

COUNTRY PROFILE

PART 2

NORWAY

**Status 1 January 2024 of the implementation of
Norway's corrective actions to address
recommendations issued by the
EFTA Surveillance Authority
in the period April 2018 to November 2022**

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INTRODUCTION

This part 2 of the Norwegian country profile was drawn up by the EFTA Surveillance Authority (“the Authority”) to present in a summary format the current status of progress in implementation of corrective actions by Norway to recommendations issued by the Authority in the period April 2018 to November 2022.

The Authority works to assure that effective and efficient official control systems, related to food and feed safety, animal health and welfare, are in place. This is done mainly by carrying out audits (referred to as missions until 2020) to Norway and issuing audit reports including recommendations based on any main shortcomings identified. Norway is requested to present plans for corrective actions to each recommendation and these plans are evaluated and their implementation monitored by the Authority through a number of follow-up activities. The information in this part of the country profile has been compiled on the basis of a General review audit which was carried out by the Authority in co-operation with the Norwegian competent authorities from 27 to 31 March 2023. The General review audit addressed the recommendations issued following audits in the period April 2018 to November 2022. This document presents the updated status for the recommendations included in that review based on information received since then from the Norwegian authorities.

This part of the country profile is presented in two chapters:

Chapter 1 contains an overview of audits carried out by the Authority in Norway from April 2018, including status assessment of all issued recommendations, followed by several sector specific sub chapters detailing status for corrective actions for recommendations reviewed in the 2023 General review audit.

Chapter 2 contains an overview of controls planned by the Authority to Norway for the period 2022 to 2026.

This part of the country profile is updated at regular intervals pursuant to the EFTA Surveillance Authority’s audits or additional relevant information being submitted by the Norwegian competent authorities. Recommendations issued following audits to Norway after the period covered in the 2023 General review audit, April 2018 to November 2022, are not included.

Acronyms are used extensively throughout the text for the sake of brevity. A list of acronyms, abbreviations and special terms is given in Annex I.

1 Overview of audits and follow-up status of recommendations

The Authority regularly conducts audits to Norway to evaluate compliance with relevant EEA legislation. EEA EFTA states are required to take appropriate follow-up actions in the light of recommendations resulting from the Authority controls by provisions laid down in Regulation (EU) No 2017/625 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules (Official Control Regulation). Similar provisions were included in Regulation (EC) 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules which was repealed and replaced by the Official Control Regulation.

In relation to audits carried out by the Authority in Norway, recommendations are issued in audit reports, addressing shortcomings identified where Norway is requested to present action plans to the Authority, detailing the actions taken or planned to rectify the identified shortcomings. The Authority evaluates these action plans and systematically monitors their implementation through a number of follow-up activities including regularly conducting general review audits. In the intervening period Norway shall provide information on progress and, following assessment by the Authority, this may result in an update of the follow-up status of recommendations. However, this is not immediately reflected in this Country profile. Changes in status will be reflected in an updated version of the country profile in the beginning of the year based on information provided by Norway by the end of the previous year. This update does not include recommendations issued following audits to Norway after the period April 2018 to November 2022 covered in the 2023 General review audit.

All Authority audit reports are available on the Authority website (www.eftasurv.int).

As Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (the Official Controls Regulation) and related acts are incorporated in the EEA Agreement the Authority will follow up recommendations related to provisions of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 and of other repealed acts with reference to equivalent provisions of the Official Controls Regulation and related acts.

Table 1 gives an overview of audits carried out by the Authority from April 2018 until November 2022 and Table 2 presents an overview of the number and status of all issued recommendations from Authority audits conducted in this period, including assessment of status of progress. The aim is to provide a summary of progress on the implementation of recommendations. In the following subchapters related to specific control systems, open recommendations identified by the Authority and addressed during the general review audit in March 2023 are listed indicating the Authority's assessment of actions taken by Norway.

For the purpose of assessment, the following terms are used and defined as follows:

Action taken: Appropriate measures to address the recommendation have been taken.

No longer relevant: For administrative, technical or legal reasons follow-up of the recommendation is no longer appropriate, or for administrative reasons further follow-up is done in relation to a recommendation issued on a more recent audit.

In progress: Appropriate measures to address the recommendation have been initiated but not all of the measures have been implemented.

Action still required: Appropriate measures to address the recommendation have not been initiated.

Incorrect application (INC): Appropriate measures to address the recommendation have not been taken and the follow-up of the recommendation has been referred to an incorrect application case.

Recommendations classified as "In progress" or "Action still required" do not necessarily require any immediate specific legal or administrative action on the part of the Authority but these recommendations will remain the subject of monitoring by the Authority to assess progress. On the other hand, where the Authority considers the situation warrants additional action on its part, it takes appropriate additional measures.

Table 1: Overview of audits to Norway from April 2018 until November 2022 where recommendation have been issued.

Audit ID	Topic
2018/NOR/02	Animal welfare during transport and related operations
2020/NOR/5	Ready-to-eat food
2021/NOR/1	Residues and contaminants
2021/NOR/5	Animal welfare at killing
2021/NOR/6	Plant protection products (PPPs)
2022/NOR/6	Import of products of non-animal origin (PNAO)
2022/NOR/1	Fishery products
2022/NOR/5	Poultry meat and poultry meat products
2022/NOR/8	Protection of laying hens and chickens kept for meat production

All recommendations from the audits on organic production and labelling, anti-microbial resistance, meat and milk hygiene, African swine fever and animal health controls in relation to aquaculture were satisfactory addressed before the 2023 General review audit. These cases were closed and were not addressed during the 2023 General review audit.

Table 2: Overview of status on 1 January 2024 of recommendations from Authority audits covered in the 2023 General review audit

Control system (Number of audits)	Number and status of recommendations					Incorrect application
	No.	Action taken	No longer relevant	In progress	Action still required	
Animal health (0)						
Food of animal origin (3)	19	13		6		
Import controls animals, food of animal origin (0)						
Feeding stuffs and animal nutrition (0)						
Transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (0)						
Animal by products (0)						
Control system for veterinary medicinal products (VMP) and residues, Antimicrobial resistance (1)	2	2				
Foodstuffs, food hygiene, imports of food of plant origin, and pesticides (2)	15	13		2		
Animal welfare (3)	18	9	1	8		
National audit system (0)						
Organic production (0)						
Total 9	54	37	1	16		

The individual open recommendations which were addressed in the 2023 General review audit are presented in chapter 2 for each control system. The recommendations which were closed due to appropriate measures taken to address them before the 2023 General review audit were not addressed and are not included in the overview.

Recommendations which are followed up separately in Incorrect application (INC) cases were not addressed during the 2023 General review audit; however, for the sake of clarity, they are included in chapter 2.

Based on information provided by Norway, ESA has closed additional 17 recommendations since June 2023 in the updated Country profile, Part 2. Norway has addressed 37 out of a total of 54 recommendations covered by the 2023 general review audit, including all recommendations from an audit on the protection of animals at the time of killing. In addition ESA has changed the status of one recommendation to 'no longer relevant' and closed it.

2 SECTORAL RECOMENDATIONS

2.1 Animal health

There are no recommendations currently open for follow-up.

2.2 Food of animal origin

In the period from February 2020 to November 2022, the Authority has completed three audits in relation to Food of animal origin. Out of a total of nineteen recommendations issued in relation to these audits, fifteen were identified to be addressed in the 2023 General review audit.

Audit ID 2020/NOR/5 Remote Audit to Norway from 12 to 23 October 2020 to evaluate official controls related to the production of ready-to-eat food.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
Rec 5: CA should ensure that when they identify a non-compliance, they take action to ensure that the operator remedies the situation and prevents further occurrences of such noncompliance as required by Article 138(1)(b) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in December 2020 informed the Authority that the Head Office, the Hygiene and Drinking Water Section and the Sea Food Section, will make a joint presentation to the Regional level of the findings from this ESA remote audit. In this presentation we will emphasize that in the case of non-compliance, it is important to decide proportional measures and time limits. We will also focus on the importance of following up by verifying that the non-compliances are corrected within the set time limits. We would like to inform ESA that there is a central process in the NFSA on our internal control to ensure that the NFSA meets the obligations it has in laws and regulations including the Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625. A relevant part of this process covers official control which includes follow-up of noncompliance until the businesses have complied.</p> <p>In April 2021 NFSA informed the Authority that a presentation of the audit findings was delivered on 19 March 2021 for the regional level which included the requirements of Article 138 (OCR). Duration 2 hours. There were 138 participants involved.</p> <p>In March 2022 NFSA informed the Authority that they will add a new chapter to the general guidance document «Retninglinje for virkemiddelbruk ved tilsyn» in order to be more specific about the requirements in Art. 138.1. This will still mean a slight general approach in order to fit all the official controls carried out by the NFSA. Suggested time aspect: End of June 2022.</p>	In progress.

	<p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that there were no changes to the deadline according to the action plan. During the GRA, CA confirmed the guidance document will be updated by June 2023.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
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Audit ID 2022/NOR/1 Audit to Norway from 7 to 16 March 2022 on fishery products.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
<p>Rec 1: The competent authority should ensure that the approval requirements in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 for food business operators are followed in all cases and ensure compliance with Article 148 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.</p>	<p>In response to the final audit report the NFSA in July 2022 provided the Authority with a plan for corrective actions. For recommendation 1 this stated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Procedures for verification of official control activities are in progress, and the NFSA will prioritize this work in 2022. (deadline 2022). b. The guideline for approval will be verified according to the verification procedures, to ensure that the approval requirements for FBOs are followed, and to ensure compliance with the requirements in Article 148 of Regulation 2017/625. (deadline 2023). c. Control template specific to the approval of vessels, will be developed. (deadline 2022). <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that Guidelines for control verification procedures have been finalized and published in our quality system. Control template specific to the approval of vessels, will be available from 20 March 2023.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided update on the recommendations. New guidelines have been developed for vessels to improve the approval process.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>
<p>Rec 2: The competent authority should carry out official controls on a consistent and reliable basis regarding good hygiene practices and HACCP-based procedures in order to verify that food business operators observe such practices and apply such procedures</p>	<p>In response to the final audit report the NFSA in July 2022 provided the Authority with a plan for corrective actions. For recommendation 2 this stated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The findings from the Authority will be presented at a seminar for the seafood inspectors of NFSA. (2022) b. The NFSA will develop a plan for training of food inspectors on audit of 	<p>Action taken.</p>

<p>continuously and properly, pursuant to Articles 4 and 5 and Annex II to Regulation (EC) 852/2004 and Article 3 and Annex III to Regulation (EC) 853/2004.</p>	<p>HACCP systems. (2022)</p> <p>c. Training of inspectors regarding audit and HACCP will be carried out. (2023)</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that a training course on auditing techniques was purchased in week 8 2023. We expect that 80 inspectors have participated on this training before the end of 2023. Training on HACCP for relevant inspectors will build on the auditing training and will be initialized during autumn 2023.</p> <p>The NFSA is in a tendering process for a new Learning Management System in 2023. This system will provide a complete overview of the employees' participation on relevant training programs and courses.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed ESA that dates have been set for the training of seafood inspectors. The training in HACCP will take place on 25-26 October and 6 December 2023.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided update on the recommendations. HACCP and audit training has been carried out for inspectors.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
<p>Rec 3: The competent authority should ensure that official controls of fishery products include all the relevant elements laid down in Article 70 and Chapter I of Annex VI of Regulation (EU) 2019/627, especially Points A. Organoleptic examinations, C. Histamine and F. Parasites of Chapter I of Annex VI.</p>	<p>In response to the final audit report the NFSA in July 2022 provided the Authority with a plan for corrective actions. For recommendation 3 this stated:</p> <p>a. Organoleptic examination is one of the control points in the control templates for fishery products in 2022. When documentation regarding this control is available, the NFSA will evaluate the results. Based on these results the NFSA will consider further action, to assure that official control of fishery products is carried out in line with Article 70 and Chapter I of Annex VI of Regulation (EU) 2019/627 Point A and F. (mid 2023)</p> <p>b. The NFSA will develop a risk-based plan for official sampling, to ensure that official control on histamine in fishery products is in line with Article 70 and Chapter I of Annex VI of Regulation (EU) 2019/627 Point C. (2023).</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that organoleptic examination and parasite checks were control points in the control templates for fishery products in 2022. Documentation regarding this control is</p>	<p>In progress.</p>

	<p>now available. Based on these results the NFSA will consider further action, to assure that official control of fishery products is carried out in line with Article 70 and Chapter I of Annex VI of Regulation (EU) 2019/627 Point A and F.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA has provided ESA with a risk assessment which will be used to create a monitoring plan for official sampling.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
<p>Rec 4: The competent authority should ensure that sufficient resources and competence are available to carry out official controls of fishery products efficiently and effectively, as required by Articles 5(1)(e) and 78(1) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.</p>	<p>In response to the final audit report the NFSA in July 2022 provided the Authority with a plan for corrective actions. For recommendation 4 this stated:</p> <p>a. As part of the further development of an updated governance model, the NFSA aim towards planning the official control more realistically based on available resources and competence and connecting these two aspects more closely. The development of the updated governance model is anchored in this year’s annual target and budget letter (MDS). The work is ongoing, and improvements are put into practice continuously. The work will be finalised mid/end of 2023. In regard to our ongoing management activities, we are working to connect and align the different governance procedures to get a more comprehensive approach. For instance, after the four-month reports from each region and department is available, we are conducting the internal performance management conversations with each region and department in the head office so we can adjust the course (if necessary). The conversations are based around the MDS and the OTP (operational control plan) for the year and the progress so far. (Mid/end 2023)</p> <p>b. We are also working with a uniform manual system for all the official controls from risk assessment to a realistic control plan. According to the plan, we will have a more uniform manual system to ensure that sufficient resources and competence are available to carry out official controls from 2024. (2023)</p> <p>c. In addition, the model for risk assessment of fishery establishments and vessels will be evaluated and revised, based on the concrete feedback from the Authority in the report. (2022)</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that they continue the work from 2022 to involve the regions in the final control plan, to make sure that the control plan is realistic to their resources. 23 of January this year the Strategic meeting decided to engage a working group to create a draft template for the planning of the official controls in all areas in according to OCR, for three years. According to the timetable we will start to engage people from</p>	<p>In progress.</p>

	<p>the head office and the regions at 7 of March.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed ESA that on 21 April there was an opening meeting with close to 80 participants. They were divided into 24 working groups and all have planned their first meeting. The input from the working groups will be used for the risk-based planning of official controls for 2024. In addition, the NFSA informed ESA that the new governance model was launched in May 2023.</p> <p>In the December 2023 update, an official control plan based on the new governance model was being created.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
<p>Rec 5: The competent authority should ensure that official laboratories that it designates which are situated in other EEA States have already been designated by the competent authority of the other EEA State in question, pursuant to Article 37(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.</p>	<p>In response to the final audit report the NFSA in July 2022 provided the Authority with a plan for corrective actions. For recommendation 5 this stated that NFSA will inform the designated laboratories that any subcontractors performing official analysis need to be designated by the EEA state where located. If the laboratory of interest is not designated, we will ask the relevant state about the possibility of designating the specific laboratory, or else the Norwegian designated laboratory needs to find another subcontractor. (Mid/end 2023).</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that:</p> <p>Action a) A letter of designation has been forwarded all official laboratories in Norway, clarifying that any subcontractor needs to be designated by the competent authority in the EEA State where the laboratory is located.</p> <p>Action b) We have updated the List on the web page by including designated laboratories and included information on designation and responsibilities.</p> <p>Action c) We have requested information on subcontractors from the official laboratories.</p> <p>Action d) We are in progress of identifying the competent authorities in the different EEA State who designate laboratories for being able making agreements with them.</p> <p>Action e) At a board meeting of the Nordic-Baltic committee on Food Analysis, NMKL, February 1st. 2023, where the 8 countries were represented, we all recognized the true challenge finding and choosing designated laboratories within the EEA States, due to lack of information on designation. It was decided</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

	<p>to collect contact information on designated laboratories within our countries for addition to the contact information on NRL published at the webpage of NMKL.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
<p>Rec 6: The competent authority should ensure that staff have the necessary training and experience to carry out official controls, including relating to HACCP systems, in a consistent and harmonised manner, pursuant to Article 5(4) and Point 7. of Chapter I of Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.</p>	<p>In response to the final audit report the NFSA in July 2022 provided the Authority with a plan for corrective actions. For recommendation 6 this stated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The findings from the Authority will be presented at a seminar for the seafood inspectors of NFSA. (2022) b. The NFSA will develop a plan for training of food inspectors on audit of HACCP systems. (2022) c. Training of inspectors regarding audit and HACCP will be carried out. (2023) <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that a training course on auditing techniques was purchased in week 8, 2023. We expect that 80 inspectors have participated on this training before the end of 2023. Training on HACCP for relevant inspectors will build on the auditing training and will be initialized during autumn 2023.</p> <p>The NFSA is in a tendering process for a new Learning Management System in 2023. This system will provide a complete overview of the employees' participation on relevant training programs and courses.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed ESA that dates have been set for the training of seafood inspectors. The training in HACCP will take place on 25-26 October and 6 December 2023.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided update on the recommendations. Training in HACCP and audits have been carried out.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>
<p>Rec 7: The competent authority should ensure that appropriate enforcement measures are taken in all cases to eliminate or contain risks that might be</p>	<p>In response to the final audit report the NFSA in July 2022 provided the Authority with a plan for corrective actions. For recommendation 7 this stated that NFSA has decided to review the use of measures/sanctions in a broader perspective, with the aim of ensuring the appropriate enforcement measures in all cases.</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

<p>associated with non-compliant products or establishments, pursuant to Article 138 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.</p>	<p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that the document Guidance on the use of official control measures (“Virkemiddelbruk ved tilsyn”) has been and continues to be revised according to Article 138 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625. In particular, attention will in the future be put on determining origin and extent of non-compliances in general, and thereby hindering re-occurrences of non-compliances, as stipulated in article 138.1 (a) and (b). Changes have also – as of March 15th, 2023 – been made in our computer systems concerning the electronic written records of official controls, hereunder actions that we require the operator concerned to take as a result of the official controls.</p> <p>As of 1. January 2024 an updated guidance will give inspectors better information on actions to take in case of non-compliance.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
<p>Rec 8: The competent authority should ensure that effective communication, coordination and cooperation is in place between different regions and between the head office and the regions as required by Article 5(5) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.</p>	<p>In response to the final audit report the NFSA in July 2022 provided the Authority with a plan for corrective actions. For recommendation 8 the NFSA consider the established system in place for cooperation and communication between different parts of the NFSA is sufficient to ensure effective communication within and between the regions. The NFSA will consider possible measures to facilitate dissemination of information between departments and regions.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that the recommendation from ESA was presented at a meeting of the interregional fora (IRF) for seafood and export on 15 September 2022. The IRF was given the task to identify possible additional measures to ensure effective communication, coordination and cooperation between different regions and departments (deadline: 1 May 2023).</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed ESA that the interregional fora for seafood and export have discussed possible measures related to the recommendation from the Authority. They decided on their meeting the 2 May to perform some concrete measures to systematize and standardize the work, information, clarifications etc. within the interregional forum and the regional forums. These measures will ensure more effective communication, coordination and cooperation between different regions and departments.</p> <p>Communication between different local departments involved in the process for</p>	<p>In progress.</p>

	<p>approval of vessels will be one of the focus areas when the guideline for approval will be verified according to the new verification procedures in 2023.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
<p>Rec 9: The competent authority should ensure that follow up of non-compliances identified during internal audits is carried out within an agreed and reasonable timeframe, as required by Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.</p>	<p>In response to the final audit report the NFSA in July 2022 provided the Authority with a plan for corrective actions. For recommendation 9 the NFSA considers that the management model, mentioned under recommendation 4, is also set to address this recommendation.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that during 2022, the NFSA lost key employees with responsibility for quality assurance including the non-compliance management systems. As a result, corrective and preventive actions have not yet been implemented for recommendation 9. In 2023, additional resources have been allocated to the area of quality assurance, and it has been raised on the list of priorities for the coming year. We are currently investigating which changes we can make to our current system for non-compliance management to better facilitate processing and closure within reasonable time frames. Additionally, non-compliance management has been added into the tri-annual management dialogues at the head office.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed ESA that there will be a management review for quality on 6 June 2023. Non-compliance management is the main topic in this review. To ensure non-compliances are followed up on in a timely manner, as required by Rec 9, the directors will need to decide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How we will allocate resources for case management responsibilities, - Which key performance indicators for non-compliance management shall be presented in the tri-annual management dialogues and if they should also be presented in other reports, - If the planned changes to the non-compliance management software, described below, are acceptable and how we will review their effectiveness, - If additional measures beyond these are needed to ensure closure of Rec 9. <p>The planned additions to the non-compliance management software, Better, to help facilitate better case management are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restrictions for changing deadlines on open non-compliances or tasks, - Requirements or targets for follow-up effectiveness checks of closed non- 	<p>Action taken.</p>

	<p>compliances,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More detailed built-in support for case management, i.e. performing root cause analyses. <p>The update from December 2023 included several steps to improve the internal audit process.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
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Audit ID 2022/NOR/5		
Audit to Norway from 20 to 29 June 2022 to evaluate official controls related to poultry meat and poultry meat products.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
<p>Rec 1: The NFSA should ensure that all food business operators meet their obligations on the control of animal by-products to include the correct labelling and storage of animal by-products.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in September 2022 informed the Authority that the most serious deviations found during the ESA inspection have already been followed up by advanced warning and a webinar on animal by-products (red and white meat) scheduled on 29/09/22. Regarding the NFSAs course for upgrading official veterinarians and official auxiliaries, the section on how to handle animal by-products has been updated. New guideline on slaughter hygiene for white meat is being drafted. The guideline will include supervision of the FBOs handling of animal by-products. After publishing the new guideline, NFSA headquarters will arrange training for the Regions on this matter.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that actions were completed and there were no changes to the deadlines stated in the action plan.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit and informed the Authority that approximately 127 staff participated in the webinar on animal by-products including both new and “old” OV’s and different technicians and inspectors. Program for the webinar included an over-view of ABP regulations, identification, categorization, labelling and traceability of ABPs. We have approximately 246 OV’s and approximately 80-100 who participated in the competence program on ABPs for OV’s.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

<p>Rec 2: The NFSA should verify the correct implementation by food business operators of the process hygiene criterion for Campylobacter on carcasses of broilers.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in September 2022 informed the Authority that, following the audit, the Regions have verified the process hygiene criterion for Campylobacter on carcasses of broilers - the results were satisfactory.</p> <p>Update the NFSAs course on upgrading the official veterinarians and official auxiliaries. The NFSAs course will be updated with the NFSAs obligations when it comes to verification of the slaughterhouses' sampling of process hygiene criterion for Campylobacter on carcasses of broilers. After the update of the course, NFSA headquarters will arrange a training for the Regions on this matter (completion March 2023).</p> <p>New guidelines on slaughter hygiene for white meat. The guidelines will include verification of the process hygiene criterion for Campylobacter on carcasses of broilers. After publishing the new guidelines, NFSA headquarters will arrange training for the Regions on this matter (completion April 2023). In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that actions were completed.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit and informed the Authority that Guidance on poultry meat slaughter is in place (offentlig kontroll I fjørfeslakteri). The region will be trained on this matter in June 2023. To ensure that the official veterinarian and official auxiliary carried out official controls described in the guideline there are made two templates. (Revisjon etter retningslinje offentlig kontroll I fjørfeslakteri og tilsynsmal offentlig kontroll i fjørfeslakteri).</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>
<p>Rec 3: The NFSA should have procedures and / or arrangements in place to ensure the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in September 2022 informed the Authority that they have several ongoing initiatives that will contribute to ensure effectiveness of official control. This year we have allocated resources to collect, analyse and use data in a better way to work with the effectiveness of official control. In addition, we have ongoing work with “autonomous product teams” to give the inspectors better digital applications to use while on official control. We have also started to upgrade our management model. Due to the reorganization, and the fact that we have a higher turnover than normal, this work is delayed. Hopefully, we will have procedures and / or arrangements in place to ensure the effectiveness of official control with effect from 2024.</p> <p>New guideline on slaughter hygiene for white meat - The guideline will include</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

	<p>procedures and / or arrangements in place to ensure the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls. -After the publishing of the new guideline, the NFSAs headquarters will arrange training for the Regions on this matter (April 2023).</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that this recommendation has to be seen in context with the answer to recommendation 4, 2022/NOR/1. The purpose of the ongoing work in the working group, beside to create a draft template for the planning of the official controls to make sure that the control plan is realistic to regions resources, is also to try to ensure the effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls. This work will be a part of the management model.</p> <p>There is no changes to the deadlines stated in the action plan regarding new guidelines on slaughter hygiene for white meat.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit and informed the Authority that NFSAs new governance model was launched in May 2023. On 21 April we carried out an opening meeting with almost 80 participants, who will join the 24 working groups. All working groups have had or have planned their first meeting. So far, we are in line with the schedule to use this for the risk-based planning of official controls for 2024.</p> <p>In December 2023 Norway provided an updated corrective action plan. NFSAs new operational plan was adopted in December and is set to take effect from January 1st. In January, work will commence regarding procedures for reporting and follow-up in relation to the new plan.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
<p>Rec 4: The NFSAs should ensure that the official veterinarian or official auxiliary carry out a detailed inspection of a random sample of parts of birds or entire birds declared unfit for human consumption following post-mortem inspection from each flock.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSAs in September 2022 informed the Authority that new guidelines on slaughter hygiene for white meat is being developed. The guidelines will include supervision of the FBOs handling of inspection of a random sample of parts of birds, or entire birds, declared unfit for human consumption following post-mortem inspection from each flock. After the publishing of the new guideline (March 2023), the NFSAs headquarters will arrange training for the Regions on this matter (April 2023).</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSAs informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that there were no changes to the deadlines stated in the action plan for new guidelines on slaughter hygiene for white meat and NFSAs would arrange training for the</p>	<p>In progress.</p>

	<p>Regions on this matter.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit and informed the Authority that Guidance on poultry meat slaughter is in place (offentlig kontroll I fjørfeslakteri) and the region will be trained on this matter in June 2023. Instruction for the official controls of poultry meat including FCI, ante mortem and post-mortem control suggested time aspect August 2023. The instruction will describe how the NFSA should ensure that the official veterinarian or official auxiliary carry out a detailed inspection of a random sample of parts of birds or entire birds declared unfit for human consumption following post-mortem inspection from each flock. There will be a delay according to the original plan. We need more time because we have several ongoing initiatives that will contribute to ensure effectiveness of official control and the instruction of official control of ante mortem and post- mortem will be one of these initiatives.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
<p>Rec 5: The NFSA should ensure that official controls are performed in accordance with documented procedures.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in September 2022 informed the Authority that they will establish control verification procedures. A working group in the NFSA Head office, Regulations and Control Department will perform the task.</p> <p>In December 2022 NFSA confirmed they will carry out control verification on the use and compliance of the new guideline on slaughter hygiene for white meat.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that there were no changes to the deadlines stated in the action plan.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit and informed the Authority that Guidance on poultry meat slaughter is in place (offentlig kontroll I fjørfeslakteri). The region will be trained on this matter in June 2023. To ensure that the official veterinarian and official auxiliary carried out official controls described in the guideline there are made two templates. (Revisjon etter retningslinje offentlig kontroll I fjørfeslakteri og tilsynsmal offentlig kontroll i fjørfeslakteri.) Instruction for the official controls of poultry meat including FCI, ante mortem and post-mortem control suggested time aspect August 2023. The instruction will describe how the NFSA should ensure that the official veterinarian or official auxiliary carry out a detailed inspection of a random sample of parts of birds or entire birds declared unfit for human consumption following post-mortem inspection from each flock. There will be a delay according to the original plan. We need more time because we have several ongoing initiatives that will contribute to ensure effectiveness of official control</p>	<p>In progress.</p>

	and the instruction of official control of ante mortem and post-mortem will be one of these initiatives.	
Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.		

2.3 Import controls, animals and food of animal origin

An audit to Norway on import and use of TRACES in import and trade was carried out by the Authority in October 2017 which resulted in nine recommendations. Seven of the recommendations were closed due to action taken. However, appropriate measures to address recommendations 6 and 7 were not taken and the follow-up of these recommendations was referred to an incomplete application case (INC). This case is in the process of being closed and was not discussed during the general review audit in March 2023.

2.4 Feeding stuffs and animal nutrition

There are no recommendations currently open for follow-up.

2.5 Transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE)

There are no recommendations currently open for follow-up.

2.6 Animal by-products (ABP)

There are no recommendations currently open for follow-up.

2.7 Veterinary medicinal products and residues

In the period from October 2020 to November 2022, the Authority completed one remote audit in relation to veterinary medicines and residues. Two recommendations were issued in relation to this audit and both recommendations were evaluated as being addressed during the general review audit in March 2023.

Mission ID 2021/NOR/1 - Remote audit to Norway from 22 February to 5 March 2021 to evaluate official controls on residues and contaminants in live animals and animal products		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
Rec 1: The NFSA should ensure that official sampling for residues and contaminants is unforeseen and unexpected and that all precautions necessary to ensure the element of surprise in checks are maintained as required by Point 2.1 of the Annex to Decision	In May 2021 NFSA informed the Authority that: a) The Head Office will review and amend the sampling instructions so that it becomes clear that the sampling must be carried out unannounced. The instructions must also address in cases where NFSA must notify business operators for practical reasons, the notification should always be neutral and never indicate that samples would be taken (deadline 31/12/21)	Action taken.

<p>98/179/EC and Point 1. of Annex III (1) of Directive 96/23/EC.</p>	<p>b) When the sampling instructions for 2022 are ready, the Head Office will conduct training sessions with the regional coordinators with emphasis on basic principles in the sampling instructions. The basic principles will include unannounced sampling, targeted sampling, secure depositing of the samples and transport to the laboratories (deadline 31/01/22).</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that the Head Office has reviewed and amended the samplings instructions so that it is clear that the sampling must be carried out unannounced. In the cases where the business operators for various reasons must be informed, the notification should always be neutral and never indicate that samples would be taken.</p> <p>Whenever a sampling event is planned in the NFSA IT-system (MATS), there is a reminder that sampling must be unannounced.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
<p>Rec 2: The NFSA should 2021/NOR ensure that the residue sampling strategy is designed to maximize the detection of illegal treatments and controls compliance with the maximum residue limits for residues of veterinary medicinal products as required by Point 2.2 of the Annex to Decision 98/179/EC.</p>	<p>In May 2021 NFSA informed the Authority that the Head Office will amend the instructions and conduct training of the regional coordinators to target the sampling. This will also include less sampling at the slaughterhouse. Head Office will amend the instructions to ensure residue sampling of emergency slaughter animals. Head Office will amend matrices in the sampling plan to detect certain substances for the longest period post treatment.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that all the plans and matrices for the analysis for illegal substances have been reviewed and updated to maximise the probability of detection of illegal substances. The fraction of urine samples taken on farms have increased and more samples are taken on hair instead of urine.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

2.8 Import of products of non-animal origin

In the period from October 2020 to November 2022, the Authority completed one audit in relation to import control of products of non-animal origin. Four recommendations were issued in relation to this audit. One recommendation was closed as action taken in advance of the General review audit and the remaining three recommendations were identified as being addressed during the 2023 General review audit.

Mission ID 2022/NOR/6		
Audit to Norway from 12 to 21 September 2022 on import control of products of non-animal origin		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
Rec 2: The competent authority should ensure that identity checks and physical checks on products of non-animal origin referred to in Article 47(1) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 are carried out at the border control post of arrival as required by Article 49(1) of that regulation, in premises or other facilities appropriate to the nature and volume of the categories of goods handled as required by Article 64(3)(b) of that regulation; if applicable, in commercial storage facilities complying with the conditions laid down in Article 3(11) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1014.	<p>In December 2022 NFSA informed the Authority that, regarding Borg port, the designation of a control point is in progress; regarding Oslo port, options considered: controls at control points, to use the private warehouse next to the BCP for controls of PNAO in accordance with Art. 3 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1014. This necessitates upgrade of the warehouse to comply with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2019/1014. Including this area as a part of the BCP is also considered which would necessitate an upgrade of the location.</p> <p>In February 2023 NFSA informed the Authority that they were in the process of appointing control points for controls of bulk bags. Appointment of the first control point is planned by 1 April 2023. Further control points will be appointed continuously from January 2023. BCPs are not allowed to control bulk bags since 1 January 2023; once control point appointed, the NFSA will put a remark in the list over BCPs to inform that certain BCPs are not designated for controls of products of non-animal origin in bulk bags. Timeline: from March 2023 and continuously.</p> <p>The NFSA is also considering a guideline for BCPs to perform controls on bulk bags in an emergency situation (e.g. control point is withdrawn or suspended). Timeline: autumn 2023.</p> <p>In April 2023 the Authority received satisfactory information including an approval document for a control point for inspection of bulk bags.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	Action taken.
Rec 3: The competent authority should ensure that official controls are performed in accordance with documented procedures as	In December 2022 NFSA informed the Authority that the updating of documented procedures is in progress, planned completion is end of January 2023. The BCPs' local procedures are planned to be placed at central level, planned completion is end of January 2023. Sampling procedures will be included.	Action taken.

<p>required by Article 12(1) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625, and that documented procedures are updated as appropriate, as required by Article 12(3)(b) of the same regulation.</p>	<p>In February 2023 NFSA informed the Authority that a detailed guidance document concerning Regulation (EU) 2019/1793 (including precise requirement for sampling procedures, and references to relevant legislation) was planned to be finalised by the end of March 2023. Several guidance documents should be administrated at the main office to ensure a common practice - action planned in cooperation with the inter-regional meetings, timeline: start March 2023 and finalised autumn 2023. A meeting in January 2023 was held where the head office presented guidance documents and had Q&A and will continue with these meetings throughout the year to ensure a common level of understanding. The NFSA will continue to discuss and inform inspectors about the guidance documents and other issues through annual meeting with the inspectors. The NFSA is further working on updating their webpages to ensure that the operators and inspectors can find updates with regards to the import-legislation.</p> <p>In April 2023 the Authority received satisfactory information including the updated documented procedures and a presentation to inform the interested parties about the new procedures.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
<p>Rec 4: The competent authority should have arrangements to ensure that official laboratories are supervised as required by Article 37(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and that activities of the official laboratories are coordinated by national reference laboratories also when they are located in other EEA State as required by Article 101(1)(b) of the same Regulation.</p>	<p>In December 2022 NFSA did not submit a corrective action plan in response to the draft report.</p> <p>In February 2023 NFSA informed the Authority that a list of national reference laboratories and official laboratories is available on the internet; Norway is in the process of identifying the authorities to contact for making agreements with the competent authorities in other EEA States to ensure that official laboratories located there are coordinated by national reference laboratories.</p> <p>In April 2023 the Authority received satisfactory information including correspondence with the Commission and correspondence with the authority in the EU MS where the designated official laboratory is located to ensure NRL supervision of the official laboratory designated by Norway.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

2.9 Plant protection products and pesticide residues

In the period from October 2020 to November 2022, the Authority completed one audit in relation to plant protection products and pesticide residues. One recommendation was closed in the pre-audit phase and the remaining ten recommendations were identified to be addressed in the 2023 General review audit.

Audit ID 2021/NOR/6 Audit to Norway from 27 September to 6 October 2021 on plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
Rec 1: The competent authority should ensure that control verification procedures are in place as required by Article 12.2 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2022 informed the Authority that they will establish control verification procedures. A working group in the NFSA Head office, Regulations and Control Department will perform the task.</p> <p>In April 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan adding that procedures will be used by NFSA, plants and by-products, in connection with verification of inspectors follow documented procedures for public control, deadline May 2023.</p> <p>In June 2022 NFSA provided a further implementation progress plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within 30 November 2022: Plan which area the verification procedure will be used • within 31 January 2023: Inform the regions about the new verification procedures • within 30. April 2023: Carry out verification in the selected area according to new routines • within 30. May 2023: Make a summary of the verifications including input for improvements. <p>In October 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan whereby the NFSA proposed further internal deadline and actions: Plan which area the verification procedure will be used (deadline end of November 2022), inform the regions about the new verification procedures (deadline end of January 2023), the procedures are used by the NFSA (deadline end of April 2023) and make a summary of the verifications including input for improvements (deadline end of May 2023).</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that</p>	In progress.

Audit ID 2021/NOR/6 Audit to Norway from 27 September to 6 October 2021 on plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>guidelines for control verification procedures have been finalized and published in their quality system. Delays confirmed; the regions will be informed during March 2023. For 2023, it is planned that the guidelines for verification of control procedures will be used for the regions' control of delegated bodies (Country Governors and Municipalities).</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided an update. There was some delay in updating procedures. The last part of this recommendation will be addressed by the end of February 2024.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
<p>Rec 3: The Competent authority should ensure that when they identify a non-compliance, they take action to determine the extent of the non-compliance and to ensure that the operator remedies the situation and prevents further occurrences of such non-compliance as required by Article 138.1 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.</p>	<p>In response to the draft mission report the NFSA in January 2022 informed the Authority that: a) The NFSA will add a new chapter to the general guidance document Guidance on the use of official control measures ("Virkemiddelbruk ved tilsyn") in order to be more specific about the requirements in Article 138.1. This will still mean a somewhat general approach in order to cover all the official controls carried out by the NFSA; Deadline end June 2022 b) The principles in the new chapter will be elaborated in a more specific guidance document concerning plant protection products. Deadline end of June 2023.</p> <p>In April 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan. Additional general deadlines of April and June 2023 with some general proposed actions added to the original Action Plan.</p> <p>In June 2022 NFSA submitted a further updated action plan including delayed deadline (December 2022 replacing June 2022) for action 3a and adding action 3d on how inspectors in the region will be informed of the updated guidance document, deadline end of January 2023.</p> <p>In October 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan and information whereby, due to reviewing the use of measures/sanctions in a broader perspective, deadlines on updating specific guidelines for sanctions regarding PPPs and for informing inspectors, will be also delayed until end of August 2023.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that no changes were made to actions 3 a), b), c) and d) and work was in progress. Changes have been made to the NFSA's computer systems concerning the</p>	<p>In progress.</p>

Audit ID 2021/NOR/6 Audit to Norway from 27 September to 6 October 2021 on plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>electronic written records of official controls now indicating actions required to be taken by the operator following the official controls to address non-compliances.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided an update. The NFSA has decided to review the use of measures/sanctions in a broader perspective, with the aim of ensuring the appropriate enforcement measures in all cases. As of January 1st 2024, general and overarching guidance to inspectors will stipulate that inspectors shall take any action necessary to determine the origin and extent of the non-compliance and to establish the operator's responsibilities, where non-compliance is established. The new guidance will also be included in our annual training of new staff performing official controls.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
<p>Rec 4: The competent authority should ensure that all appropriate methods and techniques for official controls are used as required by Article 14 of the OCR.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2022 informed the Authority that they will review the guidance material for pesticides in order to ensure that all appropriate methods and techniques for official controls are described, and to be more specific about requirements in Article 14 of the OCR.</p> <p>In April 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan. Additional deadline of April to review the guidance for pesticides according to Article 14 of the OCR and a deadline of June 2023 about how inspectors in the region will be informed and the start date of using the new guidance were added to the original Action Plan.</p> <p>In June 2022 NFSA submitted a further updated action plan including plans to update checklist for plant protection products in MATS with deadline of October 2022.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) there were no changes to actions 4 a) and b) and work in progress. A number of inspection checkpoints have been updated for verification of information of operators, assessment of whether good agricultural practice has been implemented, inspection of premises/areas etc. more visible for the inspectors. The updated checkpoints are automatically included for the next inspections. Information about updated checkpoints is communicated to NFSA's inspectors in the pesticide area via Teams.</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

Audit ID 2021/NOR/6 Audit to Norway from 27 September to 6 October 2021 on plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>In May 2023 the Authority received information regarding overall Guidelines on pesticides - placing on the market, storage and use of PPPs submitted. The guidelines concern recommendations 3,4,5,6,7,10 and 11.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided update on the recommendations. New guidelines and inspection reports based on them were presented as evidence.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
<p>Rec 5: The competent authority should ensure that emergency authorisations granted are for a limited and controlled use as required by Article 53.1 of Regulation (EC) 1107/2009.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2022 informed the Authority that they will update the Article 53 procedure and decision letter to require the applicant to submit information on the persons who make use of the emergency authorisation, when they use it and the areas treated. The procedure will also be updated to include correcting the area where the Art. 53 authorisation has been applied in PPPAMS, deadline end of January 2022; b) will review guidance documents to ensure targeted controls of emergency authorisations are carried out, as required in Article 53.1 of Regulation (EC) 1107/2009.</p> <p>In April 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan which included revised Article 53 procedure and decision letter and the CA considers with that revision, action has been taken.</p> <p>In June 2022 NFSA submitted a further updated action plan. NFSA requested further clarification on how to improve their Article 53 procedure. The updated Action Plan also includes updating checklist for plant protection products in MATS for inspectors to control emergency authorisations - deadline of October 2022.</p> <p>In October 2022 NFSA provided updated authorisation decision forms and documented procedures for emergency authorisations.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that a checkpoint in MATS concerning emergency authorisations has been added to ensure limited and controlled use. The updated checkpoint will automatically be included for next inspections of professional users. Information about updated</p>	Action taken.

Audit ID 2021/NOR/6 Audit to Norway from 27 September to 6 October 2021 on plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>checkpoints is communicated to the NFSA inspectors in the pesticide area via Teams.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided update on the recommendations. New guidelines and inspection reports based on them were presented as evidence.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation</p>	
<p>Rec 6: The competent authority should ensure that the sales of pesticides authorised for professional use are restricted to persons holding a certificate as required by Article 6.2 of Directive 2009/128/EC.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2022 informed the Authority that they will review and update the guidance documents for pesticides in order to include the requirements specified in Article 6.2 of Directive 2009/128/EC, deadline end of June 2023 ; b) The issue concerning a company having its own documentation system is related to one group of companies. The NFSA will provide instructions to the relevant region to carry out an audit of the parent company in question, deadline end of December 2023.</p> <p>In April 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan with additional deadlines of April 2023 and June 2023 with some general proposed actions added to the original Action Plan.</p> <p>In June 2022 NFSA submitted a further updated action plan which includes reduced deadline for action 6c (auditing the parent company of the non-compliance) from April 2023 to December 2022. It also includes updating checklist for plant protection products in MATS for requirements on pesticides sales with deadline of October 2022.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that, regarding Action 6 c) - an inspection has been carried out at the head office of the establishment where there were deficient routines regarding the sale of PPPs authorised for professional use. The company's head office has drawn up new routines which involve obtaining information from the NFSA regarding authorisations that have been withdrawn. They will be responsible for updating the company's computer system. Regarding Action 6 d) - a checkpoint in MATS concerning pesticides authorised for professional users has been updated to ensure that the sales are restricted to persons with a certificate. The updated checkpoint will automatically be included for next inspections of professional users. Information about updated checkpoints is communicated to the NFSA</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

Audit ID 2021/NOR/6 Audit to Norway from 27 September to 6 October 2021 on plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>inspectors in the pesticide area via Teams.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided update on the recommendations. New guidelines and inspection reports based on them were presented as evidence.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
<p>Rec 7: The competent authority should ensure that only authorised PPPs are marketed and used as required by Article 28 of Regulation (EC) 1107/2009.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2022 informed the Authority that they will: a) review the guidance documents for pesticides in order to be more specific about requirements in Article 28 of Regulation (EC) 1107/2009; b) carry out a guidance campaign to increase awareness of retailers and professional users of the dangers of obsolete and unauthorised pesticides in storage rooms. The purpose is for the companies to clean up their storage rooms on their own initiative, rather than the NFSA inspecting, and deviations being discovered.</p> <p>In April 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan with additional deadlines of April and June 2023 with some proposed action on how inspectors in the region will be informed and that the new guidance will be used from June 2023.</p> <p>In June 2022 NFSA submitted a further updated action plan which includes: Action 7d added - the NFSA will update the checklist for plant protection products in MATS in order to be more specific about requirements in Article 28 of Regulation (EC) 1107/2009 and inspectors will be informed, deadline end of October 2022; Action 7e on information campaign on use of approved pesticides only and other plan related topics deadline end of December 2022 added.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that, regarding Action 7 d) - a checkpoint in MATS concerning authorised PPPs has been updated to ensure that only authorised PPPs are marketed and used. The updated checkpoint will automatically be included for the next inspections.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided update on the recommendations. Evidence of information to users and awareness campaigns were provided.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

Audit ID 2021/NOR/6 Audit to Norway from 27 September to 6 October 2021 on plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	recommendation	
<p>Rec 8: The competent authority should ensure that samples are sealed with the sampling record attached, as required by section 4.6 of the Annex to Directive 2002/63/EC</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2022 informed the Authority that a) The guidance document for sampling (“Prøvetaking i Mattilsynet”) has been updated when it comes to sealing of samples. This is also included in routines for official control programmes for pesticide residues (“OK-instruks plantevernmiddelester”). b) The inspectors who take the samples in the monitoring program for pesticide residues will be informed about the routines for sealing of samples.</p> <p>In April 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan which confirmed that the sampling guidance had been updated, this action completed. Information on how inspectors in the region will be updated was added to action b).</p> <p>In June 2022 NFSA submitted an updated guidance document for sampling. In October 2022 NFSA submitted updated information about the planned training of 29-30 November 2022 for sampling inspectors.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that, regarding Action 8 a) requirements for sealing of samples for control of pesticide residues and the need for traceability in registration is included in “OK-instruks</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

Audit ID 2021/NOR/6 Audit to Norway from 27 September to 6 October 2021 on plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>kjemisk mattrygghet 2023”. Regarding the monitoring programme, the laboratory that analyses the samples, is requested to inform the NFSA if samples are not properly sealed. Regarding Action 8 b) a workshop for inspectors taking samples under the monitoring programme for pesticide residues in food was held 29-30 November 2022. NFSA informed the inspectors and regional advisors about the requirements regarding sealing of samples, on registration traceability, and had a presentation about general sampling, sealing, storage and transport of samples. The follow-up on the ESA recommendation 8 was also presented and discussed.</p> <p>In May 2023 the Authority received information regarding updated procedures of the laboratory and use of sample seals including photo evidence.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
<p>Rec 9: The competent authority should ensure that PPPs are used in accordance with the conditions specified in authorisations as required by Article 55 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2022 informed the Authority that they will review and update the guidance documents for pesticides in order to be more specific about requirements in Article 55 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009.</p> <p>In April 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan. Regarding action a) updating checklist in MATS deadline updated to end April 2022. Action b) information on how inspectors in the region will be informed and that the updated procedures will be used from June 2022 added with deadline.</p> <p>In June 2022 NFSA submitted an updated checklist document.</p> <p>In October 2022 NFSA submitted an update about informing regional officers about the updated checklist.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided update on the recommendations. Checklist has been updated and inspectors informed of the change.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the</p>	Action taken.

Audit ID 2021/NOR/6 Audit to Norway from 27 September to 6 October 2021 on plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	recommendation.	
<p>Rec 10: The competent authority should ensure that disposal of pesticide remnants and their packaging does not endanger human health or the environment as required by Article 13.1 of Directive 2009/128/EC.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2022 informed the Authority that a guidance document for the regional inspectors will be prepared to ensure better verification of the safe disposal of pesticide remnants and their packaging.</p> <p>In April 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan. It was added that the guidance document for the regional inspectors will be prepared by end of April 2023 and how inspectors in the region will be informed and will use the procedures with a deadline of June 2023.</p> <p>In June 2022 NFSA submitted an updated action plan including updating checklist for plant protection products in MATS to be more specific regarding the requirements of Article 13.1 of Directive 2009/128/EC, with deadline of October 2022.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that regarding Action 10 c) - a checkpoint in MATS concerning pesticide remnants has been updated to ensure that only authorised PPPs are marketed and used.</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

Audit ID 2021/NOR/6 Audit to Norway from 27 September to 6 October 2021 on plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>The updated checkpoint will automatically be included for the next inspections. Information about updated checkpoints is communicated to the NFSA inspectors in the pesticide area via Teams.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided update on the recommendations. Several inspections reports were provided as evidence showing the use of the new guidelines.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	
<p>Rec 11: The competent authority should ensure that the general principles of Integrated pest management (IPM), as referred to in Article 14 of, and Annex III to Directive 2009/128/EC, are implemented by all professional users, in accordance with Article 14.4 of Directive 2009/128/EC, in conjunction with Article 55 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2022 informed the Authority that the NFSA will review and update the guidance documents for pesticides in order to ensure that IPM-principles is a focus area at inspections.</p> <p>In April 2022 NFSA provided an updated Action Plan. Additional general deadlines of April and June 2023 with some general proposed actions have been added to the original Action Plan.</p> <p>In June 2022 NFSA submitted a further revised action plan including updating checklist for plant protection products in MATS to be more specific regarding the requirements of Article 14.4 of Directive 2009/128/EC, with deadline of October 2022.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that, regarding Action 11 c) - the checkpoint in MATS concerning the general principles of IMP has been updated. The checkpoint has been split in two so that the NFSA can get a better overview of whether deviations is related to whether the principles are not being followed or whether the record-keeping is inadequate/deficient. The updated checkpoint will automatically be included for the next inspection. Information about updated checkpoints is communicated to the NFSA inspectors in the pesticide area via Teams.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided update on the recommendations. Evidence of inspections based on the new guidelines was presented.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation.</p>	Action taken.

2.10 Animal welfare

In the period from April 2018 to November 2022, the Authority has completed three audits in relation to animal welfare. Out of a total of eighteen recommendations issued in relation to these audits, twelve recommendations were identified to be addressed in the 2023 General review audit.

Mission ID 2018/NOR/2		
Mission to Norway from 17 to 24 April 2018 on animal welfare during transport and related operations		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
<p>Rec 1: The competent authorities should ensure that staff performing official controls receive appropriate training enabling them to undertake their duties competently and to carry out official controls on transport of live animals in a consistent manner and that they receive regular additional training as necessary, as required by Article 6(a) and (b) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.</p>	<p>During the General review mission in February 2020 the NFSA provided information that specific requirements regarding transport of live animals, and the need for training, will be identified and included in the training programme for 2020. Budget for developing the training programme is approved. The training program will be designed during 2020. The programme will be ready for use/available in NFSAs training module in the beginning of 2021.</p> <p>In response to the Authority's follow up letter the NFSA in October 2021 informed the Authority that the training programme had not yet been developed.</p> <p>In response to the Authority's follow up letter the NFSA in June 2022 informed the Authority that the training programme had not yet been developed and that NFSA were in dialogue with their consultants regarding e-learning programmes.</p> <p>In response to the package meeting follow-up letter in January 2023 the NFSA informed the Authority that the work on the training programme is in progress, but is still not finished. Prior to the package meeting in the NFSA informed the Authority in October 2022, that the first parts of the e-learning programme was planned to be ready for use in the beginning of 2023. With regard to the planned modules on information available on tachographs and SNS-data the NFSA is considering another model than e-learning and its exploring the possibilities for a mixed learning course with different elements (share point site, teams meetings etc), including better routines to ensure the best possible benefit from the BTSE learning programme.</p> <p>In response to the Authority's follow up letter the NFSA in February 2023 informed the Authority that work on the training programme is in progress but is still not finished.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed ESA that Module 1 is finished and available in Ransel (the</p>	<p>In progress.</p>

Mission ID 2018/NOR/2 Mission to Norway from 17 to 24 April 2018 on animal welfare during transport and related operations		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>LMS). Module 2 is delayed due to recent changes in MATS. This has affected the layout in MATS and has resulted in a need for changes in the pictures in the e-learning course. NFSA expect module 2 to be finished and available for the inspectors before the summer holidays. The Head Office has given instructions to the Regions, and a deadline is given for all relevant inspectors to complete module 1. The deadline is 10 June 2023. From this date, only staff that has completed module 1 can be responsible for official controls regarding animal transport.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided an update. Module 2 is finished and has been available in Ransel (the LMS) since 03 July 2023. The Head Office has given instructions to the Regions, and a deadline is given for all relevant inspectors to complete module 2. The deadline was set to 15 September 2023. In order to make it easier for the Regions/inspectors to find relevant information about training and guidance documents regarding animal welfare during transport, we have created a sharepoint page where we have gathered all the information in one place. The sharepoint page is available for all Regions and all inspectors. The main elements at this page includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general part on animal transport, i.e. information on the current legislation • Information about training of personnel, including information on mandatory courses In Ransel • Information about guidelines • Other interpretations and clarifications that are given • Frequently asked questions <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
<p>Rec 2: The competent authorities should ensure that their staff are duly trained and equipped to check tachographs and SNS data as required by Article 16 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.</p>	<p>During the General review mission in February 2020 the NFSA provided information that the NFSA initiated contact with the NPRA. NPRA notified NFSA that they would like to involve the respective ministries in drafting of an agreement, mainly due to some uncertainties on the interpretation of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and how to properly share data. NFSA also stated that, since there are few long-distance transports and thus not day to day issues related to reading of tachographs the Food Safety Authority has decided that the other recommendations need to be given higher priority.</p>	In progress

Mission ID 2018/NOR/2		
Mission to Norway from 17 to 24 April 2018 on animal welfare during transport and related operations		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>In response to the Authority’s follow up letter the NFSA in October 2021 informed the Authority that there has not been any progress on this recommendation, except that the issue has been discussed within the organisation and a new approach will be required to solve it. NFSA was planning to visit one of the local Norwegian Public Roads Administration (NPRA) premises to learn more about the tachographs to get a better understanding in order to find a practical way to solve this issue, but this has not been possible yet due to Covid 19.</p> <p>In response to the Authority’s follow up letter the NFSA in June 2022 informed the Authority that they depend on cooperation with the NPRA to be able to find the best and most effective way to carry out the checks. Unfortunately, necessary contact has not been established between the NFSA and the NPRA yet. NFSA has recently (June 2023) been in contact with the department handling these issues in the NPRA again, and hope to establish more efficient cooperation on this matter after the summer holidays.</p> <p>In response to the package meeting follow-up letter in January 2023 the NFSA informed the Authority that as discussed at the package meeting, they will use prints from the tacographs as method, and special equipment to analyse data will therefore not be necessary. The NPRA has confirmed that they will provide help to produce learning material, and the responsible case handlers in the NFSA and the NPRA have discussed the issue on a meeting 25 November 2022. As a result of this meeting, the NPRA has delivered a document with description of the different elements in the prints, which will be used as the basis for a guidance document. NFSA also started a discussion on how the NPRA can assist them in more practical training to make sure that the inspectors understand how to read these prints in correctly. With regard to training to do cheks of Satellite Navigation System data, there has been no progress yet. NFSA has confirmed that together with training on checks related to journey logs, this will be a part of the total training programme. With regard to the planned modules on information available on tachographs and SNS-data, another model than e-learning is being considered, such as share point site, teams meetings etc, In response to the Authority’s follow up letter the NFSA in February 2023 informed the Authority that work on the training programme is in progress but is still not finished.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided an update. The guidance document on how to read the scripts from the tachographs is still not finished. We have not been able to find time for both the NPRA and the NFSA to work together with this since we received the descriptions from the NPRA early this year. New deadline: February</p>	

Mission ID 2018/NOR/2 Mission to Norway from 17 to 24 April 2018 on animal welfare during transport and related operations		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>2024. With regard to SNS data, we refer to the guidance document regarding checks related to long journeys mentioned in our update in February 2023 on recommendation 6. This guidance document is also available for the inspectors at the sharepoint page mentioned above.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
<p>Rec 6: The competent authorities should ensure that appropriate checks related to journey logs are carried out before long journeys and appropriate checks on a random or targeted basis are carried out at any stage of the long journey as required in Articles 14(1)(a)(ii) and 15(1) of the Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.</p>	<p>In response to the draft mission report the NFSA in July 2018 informed the Authority that the NFSA will establish routines on checks related to long journeys, both before, during and after transport take place. The routines will be published in guidelines in the quality system.</p> <p>During the General review mission in February 2020 the NFSA provided information that a local guidance document on controls before long journeys to other member states, prepared by an official veterinarian in Region Øst, is in use. To ensure adequate checks in all regions, the local guidance document in use in Region Øst, will form the basis for a national guidance document on this issue. The document will be published in the quality system. The guidance document will also include retrospective controls on long journeys, in particular checks on the information from the SNS. The relevant parts of the guidance document will also be applicable for checks on long journeys within Norway.</p> <p>Following the General review audit the NFSA informed the Authority in March 2020 that almost all transports of animals from Norway to other member states have their origin in Region øst. Action has now been taken to ensure adequate checks on these journeys, both before and after the journey, in this region; A local guidance document on controls before long journeys to other member states is in use. One of the inspectors in Region Øst attended the BTSF course on retrospective checks on transport of animals in January 2020. This inspector has a key role in checks on transports from Norway to other countries and has subsequently (05.03.2020) completed the training of three additional inspectors in this region. With reference to the limited amount of transport of live animals from Norway, it is considered that this would be enough educated staff to perform retrospective controls in this region. To ensure adequate checks in all regions, the local guidance document in use in Region øst, will form the basis for a national guidance document on this issue. The document will be published in the quality system. The guidance document will also include retrospective controls on long journeys, in particular checks on the information from the SNS. The</p>	<p>In progress</p>

Mission ID 2018/NOR/2 Mission to Norway from 17 to 24 April 2018 on animal welfare during transport and related operations		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>relevant parts of the guidance document will also be applicable for checks on long journeys within Norway.</p> <p>In response to the Authority's follow up letter the NFSA in October 2021 informed the Authority that a draft guideline on retrospective controls has been made by the inspector in Region Øst that has attended the BTSF course on retrospective checks. The Head Office has not been able to review and finish the document yet.</p> <p>NFSA informed the Authority in June 2022 that the work with the guidance document has been postponed, due to other tasks considered more critical. The reason for this assessment is both the small amount of journeys requiring journey logs in/from Norway and that the most relevant region has already established routines to ensure sufficient control, and the relevant inspectors have received local training. However, it is still the plan to revise and publish the guidance document as soon as possible. As the situation is now, we expect it can be implemented soon after the summer holidays.</p> <p>In response to the Authority's follow up letter the NFSA in February 2023 informed the Authority that the guidance document regarding checks related to journey logs is finished and available for the inspectors in Teams.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	

Audit ID 2021/NOR/5 Audit to Norway from 15 to 24 November 2021 on the protection of animals at the time of killing.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
<p>Rec 1: The NFSA should ensure that official controls are performed in line with requirements of Article 18 of Regulation (EU) No 2017/625 and that the methods and techniques used for official controls reflect the requirements of Article 14 of Regulation (EU) No 2017/625. In particular, the NFSA should examine the controls that business operators</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in February 2022 informed the Authority that they will address this recommendation with a number of actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NFSA will provide more detailed guidance to describe the content of the requirements in 1099/2009, and what these requirements mean in practice. i.e. describe the expected content of the SOP's (completion - end of 2022). 2. NFSA will provide guidance on the methods and techniques used for official controls and expectations on follow up in the case of infringements. In this work it will be essential to describe the necessity to move from "old fashion" control (i.e. the OV controlling stunning efficiency himself) to a more audit-based approach to verify 	<p>Action taken.</p>

Audit ID 2021/NOR/5		
Audit to Norway from 15 to 24 November 2021 on the protection of animals at the time of killing.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
have put in place and the results obtained.	<p>if the BO meets their obligations (start within end of 2022).</p> <p>3. Revise the existing guidance on the “from day to day controls” in slaughterhouses for domestic ungulates and provide equivalent guidance for official controls in poultry slaughterhouses (completion - August 2023).</p> <p>4. Evaluate the need for revising the training programme for official veterinarians (completion - August 2023).</p> <p>In response to the Authority’s follow up letter the NFSA in June 2022 informed the Authority that:</p> <p>1. NFSA have started revising the national regulation concerning animal welfare at time of killing, in addition to guidance to both national regulation and regulation (EC)1009/2009. During this process NFSA collaborate with inspectors from the regions to get their input on which topics in the legislation they experience as difficult or challenging to understand. The feedback gathered will be used when we shall prepare the guidance stated in point 1.1. (completion - end of 2022).</p> <p>2. The guidance will be in the form of written guidelines. NFSA will also look into other ways to train and inform the inspectors, possibly in the form of webinars or meetings (start within end of 2022).</p> <p>3. NFSA collaborate with another unit at the Head Office when revising the existing guidance on daily controls in slaughterhouses for domestic ungulates and equivalent guidance for official controls in poultry slaughterhouses. NFSA have accelerated the plans and are planning to start this work within the last trimester of 2022. NFSA will assess the checkpoints related to the Regulation, and possibly make mandatory checklist to be used when conducting the daily control (start last trimester 2022).</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that work on this recommendation was temporarily postponed due to lack of resources.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed ESA that they will:</p> <p>1. Provide more detailed guidance to describe the content of the requirements in Regulation 1099/2009. Rather than producing one document with complete</p>	

Audit ID 2021/NOR/5 Audit to Norway from 15 to 24 November 2021 on the protection of animals at the time of killing.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>guidance on all issues, CA will provide elements of guidance consecutively when the elements are finished. The aim is to reduce the risk of poor animal welfare by giving guidance as soon as possible. Working with producing these elements have high priority. At the mandatory meeting for OV's in June (point 4 below) the finished elements (at that point) will be one of the main issues on the agenda. The following list illustrates the order of priority for the work with guidance material. This order has been set both based on what issues we consider most critical for animal welfare, and on the complexity of the requirements and how challenging it is for the inspectors to understand the requirements based solely on the text in the regulation. Standard operating procedures (art 6) and Maintenance, and records of maintenance, of restraining and stunning equipment (art 9) [May 2023], checks on stunning (art 5 and 16) [June 2023], stunning equipment and devices to display and record key parameters for electrical stunning and gas stunning (annex II) [September 2023], specific requirements for layout and construction of slaughterhouses and equipment in annex II, with special focus on the requirements in force from December 2019 [Nov 2023], certificate of competence (art 7) and animal welfare officers (art 17) [Nov 2023].</p> <p>2. Guidance on methods & techniques used for OCs will to some degree be included in the guidance documents mentioned above (point 1). In the longer term we will develop a more complete and detailed guideline. Methods and techniques, and especially the audit-based approach, will be an essential element of the task we plan to include in the BDL for 2024. All the issues mentioned above (the list of issues prioritised for guidance in point 1) will be included as mandatory checks in these audits.</p> <p>3. Guidance for official controls in poultry slaughterhouses has been drafted. NFSA plan to include the requirements for documentation of the daily control of animal welfare [August 2023]. When it concerns the guideline «from day-to-day controls» in slaughterhouses for domestic ungulates, we will give instructions to ensure that all regions comply with the guideline. [June 2023].</p> <p>4. The training programme for official veterinarians has been revised. We are also arranging a mandatory meeting for official veterinarians in June this year. All the OV's must complete the revised presentation on animal welfare at slaughter prior to the meeting. At this meeting we will give information about the guidance finished at that point, give information on the plan for further guidance, clarify questions and receive feedback from the OV's on additional need for guidance from their point of view.</p>	

Audit ID 2021/NOR/5 Audit to Norway from 15 to 24 November 2021 on the protection of animals at the time of killing.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>In December 2023 Norway provided an updated corrective action plan. A revised document regarding SOP and maintenance of restraining and stunning equipment has been published in teams 13 December 2023. Guidance on design of premises and equipment related to animal welfare requirements and guidance on competence of personnel handling live animals in slaughterhouses also published in teams. It has been decided that animal welfare in slaughterhouses will be one of the prioritised areas for official controls in 2024. This will be audit based controls, with special focus on the business operators systems to control and secure animal welfare, in line with the requirements in Regulation 1099/2009. An extra meeting with the official veterinarians at slaughterhouses that could not participate in June, were held in November. While working with revising the existing guideline for domestic ungulates and including animal welfare controls in the guideline for poultry, we have decided that we need to do more in depth work on these matters to be able to secure effective official controls. This means that we will need more time to finish the work - new deadline March 2024.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation</p>	
<p>Rec 2: The NFSA should ensure that official controls are performed in accordance with documented procedures.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in February 2022 informed the Authority that they consider this recommendation to be closely related to both recommendation number 1 and 3. Most of the actions described on these recommendations will also be relevant to address this recommendation. NFSA will also improve the system and routines for internal control to ensure that official controls are performed in accordance with documented procedures.</p> <p>In response to the Authority's follow up letter the NFSA in June 2022 informed the Authority that they will describe a system for internal control on these topics in the mentioned guidelines (recommendation 1) (completion August 2023).</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that the guideline for verification procedures has just been published and NFSA will continue the work on establishing detailed routines regarding this specific topic (animal welfare at the time of killing).</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed the Authority that they have re-prioritized drafting guidance on Regulation 1099/2009 and will draft the guidance starting with issues they consider most critical</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

Audit ID 2021/NOR/5 Audit to Norway from 15 to 24 November 2021 on the protection of animals at the time of killing.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
	<p>for animal welfare. The guidance will be made available to staff in phases as each section is completed rather than waiting for the whole document to be completed. Draft guidance on SOPs provided by CA with final version planned for May 2023 with guidance on stunning checks planned for June 2023. CA confirmed the unit for biological safety has produced a guideline for official control in poultry slaughterhouses. In addition, training material for new OVs has been revised.</p> <p>In December 2023 updated corrective action, no information provided specifically for this recommendation. However, final versions of guidance on SOPs and requirements for stunning equipment, guidance on design of premises and equipment related to animal welfare requirements and guidance on competence of personnel handling live animals in slaughterhouses all published and provided to ESA. In December 2023 response to recommendation 1, NFSA stated that "while working with revising the existing guideline for domestic ungulates, and including animal welfare controls in the guideline for poultry, we have decided that we need to do more in depth work on these matters to be able to secure effective official controls". This is planned to be completed by March 2024.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation</p>	
<p>Rec 3: The NFSA should ensure that control verification procedures related to protection of animals at the time of killing are in place.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in February 2022 informed the Authority that they will establish control verification procedures. A working group in the NFSA Head office, Regulations and Control Department will perform the task.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that guidelines for control verification procedures have been finalized and published in NFSA quality system.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided an updated corrective action plan. In response to recommendation 1, NFSA stated "It has been decided that animal welfare in slaughterhouses will be one of the prioritised areas for official controls in 2024. This will be audit based controls, with special focus on the business operators systems to control and secure animal welfare, in line with the requirements in Regulation 1099/2009".</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

Audit ID 2021/NOR/5 Audit to Norway from 15 to 24 November 2021 on the protection of animals at the time of killing.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
<p>Rec 4: The NFSA should ensure that all business operators meet their obligations on the protection of animals at the time of killing.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in February 2022 informed the Authority that they consider this recommendation to be closely related to both recommendation number 1 and 2 and that most of the actions described on these recommendations will also be relevant to address this recommendation.</p> <p>In response to the Authority's follow up letter the NFSA in June 2022 informed the Authority that they will suggest that official controls in slaughterhouses are included in the BDL for 2024.</p> <p>In March 2023 NFSA informed the Authority (in response to GRA PAQ) that they will: 1) update the checkpoints to improve the guidance to the inspectors. Current status February 2023: The work has started in 2022 but has been temporarily postponed due to lack of resources. 2) decide mandatory checkpoints for official controls in slaughterhouses and provide checklists Current status February 2023: The work has started in 2022 but has been temporarily postponed due to lack of resources.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed ESA that preparing checkpoints and checklists for the task in BDL 2024 will be the main focus regarding updates in MATS this year. In a longer term we will evaluate the need for changes in checkpoints and checklists related to animal welfare at the time of killing, and Regulation 1099/2009 in general. This will be a natural consequence of the content in the guidance material we will provide.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided an updated corrective action plan. According to response for recommendation 1, a revised document regarding SOP and maintenance of restraining and stunning equipment has been published in teams 13 December 2023. Guidance on design of premises and equipment related to animal welfare requirements and guidance on competence of personnel handling live animals in slaughterhouses also published in teams. It has been decided that animal welfare in slaughterhouses will be one of the prioritised areas for official controls in 2024. This will be audit based controls, with special focus on the business operators systems to control and secure animal welfare, in line with the requirements in Regulation 1099/2009. An extra meeting with the official veterinarians at slaughterhouses that could not participate in June, were held in November.</p> <p>Assessment: The actions taken have satisfactorily addressed the recommendation</p>	<p>Action taken.</p>

Audit ID 2022/NOR/8 Audit to Norway from 31 October to 9 November 2022 on protection of laying hens and chicken kept for meat production.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
<p>Rec 1: Ensure that the distinguishing number and the maximum capacity of holdings are included in the laying hen register, as required by Points 1 and 2 of the Annex to Directive 2002/4/EC, that information concerning maximum capacity on the establishment is calculated in accordance with the methodology set down in EEA legislation, that changes concerning the registered data are notified to the CA without delay and that the register is updated immediately when such information is received by the CA pursuant to Article 1(4) of Directive 2002/4/EC.</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2023 informed the Authority that they will address this recommendation with a number of actions:</p> <p>The requirement to have a distinguishing number, which is the medium for tracing eggs put on the market, is not part of the EEA agreement. However, we have in our current register a column to indicate the farming method for laying hens and the maximum capacity of the holdings.</p> <p>NFSA Head Office is currently establishing a new holding register in accordance with Animal Health Law. This register will include the maximum capacity of holdings for laying hens, as well as farming method. We will develop guidance on how to register the maximum capacity in our system to ensure that the information that is recorded is correct (see reply to recommendation no. 2 regarding guidance on how to calculate capacity).</p> <p>NFSA will inform farmers that changes in capacity must be reported to NFSA in order to update the register. If NFSA discovers that farmers have not fulfilled their reporting duties, we will respond in line with procedures for follow up described in response to recommendation no. 2. This has been communicated to the farmers organisations in a meeting with NFSA Head Office 13. January 2023.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed ESA that the NFSA will ensure that a distinguishing number indicating farming method is included in the laying hen register. There is a product team working on establishing a production site register in line with the requirement in animal health law, and this new register will incorporate this distinguishing number. This should be in place by the end of 2023.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided an update. NFSA confirmed the deadline December 2023.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	<p>In progress.</p>
<p>Rec 2: Ensure that staff performing official controls on animal welfare of poultry receive</p>	<p>In response to the draft mission report the NFSA in January 2023 informed the Authority that they will address this recommendation with a number of actions:</p>	<p>In progress.</p>

Audit ID 2022/NOR/8 Audit to Norway from 31 October to 9 November 2022 on protection of laying hens and chicken kept for meat production.		
(Reference) Recommendation	Information provided by the Norwegian authorities	ESA Assessment
<p>appropriate training and are kept up to date in their area of competence, as required by Article 5(4)(a) and (b) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625, and that procedures are in place to ensure effectiveness and appropriateness of official controls on laying hen farms, as required by Articles 5(1)(a) and 12 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.</p>	<p>As ESA is aware, NFSA is reviewing the use of measures/sanctions in a broader perspective. This work has risen principal policy issues that we have to conclude on before we can draw up any detailed guide- lines. Deadline July 2023.</p> <p>Regarding official controls on animal welfare for laying hens, we will provide documented procedures to inspectors on the methods and techniques to be used, and expectations on follow up in the case of infringements. This will include how to calculate maximum capacity in accordance with methodology in EEA legislation. The procedures will include examples on how to use enforcement measures in case of infringements related to overstocking etc. Deadline November 2023.</p> <p>We will do physical inspections, including necessary measurements of laying hen establishments, in line with NFSA`s total control plan, to ensure that the capacity in laying hen holdings meets the requirements in the legislation. Starting January 2024.</p> <p>In February 2023 the NFSA informed the authority that they are preparing the guidance material on how to calculate maximum capacity in laying hen holdings, taking into account all limiting factors.</p> <p>In November 2023 reply to package meeting, NFSA confirmed deadline postponed.</p> <p>In December 2023 NFSA provided an update. As of January 1st 2024 general and overarching guidance to inspectors will stipulate that inspectors shall take any action necessary to determine the origin and extent of the non-compliance and to establish the operator`s responsibilities, where non-compliance is established. Opinions from regions performing official controls on the new guidance has been gathered before implementation. The new guidance will also be included in our annual training of new staff performing official controls. Deadline changed to January 2024. A guideline /procedure on how to perform animal welfare checks in laying hen holdings has been produced. The procedure will be published and available for our inspectors at the latest 20.12.2023.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
<p>Rec 3: Ensure that the keepers of laying hens apply all relevant provisions of Articles 4 and 6 of Directive 1997/74/EC, depending on the production</p>	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2023 informed the Authority that they consider this recommendation to be closely related to recommendations number 2 and 5. The actions described in response to these recommendations will also be relevant to address this recommendation.</p>	<p>In progress.</p>

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system on the establishments, and that official controls are performed in line with Article 10(1) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and that compliance with these welfare requirements is verified during official controls, pursuant to Article 21(1) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.	<p>In February 2023 the NFSA informed the authority that they will share the guidance material for calculating maximum capacity with the industry when it is ready. This was agreed upon in a meeting with relevant parties after the audit. The aim is to make it easier for farmers to do the proper calculations of maximum capacity.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	
Rec 4: Ensure that official controls verifying compliance with the requirements for measurement of the usable area on broiler farms are undertaken, pursuant to Article 21(1) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2023 informed the Authority that they will update the existing procedure for control with broiler chicken holdings, to specify even clearer that the usable area shall be measured when carrying out official controls on animal welfare in broiler chicken holdings.</p> <p>We will refer to the procedure in the relevant check point in MATS and verify according to procedures referred to in the answer to recommendation number 5.</p> <p>In May 2023 Norway provided updates following the General review audit in which it informed ESA that NFSA will perform verification of the control of broiler holdings to check if NFSA inspectors have complied with the requirement to measure usable area in broiler farms. This is clearly stated in the guideline for inspections of broiler holdings. The control should be finished by 1 September 2023. While working with the preparation of these controls, NFSA had concluded that there is a need to make a special check point in MATS for measurement of usable area, in addition to the current check point that concerns chicken density.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	In progress.
Rec 5: Ensure that adequate control verification procedures are in place to ensure that official controls are consistent and effective, as required by Article 12(2) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.	<p>In response to the draft audit report the NFSA in January 2023 informed the Authority that a working group in the NFSA Head office has proposed procedures for control verification. They have performed an internal consultation of the procedures and are in the process of finalizing the document. January 2023. The procedure will be applied as soon as it is finalized.</p> <p>In February 2023 the NFSA informed the authority that the guidelines for control verification procedures have been finalized and published in the NFSA's quality system. A copy of the guidelines was provided.</p>	In progress.

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	<p>In December 2023 NFSA provided an update. The procedure for control verification was published in January 2023. The unit for animal welfare has in 2023 performed control verification on compliance with the broiler welfare guideline. The main issue was the routines for measurement of the usable area on broiler farms. When performing the control verification, we have revealed a need to update the procedure. The work on this matter has started.</p> <p>Assessment: Actions to address the recommendation are in progress.</p>	

2.11 Organic production

There are no recommendations currently open for follow up.

3 Overview of planned audits and controls

ESA must ensure that the EEA EFTA States correctly apply EEA legislation on food and feed safety, animal health and welfare. Compliance is partly ensured through audits of the national control systems, which enable ESA to assess the EEA EFTA States' application of the EEA legislation in these fields. Audits represent a common form of control to check on how the EEA legislation is enforced in the food and veterinary area.

ESA sets out the priority areas for its controls, including audits, in a multiannual control programme. This takes a number of factors into consideration, some of which are:

- New EEA legislation;
- Findings, conclusions and recommendations of the last audit on the topic;
- Unsatisfactory or no response in the follow-up evaluation of previous audits;
- Emerging topics such as animal diseases or zoonoses;
- The control programme of DG SANTE Directorate F;
- The relevance of the field in the EEA EFTA States to be audited.

On 3 December 2021, ESA adopted its control programme for the period 2022-2026 to be carried out in the food and veterinary area ('control programme') which is published on ESA's website: [Control Programme 2022 - 2026](#)

Based on the priorities set out in the control programme, ESA prepares an annual work programme which is published on ESA's website: [Work Programme 2024](#)

ANNEX I – ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS AND SPECIAL TERMS

ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
ABP	Animal By-Products
BCP	Border Control Post
BDL	Budget Disposal Letter
BTSF	Better training for Safer Food: training courses provided by EU Commission
CA	Competent Authority
CCA	Central Competent Authority
EC	European Community
EEA	European Economic Area
EEA Agreement	Agreement on the European Economic Area
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
ESA	EFTA Surveillance Authority
EU	European Union
FBO	Food Business Operator / Feed Business Operator
GRA	General review audit
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
ISO/IEC	International Standards Organisation
LBM	Live Bivalve Molluscs
MANCP	Multi Annual National Control Plan
MATS	NFSA's case processing and decision support tool
MRL	Maximum Residue Limit
MS	Member State
NFSA	Norwegian Food Safety Authority
NRCP	National Residue Control Plan
NRL	National Reference Laboratory
OCR	Official control regulation – Regulation (EU) 2017/625
OV	Official Veterinarian
PAE	Pesticide application equipment
PAQ	Pre-audit questionnaire
PNAO	Products of non-animal origin
PPP	Plant Protection Product(s)
IPM	Integrated pest management