Helix Programme Technical Conference

28 January 2026

Food Safety Incidents and Challenges

Neil Arbery

Head of Local Authority Delivery

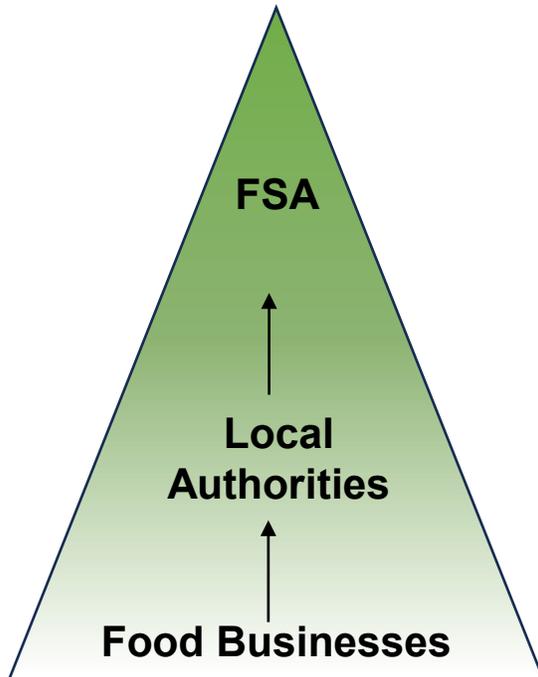FSA Wales

Changing Landscape

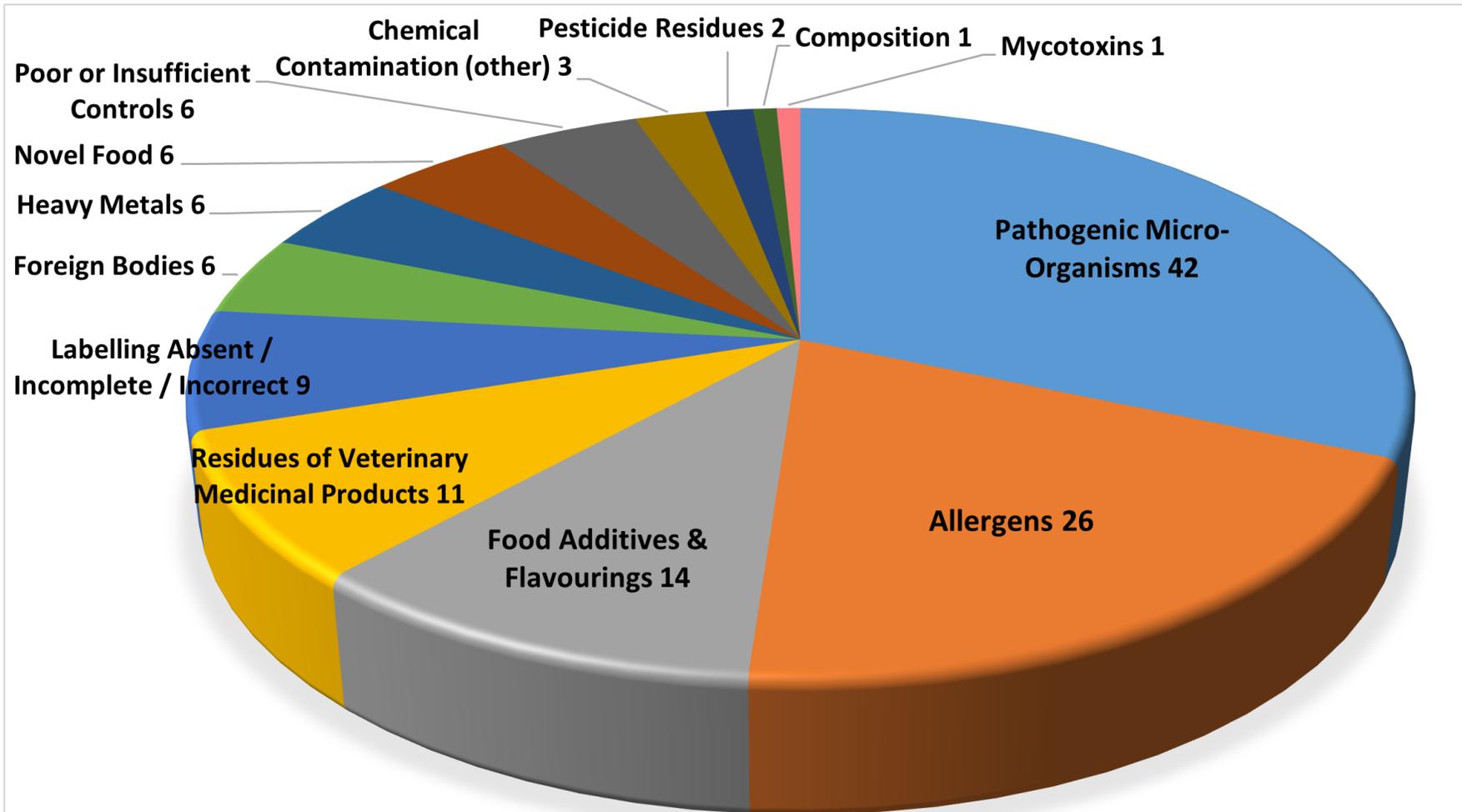*'The pace of innovation in the food sector is accelerating…..'*
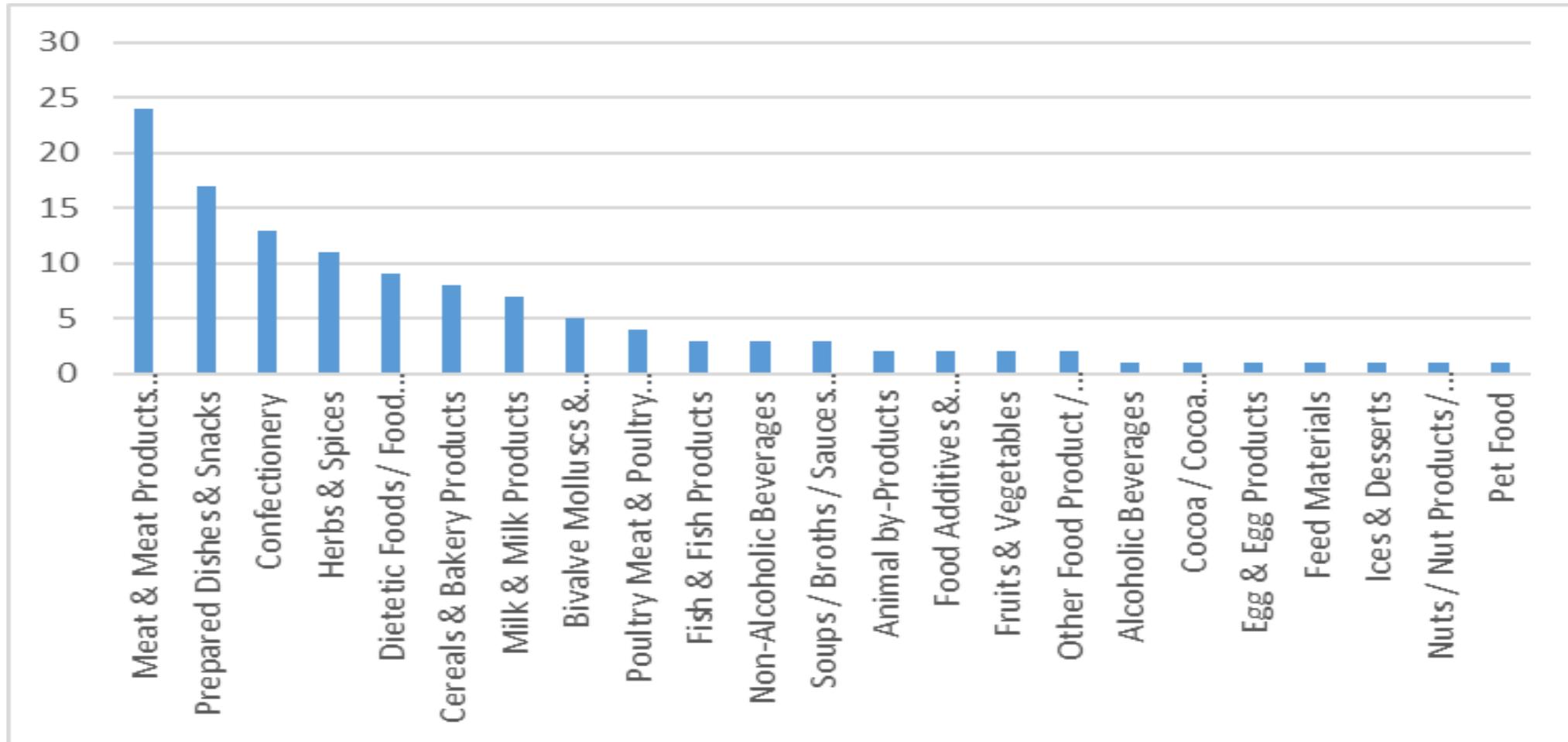
Our shared objectives

- **Food businesses** – around 35k registered in Wales
- **Local Authorities** – 22 LAs in Wales; 317 in England and 11 in Northern Ireland
- **Food Standards Agency** – 133 incidents managed in 24/25 for Wales

Incident Categories Reported 2024-2025

Chemical Contamination (other) 3
Pesticide Residues 2
Composition 1
Mycotoxins 1
Poor or Insufficient Controls 6
Novel Food 6
Heavy Metals 6
Foreign Bodies 6
Labelling Absent / Incomplete / Incorrect 9
Residues of Veterinary Medicinal Products 11
Food Additives & Flavourings 14
Pathogenic Micro-Organisms 42
Allergens 26

Incidents 2024-2025 by Product Type

Reporting of Incidents

The incidents team can be notified of an incident by emailing:

fsa.incidents wales@food .gov.uk

Incident Definition and Key Legislation

The Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) defines a food incident as:

"Any event where, based on the information available, there are concerns about actual or suspected threats to the safety, quality or integrity of food that could require intervention to protect consumers' interests".

The Feed Law Code of Practice (Wales) defines a feed incident as:

"Where there are concerns about actual or suspected threats to the safety or quality of feed that requires intervention to protect public health".

Guidance on Food Traceability, Withdrawals and Recalls within the UK Food Industry
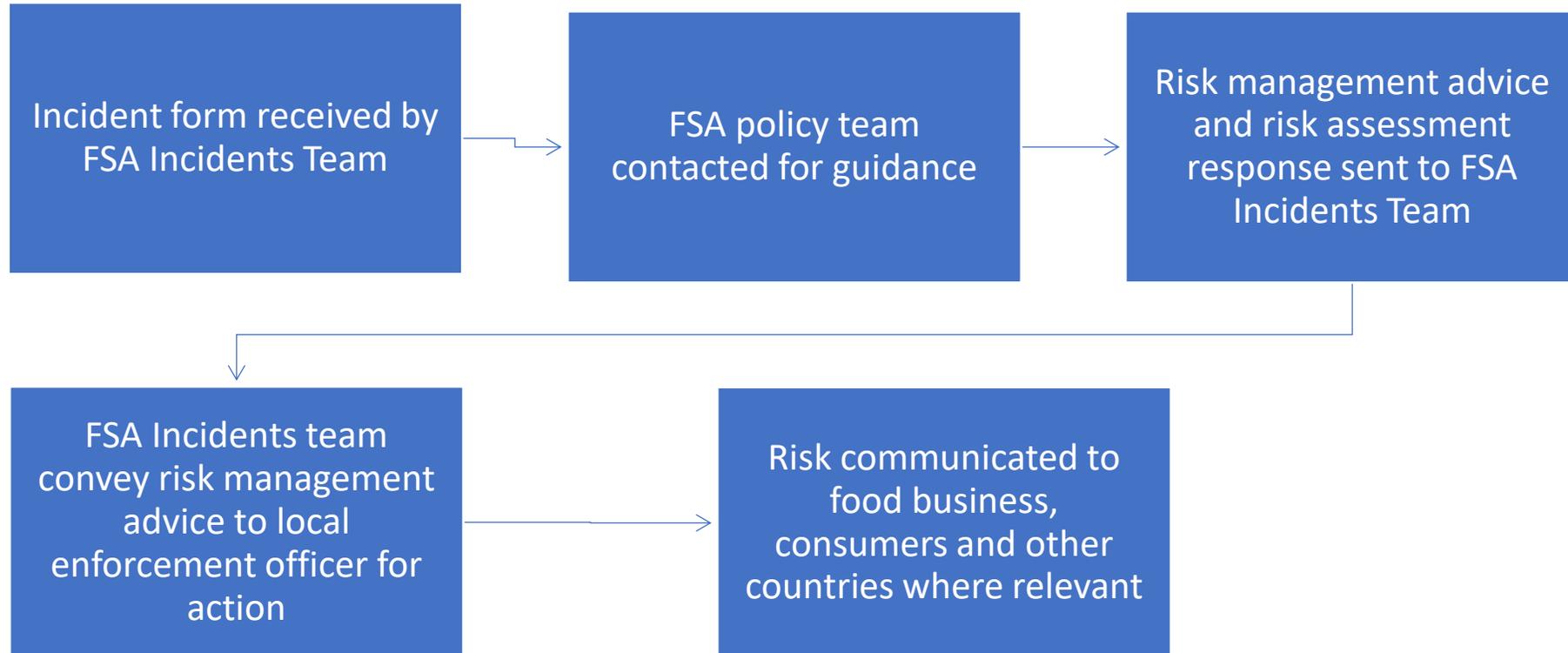
March 2019

FOOD ALERT

Rhondda Raw recalls Beef 80/10/10 Raw Frozen Dog Food because of contamination with Salmonella

ALLERGY ALERT

Tesco recalls Tesco Celery, Fruit and Nut Salad because of undeclared mustard

Incident process

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┌─────────────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Incident form received │      │     FSA policy team     │      │  Risk management advice │
│   by FSA Incidents Team │ ───▶ │  contacted for guidance │ ───▶ │   and risk assessment   │
│                         │      │                         │      │   response sent to FSA  │
│                         │      │                         │      │      Incidents Team     │
└─────────────────────────┘      └─────────────────────────┘      └─────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────────────┐
│    FSA Incidents team   │      │   Risk communicated to  │
│  convey risk management │      │      food business,     │
│      advice to local    │ ───▶ │   consumers and other   │
│  enforcement officer for│      │  countries where relevant│
│          action         │      │                         │
└─────────────────────────┘      └─────────────────────────┘
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Action we take:

Advice to LAs

Advice to consumers

Food alerts – PRIN, Allergy Alert, FAFA

RASFF notifications

International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN)

Statutory restrictions (FEPA)

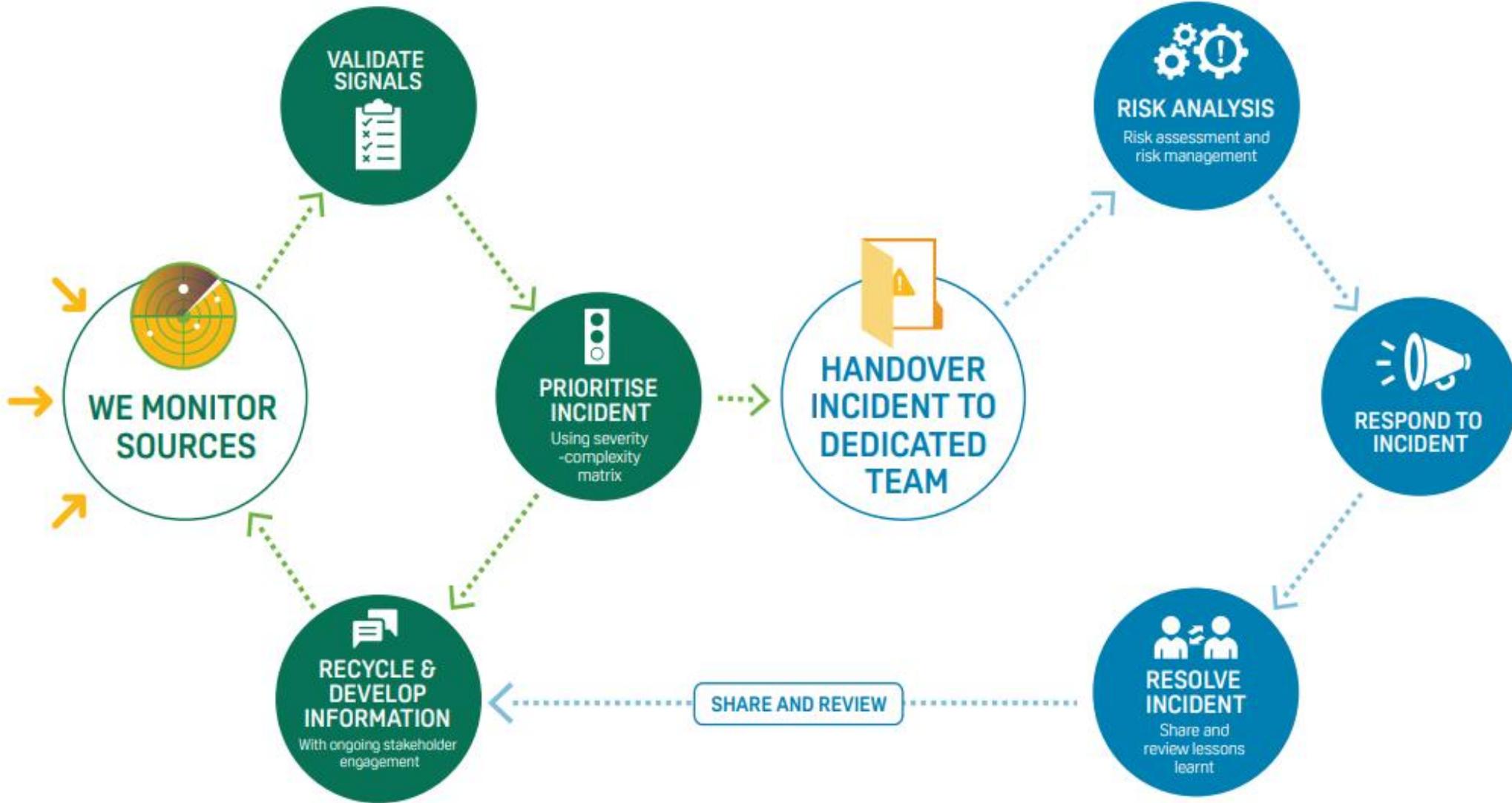# Signals and emerging issues

The work of the Signals Team provides an increased capability & capacity to detect, respond and prevent food and feed safety incidents occurring in the UK.

Established to mitigate the loss of full access to EU incidents systems, primarily RASFF

Actively monitor from over 50 open data sources that report on food and feed safety incidents which have occurred across the globe

Key focus is incident prevention – Building an understanding on what's going on in the rest of the world by monitoring these sources to determine their immediate impact to the UK

Identify potential incident trends or emerging risks through the wider analysis of our data.

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VALIDATE SIGNALS

WE MONITOR SOURCES

PRIORITISE INCIDENT
Using severity -complexity matrix

HANDOVER INCIDENT TO DEDICATED TEAM

RISK ANALYSIS
Risk assessment and risk management

RESPOND TO INCIDENT

RESOLVE INCIDENT
Share and review lessons learnt

SHARE AND REVIEW

RECYCLE & DEVELOP INFORMATION
With ongoing stakeholder engagement

Asiantaeth Safonau Bwyd
food.gov.uk
Food Standards Agency

What is Root Cause Analysis?

Asiantaeth
Safonau
Bwyd
food.gov.uk
Food
Standards
Agency

Definition of Root Cause…

'The underlying cause(s) of a problem which, if addressed, will prevent a recurrence of that problem'

RCA is a problem solving process to help identify the…

– chain of events leading up to an incident
– specific step(s) within that chain where action can be taken to prevent recurrence

It encourages the investigator to…

– look beyond the solution to the immediate problem
– understand the fundamental or underlying cause(s) of the situation

Diolch / Thank you