Chemical Strategy for Sustainability, such as the new ESPR Regulation, Digital Services Act, Toy Safety Regulation or Net Zero Industry Act (NZIA).

The Authority provided technical support to the DETE on the 10th amendment to the ADR Regulations, which was implemented at the end of April (S.I. No. 197 of 2023). It also provided assistance in relation to carcinogens regulations, the Asbestos Workers Directive and the Lead and Diisocyanates Directive.

Technical support was provided to the DETE in relation to draft quarry regulations, a draft Construction Licensing Bill and recognition of the new apprenticeship for scaffolding.

The Authority also provided advice to the DETE of Environment, Climate and Communications on safety requirements for the construction of offshore utilities projects.

# Strategic Priority

# Promote

We will support, educate and raise awareness to prevent incidents, injuries and ill health



## Awareness-raising initiatives

The Authority continued to increase its emphasis on psychosocial hazards and risks in 2023. A major media campaign and updated web resources focused on the topic of work-related stress. Promotion of guidance on psychosocial risk assessments for exposure to sensitive content continued.

WorkPositive<sup>o</sup>, the psychosocial risk management tool for employers was reviewed in 2023. The online tool was extensively updated and streamlined to provide better user experience and reporting. The updated version will be rolled out in 2024.

The Authority hosted two seminars on the impact of developments in AI and digitisation in workplaces. These seminars were part of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) campaign titled 'Safe and healthy work in the digital age 2023-2025'. We published web resources to support employers in this area, along with specific guidance to the agricultural sector on managing fatigue.

The Authority hosted its first webinar aimed exclusively at the waste sector; this focused on campaign findings in the sector and the key hazards the sector should address when developing a safety management system.

The Authority, in collaboration with the Road Safety Authority (RSA), held a Work-Related Vehicle Safety webinar in November. The webinar provided key insights into best practice for employers who manage fleets or have employees driving for work.

Legislation on the use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) came into force in November 2023 and was promoted at all major farming events, via an advertising campaign, and through extensive media coverage.

The Authority engaged with lift and machinery associations and gave a presentation to the Institute of Engineers Ireland (IEI) on the new EU Machinery Regulation (EU) 2023/123 to provide updates on upcoming regulatory changes.

### Enterprise and employee support

The Authority renewed its BeSMART platform with updates on existing business types and risk assessments. Seven new online courses at [hsalearning.ie](https://hsalearning.ie) were developed and the Authority engaged extensively in promotion of these new resources. The safety statement template in BeSMART was updated to reflect changing workforce demographics, with an initial focus on the protection of young and older workers.

We focused on providing supports on the protection of vulnerable workers in the workplace, including launching a new online learning course targeted at employers, managers and supervisors across all sectors.

The Authority launched the third edition of the *Safety Representative Resource Book* and produced two information sheets for safety representatives in all sectors. Five training workshops were conducted with key stakeholders on the theme of safety representatives. The workshops focused on the role and function of safety representatives and the importance of consultation.

The Authority launched new guidance and website resources and a new eLearning course supporting occupational safety and health while remote working. The publication *Occupational Safety and Health Guidance on Remote Working* and the associated checklist provides guidance for employers and employees on roles and responsibilities in relation to remote working, and the remote working risk assessment. The Authority also delivered five workshops in collaboration with stakeholders, addressing the theme of remote working and managing a distributed workforce; in addition, it updated resources to support employers with changing workforce demographics.

The Authority commenced work on establishing horizon scanning capability across the organisation to provide more agility in our response to the changing nature of work and work contexts. This work involves mapping changing workforce demographics and associated needs in occupational safety and health and identifying future forms of work and implications from a regulatory perspective.



### Chemicals

The Authority collaborated with the National Poisons Information Centre and the Health Service Executive (HSE) to sponsor the 'The Know, Act, Prevent Garden' at the Bord Bia Bloom festival to raise awareness and alert consumers to the dangers associated with everyday chemical products commonly found in the home and garden. The garden was awarded a Silver Medal.

The Authority provided support to enterprises with their chemical queries. Our national chemicals helpdesk for REACH and CLP responded to more than 450 queries.

We updated our guidance on technical land use planning to respond to a need for guidance on hydrogen as an energy source.

We supported the DETE in advising Irish enterprises on the universal restriction proposal for PFAS chemicals.



Strategic Priority

# Influence

We will partner and collaborate to deliver our mandates and achieve our vision



## Stakeholder engagement

The Authority continued its support and engagement of key stakeholders through the Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee (FSPAC) and the Construction Safety Partnership Advisory Committee (CSPAC) in addition to engaging with both employer and employee stakeholders in other sectors.

Eight national inspection campaigns across the economy in the sectors which have experienced the highest level of occupational safety incidents were undertaken, and communicated to key stakeholders in an organised effort to raise awareness and improve standards.

The Authority established a new Health and Social Care Advisory Committee in 2023 to develop stakeholder engagement with this important sector. The purpose of the committee is to provide a more formal mechanism to access sectoral expertise for the Board and to establish strong networks.

The Authority met with stakeholders with an interest in REACH and CLP and delivered a successful EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability Towards a Toxic-Free Environment. Guidance on chemical safety at home and in the garden was published for distribution at the Bord Bia Bloom event.

The Farm Safety Partnership continued its work on implementing the objectives of the *Farm Safety Action Plan 2021-2024*. The FSPAC ensures strong stakeholder engagement in the agricultural sector. The Authority continues to have a joint prevention initiative with Teagasc, particularly in relation to research and training, and it also engaged with Coillte and major co-ops.

The member organisations of the Construction Safety Partnership Advisory Committee continue to work on the delivery of objectives within the CSPAC Plan 2022-2024 and proactively support the influencing and promotion of good health and safety practice in construction. The sector was provided with extensive guidance and information resources in 2023 through the work of the CSPAC and the Authority.

## EU policy input

The Authority continued to support stakeholders with interests in EU chemical processes under the Chemicals Act. We represented Ireland on several ECHA and European Commission committees and technical working groups, and we expended significant effort on shaping new chemicals policy at EU level, as the central competent authority in Ireland under the Chemicals Act, in particular in the context of the revision of the CLP Regulation.

The Authority also actively supported the DETE in the negotiations that reviewed the Machinery Directive by attending meetings and providing significant technical input to finalise the new EU Machinery Regulation 2023/1230. The Regulation came into force in 2023. All provisions will be mandatory in January 2027, after the transition period.



# Strategic Priority Accredit

We will deliver the strategy for accreditation



A five-year *Strategy for Accreditation 2022-2026* was launched by the INAB in May 2022. The strategy sets out how Ireland will fully realise the benefits of accreditation and will have a positive impact across the Irish economy and society. It recognises the role accreditation will play in supporting government, enterprise, regulators, and consumers. The strategy is focused on the following four key priorities:

- ▶ Inform and influence national policy
- ▶ Promote awareness and engagement
- ▶ Grow uptake and application of accreditation
- ▶ Provide capacity and infrastructure.

A project plan has been developed for the implementation of the strategy. It is frequently monitored and updated to reflect the progress against the strategy.

An Annual Report for 2023 was prepared to summarise the work that has been achieved; it details the continuing implementation of the Strategy over the next 12 months.

### **Inform and influence national policy**

Numerous information sessions and presentations on accreditation were provided to a number of Government Departments, including the DETE, throughout 2023. Topics included the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), AI, and the CO2 Performance Ladder scheme in Ireland.

Meetings regarding the application of accreditation were held with the Data Protection Commission, the National Cyber Security Centre, and the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications.

The focus of these engagements is to provide information, share knowledge on accreditation areas and promote accreditation.

### **Promote awareness and engagement**

A communications plan has been completed and has been in place since Q2 2023. This plan will increase understanding and awareness of accreditation. It will assist in promoting awareness and engagement of accreditation, and it will communicate the value and benefits of accreditation. The plan will continue to be implemented throughout 2024.

A new European Accreditation Communications Network has been established in which INAB will participate.

### **Grow uptake and application of accreditation**

In 2023, 13 new accreditations were awarded by the INAB Board; 9 accreditations (8 testing and 1 calibration) in ISO/IEC 17025, 2 medical testing for ISO 15189 and 2 inspection bodies for ISO/IEC 17020. Testing areas in 2023 included: soil fertility testing, construction materials testing and metrology.

There were 553 assessment events in 2023, representing an increase on 2022 figures. There were 117 extensions to scope carried out in 2023. This is an increase on 2021 and 2022 figures.

### **Provide capacity and infrastructure**

Power Bi analytics was employed as an effective and efficient tool to develop infographics to use as a basis for further strategy actions, and create accreditation reports. This development will continue in 2024.





## Strategic Priority

# How we work

We will continuously improve and transform the way we work through people, processes, technology and innovation



## Governance

A corporate governance framework is in effect which is mapped to best practice. This ensures that structures, policies and processes are in place to effectively discharge the organisation's statutory functions, while effectively managing all risks and allowing for an objective assessment of management and corporate performance. Business continuity, crisis management, cyber security and information and communication technology (ICT) disaster recovery were key focus areas for the Authority during 2023, thereby resulting in an enhanced security posture and significant progress on the delivery of a framework to ensure operational resilience.

## Organisational development

A comprehensive organisational development and change management programme was implemented in waves throughout year one of our strategy, thus making 2023 the first full year of operation under our new operating model. While all structures of the new organisational design have been fully implemented, we operated throughout the year with a significant vacancy level in most areas as we continue to scale up to fill our sanctioned headcount.

In 2023, we also published our first People Strategy *Empowering our Future 2023-2025* demonstrating the commitment and value that we place on enhancing the employee experience and developing our employees' future with us. Our People Strategy will improve our ability to attract, develop and retain the best staff, and create an inclusive and collaborative environment where staff feel valued, engaged and supported.

As an employer of choice, we aim to attract, retain and develop good people. We are strongly committed to creating an efficient, innovative, diverse and inclusive workforce, and we run our recruitment campaigns in compliance with the Codes of Practice for Appointment to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). Our recruitment drives resulted in 67 new appointments in 2023.

In January 2023, we launched our *Communications Strategy 2023-2025* which will provide strategic communications direction in striving towards our vision of healthy, safe and productive lives and enterprises. It sets out our key focus and priorities over the next three years, including who we will communicate with, how we will communicate, and how we will measure success. It is designed to complement and support organisational efforts in achieving the strategic priorities, goals and expected outcomes as set out in the *Strategy Statement 2022-2024* and each annual Programme of Work (POW). In preparation for this Communications Strategy, workshops were held with key internal and external stakeholders to establish the Authority's key objectives, key stakeholders and key messages for the years ahead.



## Systems and data

The development of an integrated platform to transform and optimise businesses processes, while embracing innovation and emerging technology, is a strategic priority for the Authority. As such, work continued on the development of a new core internal platform to effectively manage all activity on occupational safety and health, chemicals, and market surveillance. This is a multi-annual project which will provide an integrated solution for full case management. Solution design and build, system integration testing and environment readiness were completed during 2023, with the platform ready for user acceptance testing at year end.

A clear vision for data management in the organisation was set out, following engagement with key stakeholders. This will ensure a co-ordinated approach to data gathering, data cleansing and data quality endurance, with the projected outcome of a trusted, single source of evidence to inform future decision-making.

## Meeting wider public sector requirements

As a public body, we actively consider how we can most meaningfully fulfil our duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and treatment, and protect the human rights of those we provide services to as well as our staff. Several initiatives were undertaken throughout the year in relation to vulnerable workers; those workers who may be particularly sensitive or overexposed to potential health and safety risks in comparison to the general working population. This work focused on raising awareness around vulnerable workers, employer responsibilities in relation to protecting vulnerable workers, and protection practices.

We are committed to ensuring that our recruitment policies are effective in reaching the targets set out in the *Comprehensive Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities*. We continue to exceed the target outlined in Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005, which places an obligation on public bodies to consider and respond to the needs of people with disabilities. Our latest online staff census indicates that 9.2% of our staff are people with a disability under the definition in the Disability Act 2005.

Additionally, to support staff needing reasonable accommodation, needs assessments have been carried out and appropriate supports provided, as required.

The Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 introduced the legislative basis for gender pay gap reporting in Ireland. The Act requires organisations (with 250+ staff) to report on their hourly gender pay gap across a range of metrics. We published our first Gender Pay Gap Report on 21 December 2023, with a gap of -1.5% indicating a generally healthy balance of male and female earnings in the reporting period.

We ensure that we create a welcoming environment in which the use of the Irish language by our people and our customers is enabled. We comply with the Official Languages Act 2003, as updated by the 2021 Act, and ensure that all required publications are available in both English and Irish. Our advertising activity was co-ordinated to ensure that during 2023 at least 20% of our advertising was in Irish and at least 5% of our advertising budgets were spent on advertising in Irish in Irish language media.

Quality customer service is a key priority for the Authority. We published a revised *Customer Service Charter* and *Customer Action Plan* during 2023. Our Customer Charter sets out the level of service customers can expect when dealing with us. Our *Customer Action Plan* sets out a range of measures that will improve quality customer service across the Authority, to be implemented during the lifetime of the plan.



# Key achievements: Occupational Safety and Health Programme

**Regulate**

**Promote**

**Influence**

| Action in POW 2023   | Achieved in 2023   |
|--|--|
| Investigate all fatal incidents reported to the Authority  | A total of 83 investigations were undertaken into fatal accidents, of which 43 were deemed work-related.   |
| Deliver 10,000 proactive inspections by way of specific campaigns and targeted inspections across all economic sectors | <p>The Authority carried out a total of 9,995 proactive inspections. Our inspectors found that 79% of workplaces had a safety statement available at the place of work. In 53% of cases, the inspector required the duty holder to make further improvements to the safety statement.</p> <p>The Authority carried out national inspection campaigns in the following sectors:</p> <p><b>Docks and ports</b></p> <p>A targeted inspection campaign was completed in May 2023, with 70 inspections conducted in seven ports. The main issues identified include lack of safety statements, risk assessments and certificates for lifting equipment at the workplace, load securing on vehicles, traffic management, lack of appropriate emergency evacuation plans, oxygen monitoring in ships holds and personal protective equipment (PPE).</p> <p><b>Waste</b></p> <p>A total of 65 inspections were completed as part of a campaign in this sector, with 42 enforcements issued. The campaign resulted in the following findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 89% of companies had a safety statement available</li> <li>• 75% of companies had a specific procedure in place for collecting and delivering skips</li> <li>• 86% of companies had procedures for inspecting and maintaining vehicles, but only 45% of them had a procedure for inspecting skips</li> </ul> <p><b>Construction</b></p> <p>A total of 389 inspections were carried out in two targeted construction campaigns, with the main focus being on working at heights. A total of 45 Prohibition Notices/Improvement Notices were issued, mostly in relation to working at height. The majority of sites inspected had a Project Supervisor Construction Stage (PSCS) appointed. Some issues in relation to traffic/pedestrian management were encountered and were followed up by inspectors.</p> <p><b>Quarrying</b></p> <p>Two quarry inspection campaigns were undertaken in 2023. Key issues identified during campaigns included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guarding and emergency stop safety</li> <li>• Maintenance and isolation</li> <li>• Risk assessment and training</li> </ul> <p>During the campaigns, 308 inspections were carried out and 307 Enforcement Notices were served. This included 33 Improvement Notices and 34 Prohibition Notices.</p> |



| Action in POW 2023 | Achieved in 2023   |
|--------------------|--|
|                    | <p><b>Retail</b></p> <p>A total of 198 inspections were completed in retail stores over a three-month period. More than 100 of these were focused on the five major grocery retailers in Ireland. The inspections focused on safety management systems, traffic management, safety consultation, racking, forklifts, deliveries, and PPE, among other risks. A total of 190 Enforcement Notices were issued (164 written advice, 22 Improvement Notices and 4 Prohibition Notices).</p> <p><b>Renewable energy</b></p> <p>This campaign was the first of its kind for the Authority, with a particular focus on solar farms, wind farms and anaerobic digesters. A total of 56 inspections were carried out. Construction was ongoing at 23 places of work inspected. The majority of the installations inspected demonstrated a high level of compliance. While no notices were served, 28 Reports of Inspection (ROI) were issued.</p> <p><b>Agriculture, forestry and fishing</b></p> <p>Four risk-specific inspection campaigns were carried out in the farming sector, focusing on livestock safety, tractor and quad bike safety, working at height, and on farmer health and wellbeing. Farmers were encouraged to consider the risks associated with these issues and to prepare to manage these risks prior to encountering them during their farming year. A total of 1,348 farm inspections were carried out during the year; of these, almost half were carried out during targeted inspection campaigns. Farmers and the farming community welcomed the focus placed on these risks, including the focus on farmer health and wellbeing. Farmers were encouraged to make proper use of the <i>Farm Safety Code of Practice</i> as a means of managing risk and injury prevention throughout the year. A total of 89 enforcements were issued.</p> <p><b>Health and social care</b></p> <p>A total of 622 proactive and reactive inspections were carried out in the health and social care sector.</p> <p>The inspections included a focus on safety management systems and a range of hazards specific to this sector including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work-related violence and aggression</li> <li>• COVID-19/Respiratory Viral Infection</li> <li>• Patient and manual handling</li> </ul> <p>Inspections were carried out in a variety of work settings, including hospitals, nursing homes, residential care, and primary and community care services.</p> <p>A total of 499 enforcements were issued; this included 28 Improvement Notices.</p> |

| Action in POW 2023   | Achieved in 2023  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Have a particular focus in our inspections of specific sectors, work activity and hazards as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work activity involving renewable energy, leisure and entertainment transport and logistics</li> <li>• Psychosocial risks including workplace bullying and stress</li> <li>• Vulnerable workers and workers in the gig economy</li> <li>• Violence and aggression.</li> <li>• Exposure to biological agents</li> <li>• Exposure to industrial products and process-generated substances that can cause cancer or mutations (carcinogenic and mutagenic chemicals) and silica dust</li> <li>• Manual handling and people handling activities</li> <li>• Cargo security, traffic management, machinery safety and engineering activities</li> </ul> | <p>More than 900 inspections with a focus on occupational health and hygiene were conducted across a range of sectors, such as manufacturing, healthcare, motor vehicle repair and services. The inspections focused on the health risks for work activities within the specific sectors as summarised below. Written advice was issued in 710 of the inspections. In addition, 27 Improvement Notices and 17 Prohibition Notices notices were issued.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of 327 inspections addressing chemical agents, including process-generated chemicals such as welding, dusts, spray painting, and chemical agents categorised as skin or respiratory sensitisers, or as carcinogenic, mutagenic or reprotoxic, were carried out</li> <li>• A total of 114 proactive and reactive inspections addressing asbestos removal and management of asbestos in pre-2000 buildings were carried out</li> <li>• An inspection campaign to address exposure to diisocyanates was carried out. This related to the restricted conditions for diisocyanate use under Annex XVII of the REACH regulations, whereby operators are required to have training in the safe use of diisocyanates. The inspections were of processes mainly in the construction and manufacturing sectors, such as woodworking, hardeners used in spray painting, insulation foam use and sealant installation work. A questionnaire was completed for review by the EU SLIC CHEMEX Working Group</li> <li>• More than 120 inspections were carried out to address biological agents</li> <li>• Almost 400 inspections addressed COVID-19/respiratory viruses in the health and social care sector</li> <li>• A total of 245 physical agent inspections addressing noise and radon were carried out. The noise-related inspections carried out were mainly in the manufacturing sector, while the radon inspections were focused on workplaces in geographical areas with potentially high radon levels</li> <li>• A total of 331 inspections were carried out to address manual handling and people handling activities, mainly in the healthcare, manufacturing, and accommodation sectors</li> <li>• More than 150 inspections were conducted on topics related to psychosocial hazards and risks (bullying, violence and aggression) in sectors such as the accomodation and food sector and the retail sector</li> <li>• A total of 202 inspections addressing work-related violence and aggression in the health and social care sector were carried out</li> <li>• In addition, 400 inspections raising awareness and addressing sun protection measures were carried out in the construction sector</li> </ul> |

| Action in POW 2023   | Achieved in 2023   |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Prepare supports and advice in the following areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe manufacture design and erection of timber frame housing</li> <li>• Work-related road use</li> <li>• Slips, trips and falls in the accommodation and food sector</li> <li>• Management of OSH in waste facilities</li> <li>• Workplace fire safety</li> <li>• Specific risks and control measures for lone workers</li> </ul> | <p>The Authority commenced work on drafting guidance for the safe erection of timber frame housing.</p> <p>The Authority updated the information and guidance on managing driving for work. In addition, the Authority co-hosted an online webinar with the RSA and An Garda Síochána which focused on safety issues related to driving for work.</p> <p>The Authority ran an inspection campaign which focused on slips, trips and falls in the food and accommodation sector.</p> <p>In relation to the waste recycling sector, the Authority ran an inspection campaign on the safe use of industrial skips.</p> <p>The Authority ran an inspection campaign focusing on public sector organisations with respect to fire safety management.</p> <p>The Authority reviewed its published information and guidance relating to lone working. Lone working was also examined as a risk factor as part of the Authority's inspection activities relating to violence and aggression.</p> |
| <p><b>Promote the Authority's guidance on remote working and support further Government initiatives in this area</b></p>   | <p>The Authority published its guidance document, <i>Occupational Safety and Health Guidance on Remote Working</i> with an associated checklist. New web resources on managing remote working and a distributed workforce were also developed. A new business type for remote working hubs was developed on BeSMART.ie. The Authority gave presentations at several events and held training sessions with stakeholder partners on promoting remote working resources.</p> <p>A short OSH inspection campaign was undertaken to raise awareness of remote working resources and to understand how workplaces are managing remote working. Some 48% of the workplaces were aware of the guidance. Of the 32 inspections undertaken, 63% had workers working remotely and 60% of those had completed risk assessments. Written or verbal advice was issued, and employers were directed to the Authority's guidance on remote working.</p>   |
| <p><b>Promote the role of the safety representative by engaging with employee and employer representatives. In all of our inspections, we will actively engage, advise and communicate with the safety representative</b></p>  | <p>The Authority updated several resources on the role of safety representatives, including the launch of the third edition of the <i>Safety Representatives Resource Book</i> and two information sheets for all sectors. The Authority supported five training workshops on the theme of safety representatives in collaboration with key stakeholders.</p>  |

| Action in POW 2023   | Achieved in 2023   |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Promote all new guidance, supports, e-tools and legislation with a particular emphasis on the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation on all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and quads, which came into force in November 2023</li> <li>• Guidance for content moderators</li> <li>• Guidance on laboratories working with biological agents</li> <li>• Psychosocial and mental health resources and supports</li> <li>• Reporting of accidents, injuries and illness by all sectors, including asbestos and biological agent notifications</li> </ul> | <p>The new legislation introducing requirements for training and personal protective equipment for operators of ATVs came into force in November 2023 and was promoted at all major farming events, with practical demonstrations at stands at the Teagasc Dairy event, the Tullamore Show and the National Ploughing Championships. The new requirements were also promoted through joint advertising campaigns and extensive media coverage.</p> <p>The guidance on psychosocial risk assessments in the area of exposure to sensitive content was promoted widely with key stakeholders.</p> <p>WorkPositive<sup>ci</sup>, the Authority's tool to support employers with psychosocial risk management, was promoted with all stakeholders, particularly with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).</p> <p>Updated guidance was developed on managing the risk of third-party violence and aggression in the workplace.</p> <p>The Authority organised two webinars on the management of ergonomic and psychosocial risks, and it promoted use of Authority guidance, tools and supports.</p> <p>The Authority published <i>Managing Exposure to Biological Agents in Laboratories</i> and promoted this guidance among key stakeholders. Promotion of the guidance will continue in 2024.</p> <p>The Authority processed 418 Asbestos Notifications under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations 2006-2010. This represented an increase of 10% when compared with the 2023 figure.</p> <p>Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Biological Agents) Regulations 2013 and 2020, 12 notifications of use of certain biological agents risk groups were received and processed, and 302 notifications representing 461 employees were received in relation to workplace COVID-19 illness.</p> |
| <p><b>Develop three new eLearning courses as well as an interactive safety course for primary schools</b></p>  | <p>The Authority launched four new eLearning courses on <a href="https://hsalearning.ie">hsalearning.ie</a>. These included courses on remote working, ergonomic risk assessments, health and safety in the workplace for apprentices, protection of vulnerable workers. In total, more than 73,000 courses addressing occupational safety and health were taken on eLearning platforms.</p> <p>Occupational health and safety resources in various languages continued to be developed, including three courses for Ukrainian workers.</p> <p>The Choose Safety Programme was delivered to 428 post-primary schools, involving more than 23,000 students and representing the largest-ever number of post-primary participants in an Authority initiative. The programme was also rolled out to 120 other institutions (including further education institutions) and involving more than 4,000 students. The Authority continues to raise awareness and promote uptake of the Choose Safety Digital Badges.</p> <p>The Authority also participated in the Graduate.ie programme for post-primary students.</p>   |



| Action in POW 2023   | Achieved in 2023  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Provide technical support to the DETE of Enterprise, Trade and Employment on the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed revisions to Quarries Regulations and Construction Regulations</li> <li>• Transposition of the most recent Carcinogens Mutagens Directive into national legislation</li> <li>• Commence the update of the Code of Practice on Occupational Exposure Levels to reflect new exposure limit values</li> </ul> | <p>The Authority provided technical support to the DETE on the draft Quarries Regulations and the draft Construction Licensing Bill.</p> <p>The Authority provided technical support to the DETE on new proposals for lead (Pb) and diisocyanates and an update to the Asbestos Workers Directive. Both proposals were concluded by December 2023 and assistance will be provided to the DETE during 2024 regarding transposition of these Directives into national legislation.</p> <p>The Authority assisted the DETE during 2023 on the recasting of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Carcinogens) Regulations to transpose the fourth amendment of the Carcinogens, Mutagens and Reprotoxic substances (CMR) Directive. As part of this work, the Authority commenced an update of the <i>Code of Practice for the Chemical Agents and Carcinogens Regulations</i> which will support the transposition. This work should be concluded in 2024.</p>  |
| <p><b>Publish and promote a Code of Practice on Indoor Air Quality to support compliance with new Government legislation in this area</b></p>  | <p>The Authority published a <i>Code of Practice for Indoor Air Quality</i> and this was promoted with various stakeholders during public consultation and post-publication through the Authority's website, newsletters and social media channels. Presentations on the Code were provided to Local Government representatives and at an Indoor Air Quality conference hosted by the Occupational Hygiene Society and the University of Galway. A BeSMART.ie Indoor Air Quality risk assessment to support the Code and small businesses was developed and promoted.</p>   |
| <p><b>Consider options for influencing and enhancing engagement with sectors including the health and social care sector</b></p>   | <p>The Construction Safety Partnership Advisory Committee continued to work with key stakeholders to progress the following deliverables in 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An employee information sheet on the hazard of respirable crystalline silica for construction workers was launched in Q1 2023</li> <li>• Work commenced on guidance for the erection of timber frame housing</li> <li>• Sector-specific guidance on 'client appointments' for construction work on farms was developed and agreed with the FSPAC</li> <li>• Guidance relating to the role of the safety representative on construction sites was developed and launched in August 2023</li> <li>• The CSPAC and its member organisations continue to lobby SOLAS and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) to formally recognise the Scaffolding Apprenticeship course as a higher level of training than that of the current SOLAS Advanced Scaffolding Construction Skills Certification Card (CSCS)</li> <li>• The CSPAC and its member organisations continue to lobby SOLAS and the DFHERIS in relation to concerns in relation to the Construction Safety Licensing Bill 2023</li> <li>• An employee information sheet on the hazard of ultraviolet radiation for construction workers was launched in June 2023.</li> <li>• A webinar to raise awareness regarding manual handling in construction was held</li> </ul> |

| Action in POW 2023 | Achieved in 2023  |
|--------------------|---|
|                    | <p>The Quarry Safety Partnership Forum was re-established in 2023 under a revised Terms of Reference. The aim of the partnership will be to share information regarding achieving compliance, explaining inspection and enforcement functions of the Authority, discussing technical updates and listening to the safety requirements of the sector.</p> <p>There were significant levels of engagement with key stakeholders in other economic sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance at the Cross Border Extractives Committee (dealing with mining issues)</li> <li>• Engagement with Irish Ports Safety Forum during Irish Port Safety Week</li> <li>• Presentation provided at Ibec retail forum</li> <li>• Meetings with CRU, SEAI and utilities providers</li> </ul> <p>The FSPAC continued to work with key stakeholders to implement the <i>Farm Safety Action Plan 2021-2024</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Partnership and its five Working Groups met on a regular basis (both in person and online) to achieve the objectives of the Action Plan</li> <li>• Farm Safety Action Plan outputs included: providing up-to-date information and guidance through video clips, distributing information leaflets/publications and interacting with the sector through the media and at various events</li> <li>• New or revised guidance produced included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Circulation of the new <i>Farmer's Health and Wellbeing</i> booklet to all farm households</li> <li>- Production and launch of new videos on Mental Health and Wellbeing in Farming, Electrical Safety, and Traffic Management, with a particular focus on blind spots and pedestrian danger zones</li> <li>- Publication of new information sheets on Safety During Calving Season and Safety during Lambing</li> <li>- 23 new short farm safety video clips jointly developed by Teagasc/FBD/HSA and launched by Minister Heydon at a BeSafe research seminar</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Champions for Safety initiative provided farm safety awareness sessions to students at all agricultural colleges and universities prior to students going out on placement</li> <li>• The Authority promoted farm safety and live demonstrations at several major events including the Teagasc Dairy 2023, Farm Safety Live at the Tullamore Show and the Farm Safety Stand at the National Ploughing Championships</li> <li>• Advertising campaigns and regular press releases coincided with inspection campaigns and generated substantial media coverage at national and local level</li> <li>• A discussion on 'A Way of Life' looked at the challenges in relation to retirement in farming, outlining key insights that could be developed in the future to reduce the number of elderly farmers working on farms and farm deaths</li> <li>• The introduction of new regulations requiring mandatory training and wearing of helmets for quad bike operators was strongly supported</li> <li>• The FSPAC recognises the importance of accessing relevant data to continue to inform ongoing interventions</li> </ul> <p>The Board of the Authority established a Health and Social Care Advisory Committee to enhance engagement with the health and social care sector.</p> |

| Action in POW 2023  | Achieved in 2023   |
|---|--|
| <p>Complete actions assigned to the Authority in the <i>Road Safety Strategy 2021-2024</i>, specifically in relation to the development of a joint intervention strategy between the Authority, the RSA and An Garda Síochána. We will support the development of a data-sharing protocol to facilitate the identification of work-related road collisions</p>              | <p>The Authority and the RSA hosted a joint webinar on work-related road safety.</p> <p>Significant work is under way to agree a common definition for 'safe work-related road use' and 'work-related road collision/incident' to assist in the identification and quantification of the type, level and context of occupational road user involvement in incidents on the road. In addition, the Authority has commenced a revised publication on National Safe Work-Related Road Safety.</p> |
| <p>Participate in the European Commission's Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC) and its Working Parties to monitor the enforcement of EU legislation at national level. We will chair the SLIC MACHEX subgroup on Digitisation and Robotics and co-ordinate Ireland's involvement in the system for sharing enforcement-related information between Member States</p> | <p>The Authority co-chaired the SLIC Work Group CHEMEX and participated in two subgroups addressing long latency issues and REACH/OSH interface issues. SLIC CHEMEX launched an EU pilot enforcement project on diisocyanates, and the Authority contributed 15 inspections on behalf of Ireland.</p> <p>Participated in EU SLIC Biolex, CHEMEX and Machex working groups and diving subgroup.</p>   |
| <p>Participate in the European Commission's Advisory Committee on Safety and Health (ACSH) and contribute to the updates of the EU Workplaces Directive, the EU Display Screen Equipment Directive and proposals for the EU occupational exposure limits for lead</p>   | <p>The Authority continued to participate in the ACSH.</p> <p>The Working Parties on the updates of the Workplaces Directive and Display Screen Directive were paused pending the outcome of the Social Partner Dialogue on Teleworking and the Right to Disconnect. The Working Parties will resume their task early in 2024.</p>   |

# Key achievements: Chemicals Programme

## Regulate

## Promote

## Influence

| Action in POW 2023  | Achieved in 2023   |
|---|--|
| Deliver 920 inspections targeting high-risk chemical activities, focusing on areas with a greater potential for exposure to chemicals, including chemicals processing, transportation, manufacture and use in the workplace | The Authority delivered 888 inspections targeting high-risk chemical activities, focusing on areas with a greater potential for exposure to chemicals, particularly chemicals processing, storage, transportation, manufacture and use in the workplace.   |
| Prioritise the inspection of high-risk chemical use sites, including an assessment of the quantities and categories of hazardous substances stored at ports   | <p>In Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH), 96 specific Tier I and Tier II sites were inspected. A further 89 inspections were carried out on sites storing dangerous substances near but below the COMAH threshold. The Authority received and assessed 22 COMAH notifications and 16 significant modifications. Eleven safety report assessments were completed.</p> <p>A total of 347 land use planning (LUP) advice requests were processed in 2023, an increase on the number in 2022.</p> <p>The Authority carried out five inspections of port facilities storing chemicals.</p> |
| Complete appropriate follow-up of reported serious accidents, complaints and European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) referrals   | <p>All serious accidents, complaints and referrals were appropriately followed up.</p> <p>The Authority addressed 41 registration enforcement referrals relating to Irish registrants from the ECHA.</p>   |
| Participate in EU expert groups for the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) and the Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) Regulations                                      | The Authority continued to participate in Commission Competent Authority meetings and working groups for both REACH and CLP. It provided significant support in 2023 to the EU Attaché and the DETE for all the EU Council Technical Harmonisation Working Group meetings for the revision of the EU Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulation (CLP) and the EU Detergents Regulation through our EU meeting attendance as technical experts, the provision of technical briefings and preparation of formal written comments.  |
| Prepare five scientific opinions for ECHA Scientific Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) and Socio-Economic Committee (SEAC) on uses of substances of high concern and proposals for restriction                                | The Authority continued to support EU activities through preparation of RAC and SEAC scientific and technical opinions. The Irish experts on the RAC and SEAC completed 10 scientific opinions as rapporteurs (one restriction dossier, one CLH dossier and eight applications for authorisation).   |

| Action in POW 2023   | Achieved in 2023  |
|--|---|
| <p>Prepare and submit harmonised classification and labelling (CLH) proposals for chemical substances to the ECHA</p> <p>Contribute to the development of a new EU-wide restriction proposal under REACH to address sensitisers in consumer mixtures</p> | <p>The Authority submitted three Irish CLH dossier proposals to the ECHA for the following substances: piperonal, O-isopropyl ethyl thiocarbamate and sodium chlorite.</p> <p>The Authority continued to contribute to the proposal led by Germany to explore a new EU-wide restriction to address the concerns associated with sensitisers in consumer mixtures.</p> |
| <p>Provide expertise to the ECHA Forum on Enforcement for developing and delivering EU-wide enforcement projects on the compliance of safety data sheets and classification of mixtures</p>  | <p>In 2023, the Authority participated in the operational phase of the ECHA Forum on Enforcement REF-11 project on Safety Data Sheets and checking the conformity with the requirements of the new Annex II of REACH.</p>   |
| <p>Host a national conference for stakeholders, addressing recent and emerging developments in chemicals regulation</p>  | <p>The Authority hosted a chemical conference in Dublin for stakeholders addressing recent developments in the EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability Towards a Toxic-Free Environment.</p>   |
| <p>Develop LUP, storage and transport advice for the energy production sector (such as hydrogen, biomethane)</p>   | <p>The Authority updated its TLUP advice for hydrogen installations, which is available for planning authorities and COMAH establishment operators.</p>   |
| <p>Carry out competent authority functions under the carriage of dangerous goods by road (ADR) Regulations</p>   | <p>The Authority issued 11 authorisations and re-appointed four tank inspection bodies under the ADR Regulations.</p>   |
| <p>Provide technical support to the DETE to implement amendments to the annexes to the ADR agreement that are applicable from 1 January 2023</p>   | <p>The Authority provided technical support to the DETE on the tenth amendment (S.I. No. 197 of 2023) to the ADR Regulations, which was implemented at the end of April.</p>  |





# Key achievements: Market Surveillance Programme

## Regulate

## Promote

## Influence

| Action in POW 2023  | Achieved in 2023   |
|---|--|
| Assess 1,500 chemical products and 500 industrial products, intended for industrial and consumer use, for compliance with EU requirements   | <p>Assessments were carried out on 917 chemical products and 307 industrial products for compliance with relevant market surveillance regulations. Non-compliant products found were removed from the marketplace.</p> <p>Follow-up action was required for 54% of chemical products checked and 41% of industrial products checked.</p>   |
| Check relevant non-compliant products on the Irish market which have been notified to the European Rapid Alert System (RAPEX) for dangerous non-food products or the Information and Communication System for Market Surveillance (ICSMS) | <p>The Authority processed 319 EU RAPEX (Safety Gate) alerts related to restricted chemicals to determine if they were placed on the Irish market. Following investigative checks, more than 90% of the products assessed under RAPEX were not found to be present on the Irish market. For the remaining alerts, suppliers were identified and contacted to remove non-compliant products from the market.</p> <p>A total of 63 RAPEX alerts relating to industrial products were checked to determine whether the products were placed on the Irish market. Following investigative checks, 2% of the products notified were found to be present on the Irish market. The suppliers were identified and contacted and instructed to remove non-compliant products from the market.</p> <p>The European ICSMS was monitored throughout the year, and 87 notifications were proactively reviewed. However, follow-up action was only required for one of these products.</p> |
| Inform other Member States (through the ICSMS and Safety Gate systems) of non-compliant products found on the Irish market that may also be traded on EU markets  | There were no Safety Gate notifications for industrial products submitted during the year. The Authority submitted four ICSMS notifications regarding non-compliant industrial products.   |
| Check machinery sold at auction houses and machinery hire companies   | Inspections of auction houses were carried out to ensure that non-compliant machinery was not entering the EU market through the auction network.  |
| Provide regulatory support and advice to businesses manufacturing, importing or distributing chemical and industrial products, including those from Great Britain   | Challenges continued to be experienced by chemical distributors in the main. The Authority provided support during inspections, and queries were addressed by its Chemicals Helpdesk.  |

| Action in POW 2023   | Achieved in 2023   |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Contribute to the EU Technical Harmonisation discussions on the new Machinery Regulations</b></p>  | <p>The Authority provided technical support to the DETE on the entering into force of the new EU Machinery Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2023/1230).</p> <p>As the competent authority for machinery, lifts, PPE, gas appliances, explosive atmospheres (ATEX) and pressure equipment, we actively engaged at Market Surveillance EU AdCo and Expert Group meetings.</p>   |
| <p><b>Participate in the EU-wide REACH Enforcement Forum (REF) projects</b></p>  | <p>The Authority participated in the operational phase of the EU REF-11 project on safety data sheets and checking the conformity with the requirements of the new Annex II of REACH. In all, 25 product assessments were undertaken as part of this initiative.</p>   |
| <p><b>Promote and raise awareness on the safe use of chemicals and industrial products among consumers</b></p>   | <p>The Authority collaborated with and supported the National Poisons Information Centre garden at Bord Bia Bloom 2023 to highlight the dangers of household and garden chemicals and appropriate controls. In parallel, a brochure on chemical safety at home and in the garden was published to raise awareness.</p>   |
| <p><b>Advise and support those supplying chemical and industrial products on the market regarding their duties</b></p>   | <p>The Authority continued to provide advice and support those supplying chemical and industrial products on the market regarding their duties, via advice during inspection, product assessments, helpdesk queries and stakeholder advice.</p>  |
| <p><b>Conduct the following EU and national campaigns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Product assessments of circular saws and scissor lifts</li> <li>• Compliance of safety data sheets for hazardous substances or mixtures and restricted substances in glues or adhesives</li> <li>• Compliance of room scent products</li> <li>• Compliance of chandleries and marine suppliers regarding hazardous chemicals or articles supplied online</li> <li>• Presence of asbestos in brake pads for two-wheeled vehicles</li> <li>• Presence of dichloromethane and N Methyl Pyrrolidone in products</li> </ul> | <p>The Authority participated in an EU Joint Action project assessing circular saws and scissor lifts for regulatory compliance. This project was delayed by the EU. It is still ongoing, and findings and final reports will be issued in 2024.</p> <p>The Authority participated in the ECHA REF-11 project on compliance of safety data sheets for hazardous substances and mixtures, assessing 25 products.</p> <p>The Authority carried out compliance checks on room scent products, assessing 99 products from 51 brands across 30 companies, including importers, distributors and retailers. All non-compliances were addressed, and several products were withdrawn from sale.</p> <p>The Authority undertook a campaign checking regulatory compliance of chemicals supplied by chandleries and online marine supplies. This project is ongoing, and findings will be issued in 2024.</p> <p>The EU Joint Action project assessing asbestos in brake pads for two-wheeled vehicles was delayed by the EU. This project will be progressed in 2024.</p> <p>This EU project on the presence of dichloromethane and N Methyl Pyrrolidone in products was withdrawn by the EU Forum due to capacity constraints. The Forum has no future plans to run this campaign at the time of writing this report.</p> |

# Key achievements: National Accreditation Programme

**Regulate**

**Promote**

**Influence**

As part of our ongoing accreditation programme:

| Action in POW 2023  | Achieved in 2023   |
|---|--|
| <b>As part of our ongoing accreditation programme:</b>  |  |
| Maintain the programme of accreditation for existing and applicant clients  | <p>The Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) continued to provide accreditation in accordance with the relevant ISO 17000 series of standards.</p> <p>The Accreditation Board met eight times in 2023 and awarded 13 accreditations. A further 384 decisions on accreditation were taken by the INAB Manager.</p>  |
| Process new applications for accreditation from new and existing clients  | At the end of December 2023 there were 23 new applications in hand. INAB awarded 117 extensions to scope for current clients, an increase of 40 on the 2022 figures.   |
| Drive uptake of applications for new accreditation activity introduced (for example medical imaging, validation and verification and vehicle inspections) | <p>A priority of the strategy is to increase the application for accreditation, adding real value and improved access for clients. One of the INAB's objectives is to identify opportunities for further accreditation schemes and future demand, leveraging findings from demand analysis, horizon scanning exercises and research projects. This is ongoing and will further be progressed throughout 2024 and over the lifetime of the strategy.</p> <p>The INAB awarded 13 new accreditations and one award for a transfer to a new standard, ISO/IEC 17021. These included nine accreditations in ISO/IEC 17025 – eight testing and one calibration – two medical testing for ISO 15189 and two inspection bodies for ISO/IEC 17020. Testing areas in 2023 included soil fertility testing, construction materials testing and metrology.</p> <p>There were 553 assessment events in 2023, an increase on the 2022 figures.</p> |
| Fulfil all representation at European and international accreditation committees  | INAB staff attended 27 European and international accreditation meetings and committees.   |
| Discharge all legislative responsibility as the Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) monitoring authority   | The INAB is the statutory GLP compliance monitoring authority with responsibility for the inspection and verification of GLP under S.I. No. 18/2020 European Communities (Good Laboratory Practice) Regulations. It continued to discharge its statutory responsibilities by conducting on-site inspections and attending EU and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) GLP working groups.   |

| Action in POW 2023   | Achieved in 2023   |
|--|--|
| <b>Deliver on Year 2 of the Strategy for Accreditation 2022-2026, in particular:</b>   |  |
| <p><b>Conclude research and analysis to inform and influence national policy</b></p>   | <p>The strategy sets out how Ireland will fully realise the benefits of accreditation and will have a positive impact across the Irish economy and society. The delivery of this strategy will increase awareness and the benefits of accreditation and will provide trust and confidence in Irish products and services across government, industry and consumers. Examining the economic value for businesses and consumers of accredited conformity assessment activities is important for client understanding and awareness of accreditation. A key objective of this strategy is, therefore, to commission research and market analysis to inform and influence national policy. This work will continue in 2024.</p>  |
| <p><b>Develop a suite of communications materials to raise awareness on the benefits of accreditation and promote this through publications and events</b></p>                         | <p>A communications plan was completed. This plan will assist in promoting awareness and engagement of accreditation and to communicate the value and benefits of accreditation.</p> <p>The INAB delivered a number of presentations, including to Government Departments. A set of presentations has been prepared to promote the benefits of accreditation, improve knowledge sharing and exchange information.</p> <p>The INAB LinkedIn social media page was regularly updated to communicate and interact with clients, to improve knowledge sharing and to grow networks.</p> <p>The implementation of this plan will continue throughout 2024.</p>  |
| <p><b>Continue engagement with Government and national stakeholders to influence the use of accreditation in provision of public services and development of national policies</b></p> | <p>The INAB and the HSA issued newsletters to provide information on developments in the INAB and in accreditation.</p> <p>Topics covered in the information sessions and presentations provided to Government Departments included the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD); artificial intelligence (AI); and the CO2 Performance Ladder scheme in Ireland. The focus of these engagements is to provide information, share knowledge and promote accreditation.</p> <p>The INAB added several client case studies to its website to illustrate the benefits of accreditation from the clients' perspective and share learnings and knowledge.</p> <p>Collaborative engagements were held with the following bodies or officials: a ministerial working group on the revision of the Drinking Water Directive; Department of Transport on a Commission audit of the implementation of the Marine Equipment Directive; the Data Protection Commissioner on accreditation under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) about accreditation of stack emission laboratories.</p> |
| <p><b>Establish a forum for engagement with current clients</b></p>  | <p>The INAB is engaging with clients in relation to case studies in accreditation for publication on the INAB website. This will support knowledge sharing and awareness of accreditation.</p>   |
| <p><b>Target sectors to drive demand for accreditation</b></p>   | <p>The Accreditation Board provided information sessions and presentations to several Government Departments throughout 2023. Topics included the CSRD, AI, and the CO2 Performance Ladder scheme in Ireland.</p>  |

# Key achievements:

## Operational Effectiveness Programme

### How we work

| Action in POW 2023   | Achieved in 2023  |
|--|---|
| Further strengthen and build capability through targeted recruitment campaigns and continuous professional development opportunities   | <p>Our recruitment drive continued in 2023 resulting in 67 new joiners and promotions across the Authority.</p> <p>The Authority launched a development programme for new inspectors, delivered via a blended learning approach consisting of classroom training in conjunction with both accompanied and supervised inspections. This programme builds on the existing on-boarding and induction programmes and is designed to support new entrants appropriately while ensuring consistency of delivery of inspections and knowledge transfer across the organisation.</p>                  |
| Continue the development of a new information and communication technology (ICT) platform to optimise our core business processes, bringing benefits such as more efficient ways of working; end-to-end case management; better work planning; improved customer experiences; access to accurate, clean and complete data; and better insights | <p>The development of the new core platform, Córás, continued throughout the year, with analysis, design, build and system integration testing completed. The platform environment was established, and a key project milestone was achieved by having a complete system ready for user acceptance testing. Many project workstreams have progressed, including data cleansing, migration, operational readiness and training.</p> <p>This is a complex multi-annual project which will continue through 2024 and will transform the way we work and bring significant business benefits.</p> |
| Implement a pilot scheme for blended working to facilitate increased flexibility for our staff and to build a more agile and responsive organisation   | <p>As part of our commitment to work-life balance opportunities, we ran a pilot for blended working throughout 2023 that was availed of by 92% of our employees. We believe that blended working can increase flexibility, improve health and wellbeing, and enhance work-life balance while sustaining strong standards of performance and productivity.</p> <p>The policy complements our existing suite of work-life balance policies, the <i>Code of Practice on the Right to Disconnect</i>, and consolidates our position as an employer of choice.</p>                                 |
| Develop an appropriate framework for the management of serious or crisis events  | <p>To safeguard the Authority from unforeseen events, significant progress was achieved towards the development of an organisational resilience framework to integrate Business Continuity Plans, Crisis Management, Incident Management, Cyber Incident Response, and Disaster Recovery. Integrating the interdependencies of these processes will enable the Authority to prepare for, respond to and recover from unforeseen events in a more comprehensive manner.</p>  |



| Action in POW 2023  | Achieved in 2023  |
|---|---|
| Implement all actions set out for the first year of our Data Management Strategy 2023-2025  | Our data capabilities have grown in recent years with the establishment of the Data Management and Analytics Team. Engagement with key stakeholders to ensure optimal behaviours around data was progressed during 2023. Key reports were developed to address business needs and provide the evidence base for decision-making. Data cleansing was a priority, with major cleansing tasks completed, particularly on our master data, ensuring the migration of clean, good-quality data to the new core platform. |
| Define and implement an information security improvement programme as well as consolidating our business continuity and disaster recovery plans | An information security improvement programme was defined and is being implemented, with ICT business continuity and ICT disaster recovery a key focus of the work undertaken in 2023. A Security Operations Centre (SOC) and Security Incident and Event Management (SIEM) were implemented, in addition to a new immutable backup solution and an upgrade of firewalls. A Security Steering Group was established, focusing initially on governance, policies and controls.                                       |



# Appendix 1:

Extracts from the  
unaudited Financial  
Statements of the Health  
and Safety Authority  
for the year ended 31  
December 2023



# Introduction

## Statement of responsibilities of the Board

In accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 the Health and Safety Authority is required to produce Financial Statements each year. The Authority's financial year ends on 31st December each year. The financial statements must be in such form as may be approved by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment with the concurrence of the Minister for Finance. In preparing those financial statements, the Authority is required to:

- ▶ Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ▶ Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ▶ Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Authority will continue in operation;
- ▶ State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The Authority is responsible for keeping proper books of account which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Authority and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 48(1) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005. The Authority is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Authority and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Draft Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2023 have been prepared and were considered by the Board at its meeting held on Tuesday 5th March 2024. The draft Financial Statements for 2023 have been prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of FRS102 and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016. The Board reviewed the draft Financial Statements and approved them on a no material change basis.

The Authority submits the draft Financial Statements as approved by the Board before 31st March each year to the Department and the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General who have appointed Mazars Ireland to undertake the external audit. The audit fieldwork is scheduled to take place during Q2 this year.

The information below is extracted from the draft Financial Statements and should not be considered to be reliable source of financial information regarding the financial affairs of the Authority until the external audit is completed. The audited Financial Statements will include following documentation together with a full set of explanatory notes –

- ▶ Governance Statement and Board Members' Report
- ▶ Statement on Internal Control
- ▶ Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves
- ▶ Statement of Comprehensive Income
- ▶ Statement of Financial position as at 31st December 2023
- ▶ Statement of Cash Flows
- ▶ Extracts from the Notes to Financial Statements

Once the external audit is completed and the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General is received the Authority will make the necessary arrangements to submit the audited Financial Statements to the Minister for approval to have them formally laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas.

A copy of the Authority's audited Financial Statements can be accessed on the Authority's website once the external audit has been completed. The processing of all the Authority's financial transactions has been contracted to the external contractor (Crowley's DFK).

The Authority continues to manage the finance function and has put in place all the necessary controls and safeguards to ensure the integrity of the function.

# Information

|                             |   |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Members of the Board</b> | Patricia Byron (Chairperson)  | Appointed 30/06/2023                          |
|                             | Paul Kelly (Deputy Chairperson)   | Reappointed 20/12/2022                        |
|                             | Bríd De Buitléar  | Reappointed 11/08/2023                        |
|                             | Ciarán Roche  | Reappointed 11/08/2023                        |
|                             | David Hughes  | Reappointed 20/12/2022                        |
|                             | Deirdre MacDonald   | Reappointed 20/12/2022                        |
|                             | Fiona Kilcullen   | Appointed 25/09/2023                          |
|                             | Frank Kelly   | Reappointed 20/12/2022                        |
|                             | Mary Coyne  | Reappointed 11/08/2023                        |
|                             | Michelle Quinn  | Reappointed 20/12/2022                        |
|                             | Padraig Somers  | Appointed 20/12/2022                          |
|                             | Terry O'Niadh   | Appointed 30/06/2023                          |
|                             | Deirdre Cullivan  | Term ended 12/03/2023                         |
|                             | Stephen Curran  | Term ended 12/09/2023                         |
| Tom Coughlan                | Term ended 12/04/2023   |   |
| <b>Chief Executive</b>      | Conor O'Brien<br>Mark Cullen (Interim)  | Appointed 29/05/2023<br>Term ended 28/05/2023 |
| <b>Head Office</b>          | Health and Safety Authority<br>The Metropolitan Building<br>James Joyce Street, Dublin 1 D01 K0Y8 |   |
| <b>Auditor</b>              | Comptroller and Auditor General<br>3A Mayor Street Upper, Dublin 1 D01 PF72                       |   |
| <b>Accountants</b>          | Crowleys DFK<br>Chartered Accountants<br>5 Lapps Quay, Cork T12 RW7D                              |   |
| <b>Internal Auditors</b>    | Deloitte<br>Deloitte & Touche House<br>29 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2 D02 AY28                    |   |
| <b>Solicitor</b>            | Mason Hayes and Curran<br>South Bank House<br>Barrow Street, Dublin 4 D04 TR29                    |   |
| <b>Bank</b>                 | Bank of Ireland<br>Baggot Street Lower, Dublin 2 D02 Y754   |   |



# Governance Statement and Board Members' Report

## Governance

The Board of the Health and Safety Authority was established on 1st November 1989 under the then Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989. This Act was replaced by the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005. The functions of the Board are set out in Section 16 of the 2005 Act. The Authority is accountable to the Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail under delegated authority from the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, and is responsible for ensuring good governance and performs this task by setting strategic objectives and targets and taking strategic decisions on all key business issues. The regular day-to-day management, control and direction of the Health and Safety Authority are the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the senior management team. The CEO and the senior management team must follow the broad strategic direction set by the Board and must ensure that all Board members have a clear understanding of the key activities and decisions related to the entity, and of any significant risks likely to arise. The CEO acts as a direct liaison between the Board and management of the Health and Safety Authority.

## Board Responsibilities

The work and responsibilities of the Board are set out in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the Standing Orders approved by the Board, and the Schedule of Reserved and Delegated functions of the Board, which also contain the matters specifically reserved for Board decision. Standing items considered by the Board include:

- ▶ Declaration of interests;
- ▶ Reports from Committees;
- ▶ Financial reports/management accounts;
- ▶ Performance reports; and
- ▶ Reserved matters.

Section 48(1) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 requires the Board of the Health and Safety Authority to keep, in such form as may be approved by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment with consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, all proper and usual accounts of money received and expended by it.

In preparing these financial statements, the Board of the Health and Safety Authority is required to:

- ▶ Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- ▶ Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ▶ State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- ▶ Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that it will continue in operation.

The Board is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, its financial position and enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 48(1) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005. The maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information on the Health and Safety Authority's website is the responsibility of the Board.

The Board is responsible for approving the annual plan and budget. An evaluation of the performance of the Health and Safety Authority by reference to the annual plan and budget is carried out regularly at Authority meetings.

The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Board considers that the financial statements of the Health and Safety Authority give a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of the Health and Safety Authority at 31 December 2023.

## Board Structure

The Board consists of a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and 10 ordinary members, all of whom are appointed by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The members of the Board were appointed for a period of three years and meet on a regular basis. The table below details the appointment period for current members

| Board Member      | Role               | Date Appointed         |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Patricia Byron    | Chairperson        | Appointed 30/06/2023   |
| Paul Kelly        | Deputy Chairperson | Reappointed 20/12/2022 |
| Bríd De Buitléar  |                    | Reappointed 11/08/2023 |
| Ciarán Roche      |                    | Reappointed 11/08/2023 |
| David Hughes      |                    | Reappointed 20/12/2022 |
| Deirdre MacDonald |                    | Reappointed 20/12/2022 |
| Fiona Kilcullen   |                    | Appointed 25/09/2023   |
| Frank Kelly       |                    | Reappointed 20/12/2022 |
| Mary Coyne        |                    | Reappointed 11/08/2023 |
| Michelle Quinn    |                    | Reappointed 20/12/2022 |
| Pdraig Somers     |                    | Appointed 20/12/2022   |
| Terry O'Niadh     |                    | Appointed 30/06/2023   |
| Deirdre Cullivan  |                    | Term ended 12/03/2023  |
| Stephen Curran    |                    | Term ended 12/09/2023  |
| Tom Coughlan      |                    | Term ended 12/04/2023  |

### The Board has established four (4) Committees, as follows:

- 1. Audit, Risk and Finance Committee:** comprises four Board members. The purpose of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee is to support the Board of the Health and Safety Authority in its responsibilities for issues of financial management, risk, control, and corporate governance by reviewing the comprehensiveness of the assurances in meeting the Board and Chief Executive's assurance needs and reviewing the reliability and integrity of these assurances. The ARF is independent from the financial management of the organisation. In particular, the Committee ensures that the internal control systems including audit activities are monitored actively and independently. The ARF reports to the Board after each meeting, and formally in writing annually.

The members of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee during 2023 were: Mary Coyne (appointed Chairperson of ARFC on 08 December 2023), David Hughes and Paul Kelly. Frank Kelly was also appointed to ARFC during 2023, but did not attend any meetings, as he was not appointed until 08 December 2023. Deirdre Cullivan was Chairperson of the Committee until her term ended on 12 March 2023. There were eight (8) meetings of the ARFC in 2023. Seven meetings were held remotely and one in person.
- 2. Strategic Steering Committee:** comprises five Board members. The role of the Strategic Steering Committee is to consider the strategic development of the Authority and to monitor the performance of the Chief Executive Officer.

The members of the Strategic Steering Committee during 2023 were: Patricia Byron (Chairperson), Bríd De Buitléar, Paul Kelly, Michelle Quinn and Fiona Kilcullen. Tom Coughlan and Stephen Curran also served on this committee during 2023 until the date on which their term as a Board member ended. There were four (4) meetings of the Strategic Steering Committee during 2023.
- 3. Legislation and Guidance Committee:** comprises five Board members. The role of the Legislation and Guidance Committee (L&G) is to monitor the implementation of the legislation and guidance aspects of the Authority's programme of work and to examine proposals for legislation, Codes of Practice and, where necessary, related Guidance, and submit appropriate conclusions and/or recommendations to the Board. The members of the Legislation and Guidance Committee during 2023 were: Deirdre MacDonald (Chairperson) Pdraig Somers, Ciarán Roche, Frank Kelly, and Michelle Quinn. There were three (3) meetings of the Legislation and Guidance Committee in 2023.

- 4. INAB Committee:** The Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) is a Committee of the Health and Safety Authority. The Board of INAB, which makes decisions relating to the award of accreditation, has 13 members and is appointed by the Board of the Authority. There are no Board members on this Committee.

### Schedule of Attendance, Fees and Expenses

A schedule of attendance at the Board and Committee meetings for 2023 is set out below including the fees and expenses received by each member:

|                           | Board    | Audit Risk & Finance Committee | Strategic Steering Committee | Legislation & Guidance Committee | Fees 2023 €   | Expenses 2023 € |
|---------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>Number of meetings</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>8</b>                       | <b>4</b>                     | <b>3</b>                         |               |                 |
| Patricia Byron            | 4        |                                | 3                            |                                  | 5,985         | 133             |
| Paul Kelly                | 9        | 8                              | 4                            |                                  | 7,695         | -               |
| Bríd De Buitléar          | 9        |                                | 4                            |                                  | 7,695         |                 |
| Ciarán Roche              | 9        |                                |                              | 3                                | 7,695         | 953             |
| David Hughes              | 7        | 7                              |                              |                                  | 7,695         | 375             |
| Deirdre McDonald          | 9        |                                |                              | 3                                | 7,695         | 3,069           |
| Fiona Kilcullen           | 3        |                                |                              |                                  | -             | -               |
| Frank Kelly               | 7        |                                |                              | 3                                | 7,695         | -               |
| Mary Coyne                | 9        | 8                              |                              |                                  | 7,695         | 2,110           |
| Michelle Quinn            | 7        |                                | 3                            | 2                                | 7,695         | -               |
| Padraig Somers            | 9        |                                |                              | 2                                | 7,695         | 314             |
| Terry O'Niadh             | 4        |                                |                              |                                  | 3,848         | 1,976           |
| Deirdre Cullivan          | 3        | 2                              |                              |                                  | -             | -               |
| Stephen Curran            | 4        |                                | 1                            |                                  | -             | -               |
| Tom Coughlan              | 4        |                                | 1                            |                                  | -             | -               |
|                           |          |                                |                              |                                  | <b>79,088</b> | <b>8,930</b>    |

Stephen Curran and Fiona Kilcullen did not receive Board fees under the One Person One Salary (OPOS) principle as they are Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment officials.

### Key Personnel Changes

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Tom Coughlan, Chair of the Board                           | Last date with the Board was 12 April 2023.                                   |
| Stephen Curran, Board Member                               | Last date with the Board was 12 September 2023.                               |
| Deirdre Cullivan, Board Member and Chair of ARFC Committee | Last date with the Board was 12 March 2023.                                   |
| Patricia Byron, Chair of the Board                         | First day with the Board was 30 June 2023.                                    |
| Terry O'Niadh, Board Member                                | First day with the Board was 30 June 2023.                                    |
| Fiona Kilcullen, Board Member                              | First day with the Board was 25 September 2023.                               |
| Mary Coyne, Board Member                                   | Reappointed to the Board 11 August 2023 and to Chair of ARFC 8 December 2023. |
| Ciarán Roche, Board Member                                 | Reappointed to the Board 11 August 2023.                                      |
| Bríd De Buitléar, Board Member                             | Reappointed to the Board 11 August 2023.                                      |
| Mr. Mark Cullen, Interim Chief Executive Officer           | Term finished 28 May 2023.  |
| Mr. Conor O'Brien  | Appointed Chief Executive Officer with effect from 29 May 2023.               |

### Disclosures Required by the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016)

The Board is responsible for ensuring that the Health and Safety Authority has complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies ("the Code"), as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016.

In 2023, the Chief Executive of the Authority, in the context of his role as a prescribed person under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, received 25 protected disclosures from parties external to the Authority and relating to third parties.

No protected disclosures were received internally from staff of the Authority.

The following disclosures are required by the Code:

### Consultancy Costs

Consultancy costs include the cost of external advice to management and exclude outsourced 'business-as-usual' functions.

|                                 | 2023<br>€        | 2022<br>€      |
|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Legal advice                    | 51,983           | 81,787         |
| Financial/actuarial advice      | 32,973           | 68,836         |
| IT Consultancy                  | 1,015,980        | 196,375        |
| External communications         | 4,305            | 66,981         |
| Occupational health consultancy | 53,375           | 41,623         |
| Strategy development            | 37,659           | -              |
| Human Resources                 | -                | 171,889        |
| <b>Total consultancy costs</b>  | <b>1,196,275</b> | <b>627,491</b> |

### Consultancy costs capitalised

|   |                  |                |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Consultancy costs charged to the Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves | 1,196,275        | 627,491        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>1,196,275</b> | <b>627,491</b> |

### Legal Costs and Settlements

The table below provides a breakdown of amounts recognised as expenditure in the reporting period in relation to legal costs, settlements and conciliation and arbitration proceedings relating to contracts with third parties. This does not include expenditure incurred in relation to general legal advice received by the Health and Safety Authority which is disclosed in Consultancy costs above

|                                       | 2023<br>€     | 2022<br>€     |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Legal fees - legal proceedings        | 61,507        | 60,123        |
| Conciliation and arbitration payments | -             | -             |
| Settlements                           | -             | -             |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>61,507</b> | <b>60,123</b> |

Included in these legal costs is an amount of €0 in relation to on-going matters involving other State agencies.

## Travel and Subsistence Expenditure

Travel and subsistence expenditure is categorised as follows:

|                      | 2023<br>€        | 2022<br>€        |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Domestic</b>      |                  |                  |
| Board                | 8,930            | 8,819            |
| Employees            | 1,275,036        | 965,355          |
| <b>International</b> |                  |                  |
| Board                | -                | 208              |
| Employees            | 114,389          | 49,812           |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>1,398,355</b> | <b>1,024,194</b> |

Includes travel and subsistence of €8,930 paid directly to Board members in 2023 (2022: €8,819). There was €0 international travel and subsistence expenditure paid by the Health and Safety Authority on behalf of the Board members in 2023 (2022: €208).

## Hospitality Expenditure

The Income and Expenditure Account includes the following hospitality expenditure:

|                          | 2023<br>€     | 2022<br>€    |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Staff hospitality        | 9,040         | 5,880        |
| Client/other hospitality | 1,168         | 267          |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>10,208</b> | <b>6,147</b> |

## Statement of Compliance

The Board has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies in 2016 and has put procedures in place to ensure compliance with the Code. The Health and Safety Authority was substantially in compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies for 2023.



# Statement on Internal Control

## Scope of responsibility

On behalf of the Board of the Health and Safety Authority, I acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal control is maintained and operated. This responsibility takes account of the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

## Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system can only provide reasonable, and not absolute, assurance that the assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities either are prevented or would be detected in a timely period. The system of internal control, which accords with guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has been in place in the Health and Safety Authority for the year ended 31 December 2023 and up to the date of approval of the financial statements.

The Authority has taken steps to ensure an appropriate control environment by:

- ▶ Clearly defining management responsibilities and powers;
- ▶ Establishing formal procedures for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action;
- ▶ Establishing a process to safeguard the assets of the Authority; and
- ▶ Developing a culture of accountability across all levels of the organisation.

## Capacity to Handle Risk

The Authority has established processes to identify and evaluate business risks by:

- ▶ Identifying the nature, extent and financial implications of risks facing the Authority including the extent and categories which it regards as acceptable;
- ▶ Assessing the likelihood of identified risks occurring;
- ▶ Assessing the Authority's ability to manage and mitigate the risks that do occur;
- ▶ Assessing the costs of operating particular controls relative to the benefit obtained; and
- ▶ Working closely with Government and various agencies to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the Authority's goals and support for the strategies to achieve those goals.

## Risk and Control Framework

The system of internal control is based on a framework of regular management information, administration procedures including segregation of duties, and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular, it includes:

- ▶ A comprehensive budgeting system with an annual budget, which is reviewed and agreed by the Board;
- ▶ Regular reviews by the Board of periodic and annual reports, which indicate financial performance against forecasts;
- ▶ Setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- ▶ Clearly defined purchasing and approval guidelines; and
- ▶ Formal project management disciplines.

An active Audit, Risk and Finance Committee, which met eight times during the year, work closely with the Board on areas of risk that may impact on the Authority. The Board sets out the risk appetite for the Authority, ensures risk management processes are in place and details the roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to risk. A risk register, which identifies key risks of the Authority, evaluates the risks and ranks the risks in accordance with the likelihood and consequences for the Authority using an agreed scoring matrix. The Audit and Risk Committee and Board review the Risk Register at each meeting.

We can confirm that a control environment is in place for the following areas:

- ▶ Procedures for all key business processes have been documented;
- ▶ Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability;
- ▶ There is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management;
- ▶ There are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems, to safeguard the assets.

The Authority has put in place an internal audit function, which operates in accordance with the principles set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies published in September 2016. A firm of independent internal auditors assist the Authority in implementing the internal audit plan approved by the Board. The work of internal audit is informed by analysis of the risk to which the Authority is exposed, and annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. The analysis of risk and the internal audit plans are endorsed by the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee and approved by the Board of the Authority. At least annually, the Internal Auditor will provide the Authority with a report of internal audit activity. The report includes the Internal Auditor's opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal control.

The Authority's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditor, the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee which oversees the work of the internal auditor, the Executive within the Authority who has the responsibility for the development and maintenance of the financial control framework, and comments made by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General in management letters or other reports.

## Procurement

I confirm that the Health and Safety Authority has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines and that during 2023 the Health and Safety Authority substantially complied with those procedures.

## Review of Effectiveness

The Statement on the system of Internal Control was reviewed by the Board on 05 March 2024 to ensure it accurately reflects the control system in operation during the reporting period.

To inform its review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control the Board considered annual reports from the Executive on risk management and safety management processes along with a suite of financial reports, and an annual report of compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. These reports were considered alongside an annual report of the Audit, Risk and Finance Committee and regular reports from the Internal Auditor. A review of internal financial controls will be undertaken by the Internal Auditors in early 2024.

I confirm that the Board conducted an annual review of the effectiveness of internal controls in 2023. The Authority is reasonably assured that the systems of internal controls instituted and implemented in the Health and Safety Authority for the financial year end 31 December 2023 and up to the date of approval of the financial statements are effective.

## Internal Control Issues

No weaknesses in internal control were identified in relation to 2023.

# Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves

for the year ended 31 December 2023

|   | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023<br>€ | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022<br>€ |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Income</b>   |  |  |
| Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment - Oireachtas Grant | 27,999,054                             | 23,840,928                             |
| Accreditation Income  | 3,371,175                              | 3,343,688                              |
| COMAH Income  | 185,350                                | 130,500                                |
| Other Income  | 501,472                                | 416,788                                |
| Deferred retirement benefit funding                               | 5,830,304                              | 5,392,865                              |
|   | <hr/> 37,887,355                       | <hr/> 33,124,769                       |
| <b>Expenditure</b>  |  |  |
| Salaries Costs  | 17,424,892                             | 15,050,621                             |
| Retirement Benefit Costs  | 7,014,054                              | 6,894,928                              |
| Operational Expenses  | 13,047,535                             | 11,104,833                             |
|   | <hr/> 37,486,481                       | <hr/> 33,050,382                       |
| Surplus/(Deficit) before appropriations                           | <b>400,874</b>                         | <b>74,387</b>                          |
| Transfer (to)/from Capital Account                                | (873,899)                              | (481,213)                              |
| Surplus/(Deficit) after appropriations                            | <hr/> (473,025)                        | <hr/> (406,826)                        |
| Balance Brought Forward at 1 January                              | 1,618,161                              | 2,024,987                              |
| <b>Balance Carried Forward at 31 December</b>                     | <hr/> <b>1,145,136</b>                 | <hr/> <b>1,618,161</b>                 |

# Statement of Comprehensive Income

## for the year ended 31 December 2023

|  | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023<br>€ | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022<br>€ |
|--|--|--|
| (Deficit)/Surplus for the year   | (473,025)                              | (406,826)                              |
| Experience gain/loss on retirement benefit obligations                               | -                                      | 8,826,000                              |
| Change in assumptions underlying the present value of retirement benefit obligations | -                                      | (55,521,000)                           |
| Actuarial (gains)/losses in the year   | -                                      | (46,695,000)                           |
| Adjustment to deferred retirement benefit funding                                    | -                                      | 46,695,000                             |
| <b>Total (Deficit)/Surplus for the year</b>  | <b>(473,025)</b>                       | <b>(406,826)</b>                       |

# Statement of Financial Position

for the year ended 31 December 2023

|   | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023<br>€ | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022<br>€ |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Fixed Assets</b>   |  |  |
| Property, plant & equipment   | 2,233,470                              | 1,359,570                              |
| <b>Current Assets</b>   |  |  |
| Receivables   | 1,331,389                              | 1,115,932                              |
| Cash and cash equivalents   | 1,606,684                              | 1,537,981                              |
|   | 2,938,073                              | 2,653,913                              |
| <b>Current Liabilities (amounts due within one year)</b>                |  |  |
| Payables  | (1,792,937)                            | (1,035,752)                            |
| Net Current Assets  | 1,145,136                              | 1,618,161                              |
| <b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities before Retirement Benefits</b> |  |  |
|   | <b>3,378,606</b>                       | <b>2,977,731</b>                       |
| Deferred retirement benefit funding asset                               | 118,875,126                            | 113,044,882                            |
| Retirement benefit obligation   | (118,875,126)                          | (113,044,822)                          |
| <b>Total Net Assets</b>   | <b>3,378,606</b>                       | <b>2,977,731</b>                       |
| <b>Representing</b>   |  |  |
| Retained revenue reserves   | 1,145,136                              | 1,618,161                              |
| Capital account   | 2,233,470                              | 1,359,570                              |
|   | <b>3,378,606</b>                       | <b>2,977,731</b>                       |



# Statement of Cash Flows

## for the year ended 31 December 2023

|  | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023<br>€ | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022<br>€ |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>      |  |  |
| Operating surplus/(deficit) for year                 | (473,025)                              | (406,826)                              |
| Depreciation   | 376,415                                | 266,123                                |
| Transfer (from)/to Capital reserve                   | 873,899                                | 481,213                                |
| (Decrease)/Increase in payables                      | 757,185                                | 235,700                                |
| (Increase)/Decrease in receivables                   | (215,457)                              | (109,067)                              |
| <b>Net cash inflow from operating activities</b>     | <b>1,319,017</b>                       | <b>467,143</b>                         |
| <b>Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>          |  |  |
| Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities             | 1,319,017                              | 467,143                                |
| Payments to acquire property, plant and equipment    | (1,250,314)                            | (747,336)                              |
| <b>Net Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>     | <b>68,703</b>                          | <b>(280,193)</b>                       |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents at 31 December 2022        | 1,537,981                              | 1,818,174                              |
| <b>Cash and Cash Equivalents at 31 December 2023</b> | <b>1,606,684</b>                       | <b>1,537,981</b>                       |

# Extracts from the Notes

## (forming part of the financial statements)

### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The basis of accounting and significant accounting policies adopted by the Health and Safety Authority are set out below. They have been applied consistently throughout the year and preceding year.

#### a) General Information

The Health and Safety Authority was established under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989 (this Act was replaced by the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005). Additional functions have been conferred on the Authority since then under the Chemicals Acts 2008 and 2010, and other legislation. The Authority's Head Office is at The Metropolitan Building, James Joyce Street, Dublin 1 D01 K0Y8.

The Authority's primary objectives are set out in Section 34 of the 2005 Act. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) has overall responsibility for the administration and enforcement of health and safety at work in Ireland. The Authority monitors compliance with legislation at the workplace and can take enforcement action (up to and including prosecutions). The Authority is the national centre for information and advice to employers, employees and self-employed on all aspects of workplace health and safety. The Authority also promotes education, training and research in the field of health and safety. There are a wide range of activities that fall under the Authority's remit including:

- ▶ To regulate the safety, health and welfare of people at work and those affected by work activities.
- ▶ To promote improvement in the safety, health and welfare of people at work and those affected by work activities.
- ▶ To regulate and promote the safe manufacture, use, placing on the market, trade, supply, storage and transport of chemicals.
- ▶ To act as a surveillance authority in relation to relevant single European market legislation.
- ▶ To act as the national accreditation body for Ireland..

The Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) is the national body with responsibility for accreditation in accordance with the relevant International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) 17000 series of standards. It is Ireland's national body within a European network of accreditation bodies. INAB assesses certification bodies, laboratories and inspection bodies for conformity against internationally harmonised standards providing assurance that these bodies demonstrate competence and performance capability in carrying out their work.

INAB was established as a Committee of Forfás under Section 10 of the Industrial Development Act, 1993 as amended by Section 46 of the Industrial Development (Enterprise Ireland) Act, 1998.

Under the Industrial Development (Forfás Dissolution) Act 2014 INAB was transferred as a Committee of the Health and Safety Authority, with the transfer of all INAB functions and staff to the Authority.

The Authority is the body legally responsible for accreditation. This responsibility is delegated to the Committee (referred to in the 2014 legislation as the Accreditation Board). The Accreditation Board members are appointed by the Board of the Authority and the staff assigned to INAB to carry out day to day functions, are employees of the Authority.

The Authority is a Public Benefit Entity (PBE).

#### b) Statement of Compliance

The financial statements of the Health and Safety Authority for the year ended 31 December 2023 have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), as promulgated by Chartered Accountants Ireland.

# Extracts from the Notes

(forming part of the financial statements) *continued*

## c) Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities that are measured at fair values as explained in the accounting policies below. The financial statements are in the form approved by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment with the concurrence of the Minister for Public expenditure and Reform under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the Authority's financial statements.

## d) Revenue

### Oireachtas Grants

Revenue is generally recognised on an accruals basis; one exception to this is in the case of Oireachtas Grants, which are recognised on a cash receipts basis. Oireachtas grants shown in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves Account reflect the amounts received from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) in respect of the year.

### INAB Income

Income for the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) represents income invoiced during the year.

### COMAH Income

Income from recoverable costs invoiced during the year for performing inspections and investigations under the Chemicals Act Regulations 2015.

### Other Income

All other income is recorded in the period to which it relates within the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves.

## e) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation, adjusted for any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided on all property, plant and equipment, at rates estimated to write off the cost less the estimated residual value of each asset on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

|                              |        |               |
|------------------------------|--------|---------------|
| Office furniture & equipment | 20%    | Straight Line |
| Computer equipment           | 33.33% | Straight Line |
| Scientific equipment         | 20%    | Straight Line |
| Fixtures and fittings        | 10%    | Straight Line |
| Software Development         | 10%    | Straight Line |

The Authority operates a capitalisation threshold policy of €1,000.

Residual value represents the estimated amount which would currently be obtained from disposal of an asset, after deducting estimated costs of disposal, if the asset were already of an age and in the condition expected at the end of its useful life.

If there is objective evidence of impairment of the value of an asset, an impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves in the year.

# Extracts from the Notes

(forming part of the financial statements) *continued*

## f) Capital Account

The Capital Account comprise the unamortised value of capital grants used to fund fixed assets

## g) Foreign Currencies

Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the exchange rates ruling at the Statement of Financial Position date. Revenues and costs are translated at the exchange rates ruling at the dates of the underlying transactions.

Profits and losses arising from foreign currency translations and on settlement of amounts receivable and payable are dealt with in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Reserves Account.

## h) Receivables

Receivables are recognised at fair value, less a provision for doubtful debts. The provision for doubtful debts is a specific provision and is established when there is objective evidence that the Health and Safety Authority will not be able to collect all amounts owed to it. All movements in the provision for doubtful debts are recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves.

## i) Operating Leases

Rental expenditure under operating leases is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves over the life of the lease. Expenditure is recognised on a straight-line basis over the lease period, except where there are rental increases linked to the expected rate of inflation, in which case these increases are recognised when incurred. Any lease incentives received are recognised over the life of the lease.

## j) Employee Benefits

### Short-term Benefits

Short-term benefits such as holiday pay are recognised as an expense in the year, and benefits that are accrued at year-end are included in the Payables figure in the Statement of Financial Position.

### Retirement Benefits

The Health and Safety Authority previously established its own defined benefit pension scheme, funded annually on a pay-as-you-go basis from monies provided by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) and from contributions deducted from staff and members' salaries. The Authority also operates the Single Public Services Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"), which is a career-average defined benefit scheme for pensionable public servants appointed on or after 1 January 2013. Single Scheme members' contributions are paid over to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER).

Pension costs reflect pension benefits earned by employees and are shown net of staff pension contributions which are remitted to the DETE and DPER. An amount corresponding to the pension charge is recognised as income to the extent that it is recoverable and offset by grants received in the year to discharge pension payments.

Actuarial gains or losses arising on scheme liabilities are reflected in the Statement of Comprehensive Income, and a corresponding adjustment is recognised in the amount recoverable from the DETE.

The financial statements reflect, at fair value, the assets and liabilities arising from the Authority's pension obligations and any related funding and recognises the costs of providing pension benefits in the accounting periods in which they are earned by employees. Retirement benefit scheme liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method.

## k) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Authority has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events; it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation; and the amount of the obligation can be estimated reliably.

# Extracts from the Notes

(forming part of the financial statements) *continued*

## l) Contingencies

Contingent liabilities arising as a result of past events, are not recognised when (i) it is not probable that there will be an outflow of resources or that the amount cannot be reliably measured at the reporting date or (ii) when the existence will be confirmed by the occurrence or non-occurrence of uncertain future events not wholly within the Authority's control. Contingent liabilities are disclosed in the financial statements unless the probability of an outflow is remote.

Contingent assets are not recognised. Contingent assets are disclosed in the financial statements when an inflow of economic benefits is probable.

## m) Critical Accounting Judgements and Estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities as at the reporting date and the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year. However, the nature of estimation means that actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. The following judgements have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

### Impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment

Impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment

Assets that are subject to amortisation are reviewed for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less cost to sell and value in use. For the purpose of assessing impairment, assets are grouped at the lowest levels for which there are separately identifiable cash flows (cash generating units). Non-financial assets that suffered impairment are reviewed for possible reversal of the impairment at each reporting date.

### Depreciation and Residual Values

The Directors have reviewed the asset lives and associated residual values of all fixed asset classes, and in particular, the useful economic life and residual values of fixtures and fittings and have concluded that asset lives and residual values are appropriate.

### Provisions

The Health and Safety Authority makes provisions for legal and constructive obligations, which it knows to be outstanding at the period end date. These provisions are generally made based on historical or other pertinent information, adjusted for recent trends where relevant. However, they are estimates of the financial costs of events that may not occur for some years. As a result of this and the level of uncertainty attaching to the final outcomes, the actual out-turn may differ significantly from that estimated.

### Retirement Benefit Obligation

The assumptions underlying the actuarial valuations for which the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determined (including discount rates, rates of increase in future compensation levels, mortality rates and healthcare cost trend rates) are updated annually based on current economic conditions, and for any relevant changes to the terms and conditions of the pension and post-retirement plans.

The assumptions can be affected by:

- (i) the discount rate, changes in the rate of return on high-quality corporate bonds
- (ii) future compensation levels, future labour market conditions
- (iii) health care cost trend rates, the rate of medical cost inflation in the relevant regions



# Extracts from the Notes

(forming part of the financial statements) *continued*

## 2. OIREACHTAS GRANTS

|  | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023<br>€ | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022<br>€ |
|--|--|--|
| D/ETE - Vote 32 - Subhead C5                     | 28,909,000                             | 24,671,000                             |
| Employee Pension Contributions remitted to D/ETE | (646,408)                              | (626,399)                              |
| Single Scheme Contributions remitted to D/PER    | (263,538)                              | (131,700)                              |
|  | <b>27,999,054</b>                      | <b>23,840,928</b>                      |

Following discussions with the Department a new arrangement was put in place effective from 1st January 2021 whereby the Authority now receives additional funding as a discrete line item in our Exchequer Grant allocation each year in respect of lump sum payments and remits all the employee superannuation contributions to the Department each month.

## 3. ACCREDITATION INCOME

|                      | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023<br>€ | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022<br>€ |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Accreditation income | 3,371,175                              | 3,343,688                              |

Following the dissolution of Forfás in 2014, the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) transferred to the Health and Safety Authority. INAB is responsible for accreditation activities and invoice clients for work undertaken. .

## 4. COMAH INCOME

|              | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023<br>€ | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022<br>€ |
|--------------|--|--|
| COMAH income | 185,350                                | 130,500                                |

In 2016 the Authority introduced a fee schedule for various inspection and investigation activities under the Chemicals Act (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2015.

# Extracts from the Notes

(forming part of the financial statements) *continued*

## 5. OTHER INCOME

|  | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023<br>€ | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022<br>€ |
|--|--|--|
| Driver Training Course Income                                    | 50,000                                 | 50,000                                 |
| ADR Fines <sup>1</sup>   | 4,850                                  | 9,300                                  |
| ECHA Income <sup>e2</sup>  | 11,137                                 | 10,930                                 |
| Miscellaneous (Seminars, Legal, Witness Expenses, EU Commission) | 103,964                                | 85,587                                 |
| Farm Safety Income <sup>3</sup>                                  | 331,521                                | 260,971                                |
|  | <b>501,472</b>                         | <b>416,788</b>                         |

- 1 ADR fines income relates to fines issued by inspectors for the breaching of legislation in relation to the carrying of dangerous goods.
- 2 ECHA Income relates to the engagement of the Authority's inspectors to carry out work for the European Chemicals Agency.
- 3 Funds received from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in respect of farm safety activities.

## 6. SALARY COSTS

|                           | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023<br>€ | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022<br>€ |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Staff short-term benefits | 15,885,478                             | 13,707,447                             |
| Employer PRSI             | 1,539,414                              | 1,343,174                              |
| <b>Total Salary Costs</b> | <b>17,424,892</b>                      | <b>15,050,621</b>                      |

### Staff Short-Term Benefits

|                          |                   |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Basic Pay                | 15,810,091        | 13,619,753        |
| Overtime                 | 31,078            | 29,760            |
| Allowances               | 44,309            | 57,934            |
| Other compensation costs | -                 | -                 |
|                          | <b>15,885,478</b> | <b>13,707,447</b> |

The Authority can confirm that there was no termination payment paid during the year 2023.

# Extracts from the Notes

(forming part of the financial statements) *continued*

## 6. SALARY COSTS *(continued)*

### Staff Numbers

|   | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023 | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022 |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Actual Staffing Levels at year end – Professional/technical | 156.3                             | 141.1                             |
| Actual Staffing Levels at year end – Administration         | 99.6                              | 87.2                              |
|   | <b>255.9</b>                      | <b>228.3</b>                      |

€597,539 (2022: €541,639) of pension levy has been deducted from staff and paid over to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

|  | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2023<br>€ | Year Ended<br>31 December<br>2022<br>€ |
|--|--|--|
|--|--|--|

### CEO and Interim CEO Remuneration

|                                    |        |         |
|------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| CEO Remuneration Gross Pay         | 93,619 | 143,846 |
| Interim CEO Remuneration Gross Pay | 73,193 | 18,846  |

### CEO and Interim CEO Travel & Subsistence

|                          |       |       |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|
| CEO Travel Costs         | 1,549 | 2,863 |
| Interim CEO Travel Costs | 4,219 | 1,242 |

The CEO received a salary of €93,619 and expenses to the value of €1,549 in 2023.

The Interim CEO received a salary of €73,193 and expenses to the value of €4,219 in 2023.

The CEO and the Interim CEO did not receive any bonus or perquisites in the year.

The CEO and the Interim CEO retirement benefit entitlements are in line with standard entitlements in the model public sector defined benefit superannuation scheme.

### Employee Benefits Breakdown

| Range of total employee benefits<br>From To | Number of Employees |            |
|---|---------------------|------------|
|   | 2023                | 2022       |
| €60,000 - €69,999                           | 40                  | 34         |
| €70,000 - €79,999                           | 37                  | 37         |
| €80,000 - €89,999                           | 26                  | 22         |
| €90,000 - €99,999                           | 17                  | 16         |
| €100,000 - €109,999                         | 5                   | 3          |
| €110,000 - €119,999                         | 3                   | 4          |
| €120,000 - €149,999                         | 5                   | 4          |
| <b>Total</b>                                | <b>133</b>          | <b>120</b> |

Note: For the purposes of this disclosure, short-term employee benefits in relation to services rendered during the reporting period include salary, overtime allowances and other payments made on behalf of the employee but exclude employer's PRSI.

# Extracts from the Notes

(forming part of the financial statements) *continued*

## 7. MEMBERS' FEES AND EXPENSES

| Board Member                    | 2023          | 2023         | 2022          | 2022         |
|---------------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
|                                 | Fees          | Expenses     | Fees          | Expenses     |
|                                 | €             | €            | €             | €            |
| Patricia Byron (Chairperson)    | 5,985         | 133          | -             | -            |
| Paul Kelly (Deputy Chairperson) | 7,695         | -            | 7,695         | -            |
| Bríd De Buitléar                | 7,695         | -            | 7,695         | -            |
| Ciarán Roche                    | 7,695         | 953          | 7,695         | 1,063        |
| David Hughes                    | 7,695         | 375          | 7,695         | 509          |
| Deirdre McDonald                | 7,695         | 3,069        | 7,695         | 1,265        |
| Fiona Kilcullen                 | -             | -            | -             | -            |
| Frank Kelly                     | 7,695         | -            | 7,695         | -            |
| Mary Coyne                      | 7,695         | 2,110        | 7,695         | 2,066        |
| Michelle Quinn                  | 7,695         | -            | 7,695         | -            |
| Padraig Somers                  | 7,695         | 314          | -             | -            |
| Terry O'Niadh                   | 3,848         | 1,976        | -             | -            |
| Andrew Bowers                   | -             | -            | 7,695         | 187          |
| Deirdre Cullivan                | -             | -            | 7,695         | 534          |
| Stephen Curran                  | -             | -            | -             | 182          |
| Tom Coughlan                    | -             | -            | 11,970        | 3,221        |
|                                 | <b>79,088</b> | <b>8,930</b> | <b>88,920</b> | <b>9,027</b> |

# Extracts from the Notes

(forming part of the financial statements) *continued*

## 8. OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

|   | Total<br>2023<br>€ | Total<br>2022<br>€ |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Accommodation                           | 2,035,236          | 1,634,711          |
| Communications costs                    | 243,884            | 255,202            |
| Travel & subsistence – national         | 1,283,966          | 974,174            |
| Travel & subsistence – international    | 114,389            | 50,020             |
| Publications & marketing                | 1,147,896          | 1,417,580          |
| Legal services                          | 113,490            | 141,910            |
| Research                                | 1,531              | 16,346             |
| Financial services                      | 558,315            | 550,221            |
| Pensions and human resources            | 43,787             | 31,480             |
| Other consultancy                       | 958,747            | 1,088,108          |
| Accreditation – external assessor costs | 1,260,939          | 1,022,001          |
| Business process review                 | 1,319,773          | 854,621            |
| Staffing costs                          | 816,489            | 1,055,829          |
| General equipment supplies              | 195,232            | 329,098            |
| Investment in learning                  | 407,734            | 254,960            |
| Technology costs                        | 1,821,746          | 784,603            |
| Depreciation                            | 376,415            | 266,123            |
| Internal audit fees                     | 31,953             | 35,243             |
| External audit fees                     | 21,200             | 21,200             |
| Members' fees                           | 84,381             | 120,688            |
| Other                                   | 210,432            | 200,715            |
| Bad Debts                               | -                  | -                  |
|   | <b>13,047,535</b>  | <b>11,104,833</b>  |

Included in operational expenses is a charge of €22,537 (2022: €6,147) in respect of amounts paid by the Authority for staff/other hospitality.

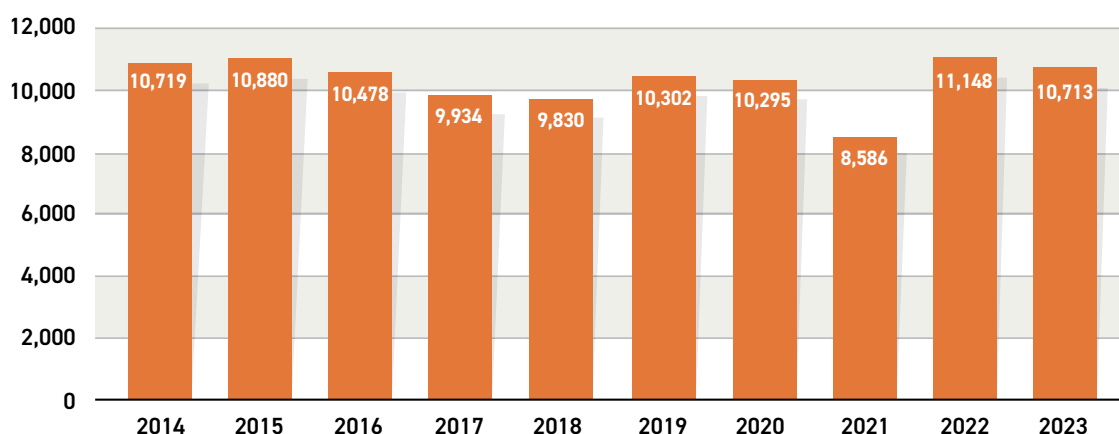




## Appendix 2:

# Inspections, Investigations and Prosecutions

**Table 2.1** Number of workplace inspections and investigations 2014-2023



**Table 2.2** Workplace inspections and investigations by economic sector and enforcement action 2023

| Economic sector  | Inspections and investigations | Improvement notice or direction | Prohibition notice | Written advice |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Agriculture, forestry and fishing                                    | 1,388                          | 78                              | 24                 | 631            |
| Mining and quarrying   | 320                            | 36                              | 39                 | 236            |
| Manufacturing  | 1,515                          | 59                              | 26                 | 1,151          |
| Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities  | 362                            | 16                              | 19                 | 252            |
| Construction   | 2,119                          | 37                              | 144                | 1,407          |
| Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles | 1,204                          | 62                              | 11                 | 874            |
| Transportation and storage   | 578                            | 18                              | 6                  | 431            |
| Accommodation and food service activities                            | 624                            | 23                              | 4                  | 497            |
| Administrative and support service activities                        | 664                            | 15                              | 9                  | 421            |
| Human health and social work activities                              | 622                            | 28                              | 1                  | 470            |
| Other sectors  | 1,317                          | 32                              | 7                  | 1,003          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>10,713</b>                  | <b>404</b>                      | <b>290</b>         | <b>7,373</b>   |

**Table 2.3** OSH and chemical investigation programme 2023

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Investigation of accidents/dangerous occurrences | 225        |
| Other  | 30         |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>255</b> |

**Table 2.4** Outcome of prosecutions completed in 2023

| Type of proceedings | Total heard | Dismissal | Under appeal | Suspended sentence | Custodial sentence | Community service | Probation Act | Compensation Order | Fines            |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------|
| On indictment       | 15          | 1         | 0            | 1                  | 1                  | 0                 | 0             | 0                  | 1,371,500        |
| Summarily           | 4           | 0         | 0            | 0                  | 0                  | 0                 | 0             | 0                  | 6,000            |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>19</b>   | <b>1</b>  | <b>0</b>     | <b>1</b>           | <b>1</b>           | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>      | <b>0</b>           | <b>1,377,500</b> |

**Table 2.5** Details of prosecutions completed in 2023 (excluding dismissed cases)

## Summary Prosecutions

### Airside Scaffolding Contractors Limited

On 22 May 2023, this case was heard in Court 8 (Four Courts) Dublin District Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to one count. On 12 October 2021 at a house under construction at Killeen, Oldtown, Co Dublin, the Accused, being an employer, failed to provide a system of work in relation to the scaffolding of the house under construction that was planned, organised, performed, maintained and revised as appropriate so as to be, so far as was reasonably practicable, safe and without risk to health.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION                                 | VERDICT     | FINE |
|---|---|-------------|------|
| Section 8(1) and 8(2)(e) contrary to Section 77(2)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty plea | €500 |



**Prosecution of an Individual**

On 26 June 2023, this case was heard in Court 8 (Four Courts) Dublin District Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to one count. On dates between April 2021 and 12 October 2021 at a house under construction in Co Dublin, the Accused, being a client within the meaning of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013, failed to appoint in writing at or before the start of the design process a competent project supervisor for the design process for the carrying out of construction works.

| CONTRAVENTION                                   | LEGISLATION   | VERDICT     | FINE |
|---|---|-------------|------|
| Regulation 6(1)(a) contrary to Section 77(2)(c) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013<br>Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty plea | €500 |

**F & M Hurley Plant Hire (Schull) Limited**

On 6 October 2023, this case was heard in Kenmare District Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to four counts. On 11 July 2022 at a quarry at Caher West, Kenmare, Co Kerry, the Accused, being an employer, failed to provide a system of work for filling, refilling, transporting and unloading an IBC tank as part of the task for washing vehicles that was planned, organised, performed, maintained and revised as appropriate and as a consequence an employee suffered personal injury. The Accused also failed to carry out a risk assessment before employing a child or young person and failed to identify hazards in the place of work associated with the task of washing vehicles and be in possession of a written risk assessment of the said risks. In addition, the Accused, a quarry owner, did fail to appoint a competent person who had sufficient resources to be the operator of the quarry and did fail to make a record of the appointment.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION  | VERDICT     | FINE                     |
|---|--|-------------|--------------------------|
| Section 8(1) and 8(2)(e) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  | Guilty plea | €2,000                   |
| Regulation 6(1) contrary to Section 77(2)(c)          | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarries) Regulations 2008<br>Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005            | Guilty plea | €2,000                   |
| Regulation 144(a) contrary to Section 77(2)(c)        | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007<br>Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty plea | Taken into consideration |
| Section 19(1) contrary to Section 77(2)(a)            | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  | Guilty plea | Taken into consideration |

### ICCM Masonry Limited

On 20 March 2023, this case was heard in Bandon District Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to one count. On dates between 20 March 2021 and 21 March 2021 at Tullymurryhy, Ballinsacarty, Co Cork, the Accused, being an employer, failed to ensure that, in the course of work being carried on, individuals at the place of work, not being its employees, were not exposed to risks to their safety, health and welfare, in that there was no adequate system of work in place in respect of carrying out the blockwork. The Accused failed as a contractor using scaffold to provide safe access to the first-floor Ducon slab by not requesting a heightened scaffolding and ensuring same was installed before any blockwork on the upper floor level took place; failed to ensure the scaffold was maintained in a condition that was safe with all ledgers and uprights in place; failed to ensure that there was adequate edge protection to prevent a person falling a distance out the long window open between the first-floor Ducon slab and the scaffold deck; and failed to ensure that the trestles which were used to lay blocks from the first-floor Ducon slab to wall plate and finished gable height level had edge protection.

| CONTRAVENTION                   | LEGISLATION                                 | VERDICT     | FINE   |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------|--------|
| Section 12 contrary to 77(2)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty plea | €1,000 |

## Prosecutions on indictment

### Inisfallen Inns Limited

On 20 February 2023, this case was heard in Tralee Circuit Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to two charges. On 25 July 2017 at a premises known as 'Mustang Sally's', Inisfallen Mall, Killarney, Co Kerry, the Accused, being an employer, failed to manage and conduct work activities, specifically the operation of a goods lift at the said premises, in such a way as to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of its employees, in that it permitted an employee to operate the said lift by way of reaching into an uncovered electrical panel and activating electrical contactors within the said panel, exposing the said employee to a risk of electrical shock and/or electrocution, and in addition, did fail to ensure that the doors located on the ground floor and the second floor of the premises were fitted with an efficient interlocking or other device to ensure that each of the said doors could not be opened except when the carrier was at the landing, and that the carrier could not be moved away from the landing until each of the doors were closed.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION  | VERDICT     | FINE                     |
|---|--|-------------|--------------------------|
| Section 8(1) and 8(2)(a) contrary to Section 77(2)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  | Guilty plea | Taken into consideration |
| Regulation 46(2)(b) contrary to Section 77(2)(c)      | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007<br>Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty plea | €50,000                  |

**GP Wood Limited** On 24 February 2023, this case was finalised at Cork Circuit Criminal Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to three charges. On 26 February 2019 at a sawmill premises at Main Street Enniskeane, Co Cork, the Accused, being an employer, failed to manage and conduct work activities, specifically the operation of a CAT938M front-loader vehicle, at or near the log storage yard area of the said premises, in such a way as to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of its employees, specifically that the Accused failed to ensure the segregation of pedestrians from the operational area of the said vehicle, failed to have a system of work regarding the operation of a CAT938M front-loader vehicle that was planned, organised, performed, maintained and revised as appropriate, and did fail to ensure that operational measures were taken to prevent employees on foot coming within the area of operation of the said work equipment.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION  | VERDICT     | FINE                     |
|---|--|-------------|--------------------------|
| Section 8(1) and Section 8(2)(a) contrary to Section 77(2)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  | Guilty plea | €90,000                  |
| Section 8(1) and 8(2)(e) contrary to Section 77(2)(a)         | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  | Guilty plea | Taken into consideration |
| Regulation 41(b) contrary to Section 77(2)(c)                 | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007<br>Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty plea | Taken into consideration |

**Swissport  
Ireland Limited**

On 9 March 2023, this case was heard in Dublin Circuit Criminal Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to two charges. On 24 November 2018 at Stand 111C, Pier 1, Terminal 1, Dublin Airport, Co Dublin, the Accused, being an employer, did fail to manage and conduct work activities in such a way as to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of its employees, specifically cargo offloading operations in respect of an Air France Boeing 777-F28 cargo aircraft, and as a consequence an employee fell from the main deck cargo doorway of the said aircraft, suffered personal injuries and died.

The Accused also failed to provide a system of work in relation to cargo offloading operations in respect of the said aircraft, that was planned, organised, performed, maintained and revised as appropriate, so as to be safe and without risk to health when carrying out cargo offloading.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION                                 | VERDICT     | FINE                     |
|---|---|-------------|--------------------------|
| Section 8(1) and Section 8(2)(a) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty plea | €250,000                 |
| Section 8(1) and Section 8(2)(e) contrary to Section 77(2)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty plea | Taken into consideration |



**Digby Bridge  
Sand and Gravel  
Company Limited  
t/a Dolly Skip  
Hire**

On 24 April 2023, this case was heard in Naas Circuit Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to one charge. On 27 November 2017 at a premises at Osberstown Business Park, Carragh Road, Naas, Co Kildare, the Accused, being an employer, failed to manage and conduct the operation of a construction and demolition processing plant in the place of work in such a way as to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of its employees, and as a consequence an employee suffered personal injury.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION                                 | VERDICT     | FINE    |
|---|---|-------------|---------|
| Section 8(1) and Section 8(2)(a) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty plea | €55,000 |

**Prosecution of an  
Individual**

On 23 May 2023, this case was heard in Wicklow Circuit Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to one charge. On 8 December 2016 at or near South Beach car park, Greystones, Co Wicklow, the Accused, being an employee while engaged in work, failed to make proper use of a Neuson 9001 9t site dumper, being work equipment supplied, in that the Accused operated and drove the said dumper while carrying two passengers when the dumper was not designed to carry passengers, and in so doing failed to take reasonable care to protect the safety, health and welfare of other persons who may be affected by the said acts or omissions at work.

| CONTRAVENTION                                  | LEGISLATION                                 | VERDICT     | FINE   |
|--|---|-------------|--|
| Section 13(1)(a), contrary to Section 77(2)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty plea | Nine months' imprisonment suspended in its entirety for a period of three months |

**Prosecution of an  
Individual**

On 19 June 2023, this case was heard in Cork Circuit Criminal Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to one charge. On 22 January 2020 at a farm premises in Co Cork, the Accused failed to ensure that the non-domestic place of work that was made available as a place of work to a person other than an employee of the Accused was safe and without risk to health, and in particular access to and egress from the interior of a Thorpe steel grain trailer was gained through the tailgate, which was propped open by wooden props which were unstable, causing the said tailgate to collapse, and as a consequence a person suffered personal injuries and died.

| CONTRAVENTION                              | LEGISLATION                                 | VERDICT     | PENALTY |
|--|---|-------------|---------|
| Section 15(3) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | €3,000  |

### Ove Arup & Partners Ireland Limited

On 26 June 2023, this case was heard in Dublin Circuit Criminal Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to two charges. On 23 September 2019 at 50 Ringsend Road, Dublin 4, the Accused failed to ensure that in the course of the work being carried on, individuals at the place of work (not being its employees) were not exposed to risks to their safety, health and welfare, and in particular the control measures put in place in respect of a hazard of a fragile surface on the floor of the plantroom at the said premises to stop persons accessing the fragile surface were inappropriate and unsafe, and as a consequence a person suffered personal injury and died.

In addition, the Accused failed to ensure the design, provision and maintenance of the place of work in a condition that was safe and without risk to health.

| CONTRAVENTION                                   | LEGISLATION                                 | VERDICT     | FINE                     |
|---|---|-------------|--------------------------|
| Section 12 contrary to Section 77(9)(a)         | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | €750,000                 |
| Section 8(2)(c)(i) contrary to Section 77(2)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | Taken into consideration |

### Prosecution of an Individual

On 6 July 2023, this case was heard in Clonmel Circuit Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to five charges. On 26 June 2016 at a farm holding in Co Tipperary, the Accused, being an employer, failed to manage and conduct work activities in such a way as to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of his employees in that an employee was carrying out work duties in a vehicle provided to him, a Merlo Teleporter which did not have a serviceable device for braking and stopping the vehicle, and as a consequence one employee suffered personal injuries and another employee suffered personal injuries and died.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION  | VERDICT     | FINE                     |
|---|--|-------------|--------------------------|
| Section 8(1) and Section 8(2)(a) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  | Guilty Plea | 12 months' imprisonment* |
| Section 8(1) and Section 8(2)(a) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  | Guilty Plea | 12 months' imprisonment* |
| Section 8(2)(g) contrary to Section 77(2)(a)                  | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  | Guilty Plea | Taken into consideration |
| Regulation 31(c) contrary to Section 77(2)(c)                 | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007<br>Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | Taken into consideration |
| Regulation 40(b)(iii) contrary to Section 77(2)(c)            | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007<br>Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | Taken into consideration |

\*(to run concurrently, with a total sentence of 12 months)

**Gleeson  
Concrete**

On 7 July 2023, this case was heard in Waterford Circuit Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to one charge. On or about 31 March 2021 at Donohill, Co Tipperary, the Accused, being an employer, failed to manage and conduct work activities, specifically the clearing of a blockage in a screw conveyor at the said plant, in such a way as to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of its employees, in that the Accused failed to ensure the said screw conveyor was isolated from the source of power before the work was carried out and as a consequence an employee suffered personal injury.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION                                 | VERDICT     | FINE    |
|---|---|-------------|---------|
| Section 8(1) and 8(2)(a) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | €75,000 |

**Mulmuf  
Limited**

On 28 July 2023, this case was heard in Sligo Circuit Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to three charges. On 15 May 2021 at a premises at Sligo Road, Tubbercurry, Co Sligo, the Accused failed to manage and conduct the work activities in such a way as to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of its employees, in particular the building of a racking system externally at the rear of the premises, failed to take measures to prevent employees from being exposed to falls from height, and failed to provide its employee with the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary for the building of the said racking system, and as a consequence an employee suffered personal injuries and died.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION  | VERDICT     | FINE                     |
|---|--|-------------|--------------------------|
| Section 8(1) and Section 8(2)(a) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  | Guilty Plea | €10,000                  |
| Section 8(1) and Section 8(2)(g) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  | Guilty Plea | Taken into consideration |
| Regulation 95(1)(a) contrary to Section 77(9)(a)              | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007<br>Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | Taken into consideration |

**Prosecution of an Individual**

On 28 July 2023, this case was heard in Ennis Circuit Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to two charges. On 22 January 2021 at a premises in Co Clare, the Accused failed to manage and conduct his undertaking in such a way as to ensure that in the course of the work being carried on, individuals at the place of work, not being his employees, were not exposed to risks to their safety, health and welfare, in particular that an excavation at the premises was unsafe and no adequate measures were taken to prevent the collapse of the sides of the excavation upon persons working within the said excavation, and as a consequence a person suffered fatal injuries.

| CONTRAVENTION                                    | LEGISLATION   | VERDICT     | FINE                     |
|--|---|-------------|--------------------------|
| Section 12 contrary to Section 77(9)(a)          | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005   | Guilty Plea | Taken into consideration |
| Regulation 51(1)(a) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013<br>Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | €30,000                  |

**Prosecution of an Individual**

On 28 July 2023, this case was heard in Ennis Circuit Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to one charge. On a date prior to 22 January 2021 the Accused failed to appoint in writing a competent project supervisor for the construction stage for construction work carried out at an excavation at a premises at Doonaha, Kilkee, Co Clare.

| CONTRAVENTION                                   | LEGISLATION   | VERDICT     | FINE   |
|---|---|-------------|--------|
| Regulation 6(1)(b) contrary to Section 77(2)(c) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013<br>Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | €3,500 |

**EW Technologies Limited**

On 19 October 2023 this case was heard in Dublin Circuit Criminal Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to two charges. On 15 January 2021 at Unit 1 The Business Centre, Northwest Business Park, Ballycoolin, Dublin 15, the Accused, being an employer, permitted employees to undertake work activities at height in the said premises in a manner which was unsafe, and in particular, employees were permitted to be raised to height by way of a forklift while standing on a wooden pallet in order to carry out work. The Accused also failed to provide a safe system of work in relation to work at height being undertaken by employees in respect of a roller shutter door and in particular did fail to ensure that adequate fall prevention measures were in place while work at height was being carried on, and as a consequence an employee suffered personal injuries.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION                                 | VERDICT     | FINE    |
|---|---|-------------|---------|
| Section 8(1) and 8(2)(a) contrary to section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | €25,000 |
| Section 8(1) and 8(2)(e) contrary to section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | €25,000 |

**GP Wood Limited** On 24 November 2023, this case was heard in Cork Circuit Criminal Court. The Accused pleaded guilty to two charges. On 10 March 2022 at a sawmill premises in Enniskeane, Co Cork, the Accused, being an employer, failed to manage and conduct work activities in respect of a Leadermac moulding machine at the aforementioned premises, in such a way as to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the safety health and welfare of its employees, and did fail to implement risk assessments concerning the locking out and isolating of machinery, and failed to implement the standard operating procedure in respect of the Leadermac moulding machine at the aforementioned premises, and as a consequence, an employee suffered personal injuries.

| CONTRAVENTION   | LEGISLATION                                 | VERDICT     | FINE   |
|---|---|-------------|--------|
| Section 8(1) and Section 8(2)(a) contrary to Section 77(9)(a) | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | €1,000 |
| Section 8(2)(g) contrary to Section 77(2)(a)                  | Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 | Guilty Plea | €4,000 |

# Appendix 3:

## EU and International Representation 2023

As competent authority (CA) and national lead on occupational health and safety, chemicals and market surveillance legislation, the Authority actively participated in a number of EU and international committees and expert working groups during 2023. As the CA for Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) and Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) of substances and mixtures, the Authority participated in a range of EU CA/Designated National Authority (DNA) meetings. The INAB also participated in and represented Ireland at both European and international meetings.

The Authority communicated the Irish position to influence an outcome that either benefits Ireland or does not put Ireland at a disadvantage. The Authority also provided technical, scientific and policy inputs at other EU and international levels, as requested by the Minister and the DETE.

The list provided below is a non-exhaustive list of the main meetings the Authority attended in 2023.

| European and international committees – OSH                                   | Number of meetings/<br>events attended |
|---|--|
| Advisory Committee on Safety and Health (including Government Interest Group) | 2                                      |
| ACSH Working Party on Workplaces  | 1                                      |
| ACSH Working Party on Display Screen Equipment                                | 2                                      |
| EU-OSHA Management Board  | 2                                      |
| Senior Labour Inspectors Committee Working Group Chemicals                    | 11                                     |
| Senior Labour Inspectors Committee Working Group Biological                   | 11                                     |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>29</b>                              |

| European and international committees – Chemicals                       | Number of meetings/<br>events attended |
|---|--|
| Commission Chemical Strategy for Sustainability                         | 4                                      |
| Technical Harmonisation of CLP  | 5                                      |
| Article 133 REACH Committee   | 6                                      |
| CARACAL Competent Authority and Subgroups on REACH and CLP              | 4                                      |
| ECHA Management Board   | 4                                      |
| ECHA Risk Assessment Committee (RAC)                                    | 9                                      |
| ECHA Committee for Socio-economic Analysis (SEAC)                       | 4                                      |
| ECHA Member State Committee (MSC)                                       | 4                                      |
| ECHA Forum on Enforcement of REACH, CLP and the Rotterdam Regulation    | 3                                      |
| ECHA Expert Group on Endocrine Disruptors                               | 3                                      |
| ECHA HelpNet Steering Group for MS Helpdesks and subgroup and workshops | 6                                      |
| Member State Communicators Network                                      | 2                                      |
| Detergents Working Group  | 1                                      |
| DNA Committee for the Rotterdam Regulation                              | 1                                      |
| ECHA Risk Management and Evaluation RIME+ (Chemical)                    | 4                                      |
| ECHA REACH Exposure Expert Group (REEG)                                 | 3                                      |



| European and international committees – Chemicals (continued)   | Number of meetings/<br>events attended |
|---|--|
| ECHA MSCA Interact User Group   | 0                                      |
| EU Seveso Committee of Competent Authorities  | 1                                      |
| Commission Expert Group on the Control of Major Accident Hazards involving Dangerous Substances ('Seveso Expert Group') | 1                                      |
| EU MJV Workshop   | 4                                      |
| Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)   | 1                                      |
| EU Committee on the Transport of Dangerous Goods  | 1                                      |
| EU Expert Group on the Transport of Dangerous Goods   | 5                                      |
| TWG2 Seveso Inspections   | 1                                      |
| UN Joint Meeting  | 2                                      |
| WP.15   | 1                                      |
| Informal WG on transport of hazardous waste (Joint meeting ADR RID ADN)   | 1                                      |
| Informal WG on electric vehicles (UN WP 15)   | 4                                      |
| OECD National Co-ordination   | 1                                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>86</b>                              |

| European and international committees – industrial products and market surveillance | Number of meetings/<br>events attended |
|---|--|
| EU Transportable Pressure Equipment Administrative Co-operation Group               | 2                                      |
| EU Machinery Directive Advisory Committee   | 2                                      |
| EU Pressure Equipment Directive Advisory Committee                                  | 2                                      |
| EU Lifts Directive Advisory Committee   | 1                                      |
| EU Lifts Directive Expert Group   | 1                                      |
| EU Personal Protective Equipment Directive Advisory Committee                       | 2                                      |
| EU Personal Protective Equipment Expert Group                                       | 2                                      |
| EU ATEX (explosive atmospheres) Directive Advisory Committee                        | 3                                      |
| EU ATEX Expert Group  | 1                                      |
| Gas Appliances Regulation Advisory Committee  | 2                                      |
| EU Machinery Directive Working Group  | 2                                      |
| Market Surveillance Product Compliance Network                                      | 1                                      |
| Transportable Pressure Equipment Directive Administrative Co-operation Group        | 0                                      |
| International Working Group on Transport of Hazardous Waste                         | 0                                      |
| Agricultural Machinery Task Group   | 1                                      |
| EU Industrial Products Joint Actions (Circular saws/Scissor lifts)                  | 9                                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>31</b>                              |

| European and international committees – Accreditation   | Number of meetings/<br>events attended |
|---|--|
| European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) Technical and Policy Committees and working groups [Laboratory, Inspection, Harmonisation, Certification, Multi-lateral Agreement, General Assembly] | 17                                     |
| International Laboratory Accreditation Co-operation Technical   | 9*                                     |
| and Policy Committees and working groups [Laboratory, Inspection, General Assembly]   | 2                                      |
| International Accreditation Forum Technical and Policy Committees and working groups [Certification, General Assembly]  | 2                                      |
| European Commission and OECD Committees and working groups on Good Laboratory Practice (GLP)  | 5                                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>26</b>                              |

# Appendix 4:

## Legislation and guidance finalised in 2023

### Legislation

S.I. No. 197 of 2023 European Communities Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment (Amendment) Regulations 2023

### Guidance

#### Occupational Safety and Health

##### Code of Practice for Indoor Air Quality

The Code of Practice is implemented through S.I. No. 255/2023 - Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) (Amendment) Regulations 2023.

##### How to Make Construction Appointments for Your Farm - Guidance

This guide highlights some of the legal responsibilities of farmers (as a client) when they plan to carry out construction work on their farm or in their home.

##### Managing Exposure to Biological Agents in Laboratories

The aim of this guidance is to promote good occupational health and safety within Irish laboratories that work with biological agents.

##### Guidance on Safety with Patient Hoists and Slings in Health and Social Care Settings

Hoists and slings are used in many health and social care settings to assist in the moving and handling of patients.

##### Annual Review of Workplace Injuries, Illnesses and Fatalities 2021-2022

The Health and Safety Authority's annual review of workplace injury, illness and fatality statistics presents the most recently available data on work-related fatalities, injuries and illnesses in Ireland (document also published in Irish).

##### Exposure to Sensitive Content Risk Assessment Template

This template was jointly developed by the Health and Safety Authority and the State Claims Agency.

##### Psychosocial Risk Assessment: Guidance for Exposure to Sensitive Content

This guidance was jointly developed by the Health and Safety Authority and the State Claims Agency (document also published in Irish).

##### SunSmart Employee Information Sheet

This information sheet is written primarily for employees and safety representatives to raise awareness about the risk of skin cancer from sun exposure.

##### Managing Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace 2023

This information sheet gives practical advice on what psychosocial hazards are, and the roles and responsibilities of employers and employees in relation to managing psychosocial hazards.

##### Silica Leaflet

This leaflet is also published in the following languages: Czech, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian and Russian.

##### Silica Poster A3

This poster is also published in the following languages: Czech, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian and Russian.

##### Managing Hazards in the Workplace

These information sheets will provide you with practical advice on how to manage the most common hazards in your workplace and prevent them causing harm.

## **Chemicals and market surveillance**

### **Guidance on Technical Land Use Planning Advice**

This guidance document interprets the Authority's policy on the technical land use planning (TLUP) advice requirements under the Seveso III Directive. It was revised in February 2023 to include an amended section 3.4 covering Hydrogen Installations.

### **Obligations of EU candle and reed diffuser producers under REACH and CLP**

This information sheet explains the obligations of EU candle and reed diffuser producers under REACH and CLP.

### **Safety Data Sheets for Hazardous Chemicals Information Sheet**

Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) provide useful information on chemicals, describing the hazards the chemical presents, and giving information on handling, storage and emergency measures in case of an accident.

### **Use Chemicals Safely - Read the Label**

How do I know if a chemical is dangerous? The label on the container should give information about any dangerous properties of the chemical.

### **Chemical Safety at Home and in the Garden**

Some chemicals found in the home and garden may cause harm depending on how dangerous they are and how long or how often you are exposed to them.

## Appendix 5:

# 2023 Annual Report to the Minister on the Operation of the Chemicals Acts 2008 and 2010

The Health and Safety Authority (herein referred to as 'the Authority') was appointed as the principal national authority under the Chemicals Act 2008 as amended (herein referred to as 'the Act'). The Act provides for the national administration and enforcement of the REACH, Detergents, Prior Informed Consent (PIC) and CLP Regulations. As of 1 June 2015, the Control of Major Accident Hazards involving Dangerous Substances (COMAH (Seveso III)) Regulations also come within the ambit of the Act but are not subject to this Annual Report. Five national authorities have administration and/or enforcement obligations under the Act, namely the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Beaumont Hospital Board, the Customs Division of the Revenue Commissioners, and the Irish National Accreditation Board.

Section 8(4) of the Act requires a national authority (other than the Authority) to a) make adequate arrangements for the performance of its functions under the relevant statutory provisions, b) keep appropriate records and c) furnish a report to the Authority within two months after the end of each year. Such a report is to include information as may be required and requested by the Authority. In fulfilment of its statutory duties under the Act, the Authority requested each national authority named above to report on its activities during 2023 under the Act. Details for each national authority are as follows.

### 1. The Irish National Accreditation Board

The Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) – Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) Monitoring Authority, acts as the national competent authority for the purposes of Articles 8(2) and (3) of the Detergents Regulation (EC) No 648/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 on detergents only. During 2023, there were no GLP facilities in the INAB monitoring programme carrying out work in relation to the Detergents Regulation. GLP Inspectors completed training through OECD GLP training programmes.

### 2. Beaumont Hospital Board

Beaumont Hospital Board is the appointed body responsible for receiving information relating to emergency health response, as per Article 45 of the CLP Regulation, and to receive ingredient datasheets as required under Article 9(3) of the Detergents Regulation and has designated the National Poisons Information Centre (NPIC) to perform these functions.

The number of resources available during 2023 were as follows: 0.8 FTE Administrative Officer and 0.7 FTE Poisons Information Officer/Manager. While there are no dedicated NPIC staff to work full time on the responsibilities under the CLP Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 and the Detergents Regulation (EC) No 648/2004, the NPIC has six poisons information officers, and all are involved in providing information to meet medical demand in the event of an emergency. The Clinical Director provides additional advice for serious or complex cases. There is one Administrative Officer in the NPIC who spends a large proportion of their time dealing with product submissions and queries from industry. One Poisons Information Officer assists with queries and two staff audit a small number of notifications each month. NPIC staff do not work exclusively on activities related to the Act, and priority must be given to the management and operation of the telephone poisons information service.

During 2023, the NPIC dealt with 988 enquiries related to the CLP Regulation and Detergent products. A total of 406,741 product submissions were made under Article 45 of the CLP Regulation relating to information on mixtures classified for health or physical hazards. Of these, 831 submissions were made directly to the NPIC, an increase of 52.7% compared to 2022. Most product notifications (405,910) were submitted via the European Chemicals Agency's (ECHA) Poisons Centre Notification (PCN) portal. Of these, 285,245 (70%) had warnings, that is, they did not fulfil all the business rules. It is of concern to the NPIC that 70% of the notifications submitted via the PCN portal had warnings. The NPIC does not have sufficient resources to review all of these or follow up with the submitters to improve the information on the database.

Following a request from the European Commission, the NPIC reviewed a sample of submissions with warnings on the ECHA PCN portal to determine how many of these related to the warning 'QLT618 - The UFI provided may relate to different mixture composition already notified (UFI corresponds to different PCN number)'. In case this mixture composition is different provide a new UFI'. 350 notifications with warnings were reviewed and the findings of this review were submitted as follow-up comments to the CARACAL 50 meeting, CLP session.

The number of mixtures notified directly to the NPIC fell in 2023, but staff received an increased number of queries from industry, mostly about the procedure to notify hazardous mixtures or about using the NPIC telephone number on safety data sheets. The number of such queries rose to 953 in 2023, a 30.7% increase compared to 2022, in advance of the requirement to notify mixtures for industrial use in the Annex VIII format from 1 January 2024.

The NPIC checked 863 desk assessments of products for compliance with Article 45 and Annex VIII of CLP, for example, checks on full composition, pH, MIMs, contact information and presence of UFI. The NPIC informed the Authority about seven chemical mixtures that had been involved in suspected poisoning incidents but had not been notified under Article 45 of CLP to the NPIC, as well as an essential oil product that was not labelled in accordance with CLP. The NPIC also answered approximately 1,307 emergency enquiries involving chemical mixtures, excluding detergents.

In 2023, the NPIC answered emergency enquiries involving 1,262 detergent products. Fabric cleaning products, particularly liquid detergent sachets/capsules, were the most frequently implicated detergent products.

At a European level, the NPIC participated in two ECHA PCN stakeholder group meetings in 2023.

Beaumont Hospital and the Authority have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Data Sharing Agreement in place since June 2022. In 2023, the NPIC provided data to the Authority on queries involving dishwasher tablets, liquid laundry detergent capsules, room scents/air fresheners and an inhalant product.

The Authority published information regarding the new procedure for notifying mixtures for industrial use from 1 January 2024 in its eBulletin in March and May.

Approximately 80 posts were published on the NPIC social media channels relating to Article 45/Annex VIII of CLP requirements. The NPIC maintains a dedicated webpage related to CLP requirements for stakeholders.

The NPIC collaborated with the Authority and the Health Service Executive (HSE) MyChild.ie team to sponsor a show garden at the Bord Bia Bloom festival from 1-5 June 2023. 'The Know, Act, Prevent Garden' was designed by Declan McKenna and showcased safe storage of garden chemicals and household products as well as low-toxicity plants. The garden was awarded a Silver Medal and attracted lots of interest thanks to its 'simplicity, beauty and gorgeous low-toxicity plants'. Personnel from the Authority, the NPIC, Beaumont Hospital and the HSE were present at Bloom each day and were extremely busy, engaging with the public to share safety messages about using chemicals and poison prevention practices to keep everyone safe in their home and garden. The event helped to raise awareness of the service provided by the NPIC and increased visits to the NPIC website and social media platforms.



### 3. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine enforces the REACH and CLP Regulations under the sector-specific Plant Protection Product (PPP) and Biocides Regulations. Product labels are checked for CLP compliance before being approved.

The number of resources available during 2023 were as follows: 4.5 FTE inspectors working on the REACH Regulation, 4.5 FTE inspectors working on the CLP Regulation and 0.5 FTE allocated to duties under the PIC Regulation. There are 15 inspectors warranted to enforce REACH, CLP and PIC regulations under Section 11 of the Act. Brexit and the ongoing expansion of Annex I under the PIC Regulation have led to more resources being allocated for PIC-related activities. The DAFM has 21 inspectors signed up to the ECHA Interact portal for the purpose of REACH and two for the purpose of PIC. Staff involved in REACH, CLP and PIC regulations enforcement and administrative duties have expertise in toxicology, ecotoxicology, exposure assessment, environmental fate and behaviour, risk assessment, risk management and enforcement.

In 2023, the DAFM checked CLP compliance regarding 501 products. It undertook 121 checks of PPPs as part of the approval for authorisation, which addressed compliance of classification, hazard labelling and packaging requirements under CLP. Classification, labelling and packaging of biocidal products were addressed during 380 approval checks. Additionally, notification obligations under Article 45 and Annex VIII of CLP were checked for 100 PPPs and 206 biocidal products. The DAFM issued 30 pieces of written advice due to non-compliance with hazard labelling requirements in 2023.

The DAFM maintains dedicated webpages to provide information on REACH requirements related to biocides and on PIC-related obligations.

As part of its PIC functions, the DAFM processed one export notification and one explicit consent request and responded to one stakeholder request for information. As part of its Designated National Authority functions under the PIC Regulation, the DAFM attended one Commission expert group meeting and submitted one briefing to the Commission.

At a European level, under the CLP Regulation, the DAFM continued to be represented at the Risk Assessment Committee (RAC). In 2023 the DAFM was Rapporteur for two substances: captan and penconazole.

It attended four RAC plenary meetings and participated in four CLH (harmonised classification and labelling) working group meetings in 2023. The DAFM also attended four ECHA HelpNet meetings, two Endocrine Disruptor expert group meetings and nine working group meetings, three relating to human health and six to environmental topics.

A MoU between the Authority, DAFM and Revenue in relation to the PIC Regulation was renewed and signed by Revenue on 15 November 2022, by the DAFM on 27 March 2023 and by the Authority on 23 May 2023.

### 4. Customs Division of the Revenue Commissioners

The Revenue Commissioners is the Designated National Authority under Article 17 of the PIC Regulation. Revenue's Customs Division is responsible for the control of the import and export of hazardous chemicals as listed in the PIC Regulation. For this purpose, profiles have been set into Revenue's Automated Entry Processing (AEP) Customs clearance systems.

Revenue has (through its Customs Consultative Committee) informed the trade of the export declaration and Reference Identification Number (RIN) requirements for the exportation of chemicals covered by the PIC Regulation.

The Revenue website sets out general information in respect of prohibited and restricted goods, including information about the exportation of dangerous chemicals under the PIC Regulation.

Customs activities under the PIC Regulation include the electronic profiling of certain hazardous chemicals on the AEP system and the validation by Customs staff of RINs at exportation where relevant. During 2023, 45 export consignments were monitored under the PIC Regulation.

Revenue participates in the Chemicals Interdepartmental Group meeting under the DETE. However, its participation in 2023 was limited due to other commitments.

A MoU between Revenue, the Authority and the DAFM is in place in relation to activities under the PIC Regulation. Revenue maintains a Data Sharing Agreement with both agencies in relation to the exchange of information under the PIC Regulation. This agreement was renewed in 2023.

## 5. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

In 2023, EPA resources for the purposes of the REACH Regulation were approximately 0.33 FTE, a slight decrease on the 2022 level of 0.47 FTE. REACH enforcement activities are covered as part of the role of the EPA Chemicals Team. Activities relating to REACH include, for example, market surveillance, review of decisions on applications for the authorisation of restricted chemical and stakeholder engagements. There was also a slight decrease in the allocation under the Detergent Regulation in 2023 (0.01 FTE) due to a decreased demand in this work area and due to changes in internal resources. Three inspectors are warranted to enforce the REACH Regulation and two to enforce the Detergents Regulation under Section 11 of the Act. Staff involved in REACH and Detergents Regulation enforcement and administrative duties have expertise in risk assessment, risk management and enforcement.

During 2023, the EPA followed up on 100 Safety Gate alerts with importers and downstream users relating to substances in articles, resulting in the issuing of verbal/written advice in three cases regarding non-compliance under the REACH Regulation. As part of an organised market surveillance programme in response to the Safety Gate alerts notifications, 135 products were inspected and follow-up checks were carried out on 15 of these products for REACH compliance. Of these 15 products, 13 were imported from outside the EU. Three Safety Gate alerts were notified to the Commission by the Authority in relation to products checked and analysed by the EPA as part of the ECHA-co-ordinated project REF-10 on integrated controls of chemicals. One inspection in 2023 addressed authorisation duties under REACH. The EPA contacted an authorised user regarding a Commission implementing decision (CID) for the continued use of a restricted Annex XIV substance and outlined their role in enforcing the conditions of the CID.

In 2023, the EPA responded to five stakeholder queries relating to the REACH Regulation and to one stakeholder query on the Detergents Regulation. The EPA has a dedicated webpage for the REACH Regulation.

In October 2023, the EPA and the Authority hosted the joint EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability Conference, focusing on what the future may hold for EU chemicals legislation. Hosting the conference was part of an action to implement the European Commission chemicals strategy for sustainability. The EPA has several actions under way under the strategy, spanning key chemical and circular economy policy areas.

The EPA contacted the Irish Environmental Network to inform them about the European consultation on the universal Poly- and Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Restriction. The EPA attended an ECHA webinar on the PFAS Restriction, as well as a stakeholder meeting with the DETE and the IDA relating to the restriction.

REACH enforcement training was provided to a new EPA Chemicals Team member in 2023. An inspector also attended the Competition, Consumer and Protection Commission (CCPC) for training on Safety Gate. Two inspectors are signed up for the ECHA Interact system.

At a national level, the EPA participated in the Draft Detergents Regulation review in 2023. It also participated in the Polymer Microparticles Subgroup under the DETE Chemicals Interdepartmental Group and provided input to the DETE on draft regulations for a competent authority for lead in gunshot in wetlands. The EPA attended the One Substance, One Assessment 'data flows' meeting in 2023.

At an EU level, the EPA Chemicals Team contributed to the ECHA Forum for the Exchange of Information on Enforcement regarding the proposed PFAS Restriction and the proposed restriction on poly- and perfluoroalkyl substances under the REACH Regulation. The EPA nominated an inspector to act as the Irish alternate member representative for the ECHA Forum on Enforcement. The EPA provided comments to the DETE regarding PFHxA for the REACH Committee meeting.

At an international level, the EPA sat on the European Environment Agency (EEA), where it is the National Focal Point for the EEA EIONET network and participates in thematic area activities (that is, working groups) covering chemicals. Items of relevance to other regulatory bodies are often covered, and relevant details are circulated by the EPA for any comments or observations. The EPA also sat on the EU Competent Authority Working Group implementing Regulation (EU) No 2019/1021 (Persistent Organic Pollutants Competent Authority Working Group), where it participates through attending meetings and providing feedback to information requests where relevant.

The EPA operates a MoU with the Authority. Representatives from the EPA met with the Authority in December 2023 for the annual MoU meeting to facilitate communication and knowledge exchange between the two parties. During this meeting both authorities identified areas for collaboration and knowledge exchange for follow-up in 2024.

The EPA has an established a market surveillance plan and an internal cross-office chemical plan to assist in disseminating relevant chemical information and sharing knowledge across offices dealing with relevant areas, such as licensing, enforcement and monitoring.







# Our Vision: Healthy, safe and productive lives and enterprises



An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta  
Health and Safety Authority

Health and Safety Authority

**Tel: 0818 289 389**

**[www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)**