

AFSAC Sub-Committee Meeting – 2/13/2012

Attendance: Michel Villon – Alaska Culinary Association; Dale Yamnik – Yum Brands; Herb Everett (Safety Herb); Randy Pfeuffer – DEC/FS&S; Jeri Forgue – DEC/FS&S

Purpose of meeting: To review original purpose and goals of AFSAC and adapt the committee's structure and actions to best accommodate new goals that allow AFSAC to once again actively provide feedback and advise the Food Safety & Sanitation program.

Discussion:

- Historically, especially in the early years of AFSAC when DEC was putting together industry regulations, AFSAC was formed to give suggestions/guidance to ADEC; however, this has changed over the years. Originally, many of the expanding industries used to be represented and involved in AFSAC, whereas there is not nearly the participation today. There is at least one major possibility for the decline in industry participation: When regulations were being formed and changed, industry used to be constructively involved. They actively contributed to regulation formation and modifications. After the regulations were adopted, not much contribution was needed. Several sub-committees weren't really necessary, and when they went away, AFSAC membership dropped.
- The discussion then centered on how does AFSAC adapt in a manner to increase interest. How does it once again become an active advisory committee?
- Discussion about Structure: Do we want to run AFSAC using the bylaws on record or make a change? In the last several years, it appears we have not been following them. Opinion: We either need to strictly adhere to the current bylaws or revise them and remain more casual. Current bylaws require 15-20 elected members serving three-year terms and participate on sub-committees. Currently AFSAC has a mailing list of 40 to 50 people, but only around 10-15 are "active." Questions arose about this. With no elections for members are all considered members? Are people who attend a single meeting a member? Who gets to vote at meetings, as meetings are open to the public? How should we consider membership? Should guidelines be imposed on members? For example, would missing two consecutive meetings affect membership? Might be too restrictive especially for people who are retired and traveling – no need to further eliminate attendees. On the other hand, a core membership is important.

This topic branched into what can AFSAC to make membership interesting and productive? There was an overall consensus that member involvement that produced tangible results could bring enthusiasm and purpose back to the meetings.

- To find topics of interest to address in sub-committees, it was decided that we should determine what is not working, based on the data for most common inspection issues, and pick some of those issues to see if members could offer some solutions via sub-committees as in the past. The sub-committees of the past had interesting issues to consider. There used to be sub-committees involved in several areas such as the transportation subcommittee, which worked on how to transport food around remote Alaska with less loss to freezing and perishing. We should study our current issues to find topics members would want to work on. Perhaps past

members would get involved again if we had useful topics and goals to work on. Perhaps we need to advertise this and solicit interest. Here are some ideas for subcommittees:

1. Revive the transportation subcommittee – example: check into how long food ends up sitting at the airport or other delivery stops.
2. Food worker cards: have a common card that can be used all over the state, including the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA). Brief history: MOA did not have online training; disagreement on policies/regulations; splitting cost for food worker cards is an accounting nightmare.
3. One stop permits shopping. Example: a food operator could go to one state site and obtain all approvals for a food service rather than having to go to ADEC FS&S, drinking water, wastewater, business licensing; plumbing; etc.
4. Top ten inspection violations in the State of Alaska per list below. Pick top five and address them. CFPM – availability of classes, proctored exams in rural areas (Randy working on this and invites people to join subcommittee on addressing this); coming up with a basic most common violation handout for operators to augment the AMC self-evaluation checklist (not all people use the internet); evaluate the top five to determine priority (risk factors in Active Managerial Control Manual, priority factors in FDA 2009 Food Code); use of Washington Fact Sheets; self-inspection forms.
 - ADEC Resource material http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/fss/Food/AMC/AMC_Home.html for examples of resource materials;
 - ADEC identifying risk factors at http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/fss/Food/AMC_Posters/riskfactors.pdf.
 - ADEC urges people to take or online survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BXDRYKK>

Actions:

- Randy will draft and sent an email to all 40-50 members in attempt to revive participation.
- Randy will contact Tony at MOA to see about current status on having one interchangeable food worker card.
- Randy will put together more info on subcommittees and email them to this group (examples: CFPM and top five risk factor violations).

Top Ten inspection violations
CFPM on Staff x
Handwashing facilities supplied and available
Food-contact surfaces properly cleaned
FWC for all workers x
Toxic substances properly identified, stored, used x
Thermometers provided, calibrated, accurate and used x
Warewashing facilities: installed, maintained, used; test kits provided and used
Food separated and protected x
Adequate ventilation and lighting. Designated areas
Hands cleaned and properly washed x
Proper cold holding temps
Wiping cloths-properly used and stored
food and non-food contact services cleanable, properly designed, constructed, used
Physical facilities installed, maintained, clean

Time ran out. Meeting adjourned. Next Meeting date: Feb 23, 2012 at 1:30pm

Addendum to Minutes – Action items

Possible Sub-Committee Topics

It was proposed that AFSAC put together a simple document listing out the 5-10 most common inspection violations along with a short description of how to fix or avoid the mistakes in the form of a self-testing checklist:

- Certified Food Protection Manager
- Food Worker Card - a single card used by all food workers in Alaska?
- Toxic substances properly identified, stored and used.
- Thermometers provided, calibrated and used.
- Food separated and protected.
- Hands clean and properly washed.

Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM)

We need a better way to offer access to rural food workers who want or need to get a CFPM certification.

The issue: Only three tests are recognized for use in the CFPM certification process. While training can be delivered online, the testing must be proctored and held on an approved location. Often there are specific guidelines that must be met, like a computer being used only for testing and located by itself in a locked room.

Various institutions and public organizations offer testing facilities. Charges for training, proctors and testing are not regulated and vary quite a bit. That said, I've been working with U of A personnel and private companies to expand the number of testing facilities. Progress is being made but the rural areas remain hard to service. While trying to balance a decent rate for training, proctoring and testing, I've started talking to a private company that offers a package deal of \$129 for online training and a proctored exam at several locations in Alaska. \$129 is pretty cheap considering the university charges \$75 just to proctor the exam.

Exams in the more populated areas is fairly easy, but we are trying to figure out how to help out in the rural areas. We think that between university agents and our EHOs, we should be able to make up a schedule to visit some rural villages for training and testing. The logistics are tough. It means somehow finding who needs or wants to be certified and balance that with scheduling a time to be in the person's area in order to do more than just proctor a test. Plus, testing locations in remote areas are still bound by the guidelines of the three testing agencies. This is where a sub-committee may be of help with some good ideas.

Universal Food Worker Card

The State of Alaska and the Municipality of Anchorage had talks on a full reciprocity agreement for accepting Food Worker Cards in 2009 and 2010. Current standing on Food Worker Card reciprocity between the State of Alaska and the Municipality of Anchorage: The State of Alaska accepts the Municipality's card as long as training for the MOA test includes an explanation of the differences with the State of Alaska, like the garnish issue (the MOA allows bare hand contact with garnishments; the State of Alaska doesn't.)

Other reasons the cards are not fully reciprocal:

- There is disagreement with a couple of MOA regulations, most notably the allowance of bare hand contact on garnishes.
- MOA believes the State FWC test should be more difficult. (We would need to agree on a bank of about 100 questions, including a few that pointed out the regulation differences. (FSS would like to review the question bank, but any changes would need to be made by the third party software vendor who coded the application. FSS would need to get any changes translated into the eight supported languages and have those inserted by software vendor.)
- MOA does not yet have an online test. If people chose to take the FSS test, there would need to be a way to distinguish, separate and distribute revenue.

It seems to me, that the main issue is the online presence, or lack of. To make the cards interchangeable, a couple of things would need to happen:

1. The MOA needs an online test. If they had one, we would need to agree the level of difficulty on both tests to be about the same. And the a few of the test questions would need to center on pointing out the differences in regulations. This would mean the FSS test would need to be revised (and the revisions would need to be translated). If this happened, there would be no problems in whose card was used or which test was taken. There would be no accounting issues to deal with. (Opinion - The cost to build and host a testing service would be under \$5000, probably \$2000 - \$3000. Subsequent maintenance fees would be negotiated, but probably wouldn't exceed \$3000 per year. This would be the best case scenario. The MOA might be able to offset initial development fees, by negotiating terms with the developer to pay \$1 per card until the negotiated amount was reached. However, the \$1 per card might continue and pay for future features, maintenance or whatever.)
2. If the MOA does not have an online test, it could use the State's. This would mean the test question bank would need to be revised (and translated) to an agreeable level of difficulty and include regulation differences. Obstacles would include the state taking on all of the effort to administrate the issuing of cards and the burden of accounting for revenue sharing. It would cost the State quite a bit to do this. The added burden needed to support the increased work load for support and accounting would not be cost efficient. This proposal has already been rejected once. I doubt it would be given serious consideration in the future.
3. There is also the option of using a third party's online test, but that would increase the cost of the MOA's test, as testing services usually charge \$10 for their service in addition to what the MOA would charge for their card currently \$10. If the MOA and State used vendors, it would work for testing, but a price increase to \$20 may have a substantial impact and would need high-level approval. If both the FSS and the State used the same vendor site and test, that would work. He price increase and the stability/responsiveness of the online company would be a big factor.

These are just ideas for discussion, not proposals. I'd appreciate your thoughts on them.

Toxic Substances, Thermometers and Clean Hands

These other three topics (and more) might be best served by promoting awareness to the problems and simple documentation to prevent and remedy the conditions. Perhaps a couple of weeks or a month before a scheduled inspection, some materials could be mailed out, or maybe just mailed out regardless. EHOs could hand some things out on inspections.

A packet might include:

A checklist of the 5-10 most common inspection problems would offer both awareness and a reminder of what needs to be done. I've included a sample made from a longer one we have.

A simple booklet that describes the problems and best practices that remedy them

Appropriate stickers could be included—"Wash Your Hands" for sinks and the restrooms; cross-contamination for the kitchen locations; holding temperatures for hot and cold; "How To" pamphlet of calibrating and using a thermometer.

What else?

Appreciate your ideas.

Randy

Self-Assessment Checklist

✓	PROCEDURES	Needs Action	CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: (Who, What, How, & When)	Date Completed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employee Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Certified Food Protection Manager on staff and present during working hours ▪ All new employees have FW Cards 			
	Handwashing			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Observe employee handwashing practices			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Handwash sinks:			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Soap & paper towels provided			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Accessible & used for no other purpose			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Water temp & pressure adequate			
	No Bare Hand Contact w/RTE			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Observe employee handling of RTE foods			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Utensils/tissues/single use gloves used w/ RTE foods			
	Cleaning & Sanitizing			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Observe employee cleaning & sanitizing practices			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Food contact surfaces cleaned & sanitized at required frequency			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Food contact surfaces clean & sanitized between different raw foods & between raw & RTE			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Dishwashing equipment properly operated & maintained			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Test kits provided/used			
	Protection From Contamination			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ RTE foods protected during preparation			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ RTE segregated during display & service			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pesticide/Toxic Chemicals properly used/stored			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Used according to label directions			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ In-use containers labeled & used at proper concentrations			
<input type="checkbox"/>	▪ Stored away from food & food contact utensils			