

Terms of Reference – Health Star Rating Advisory Committee

Background

The Health Star Rating (HSR) Advisory Committee (HSRAC) was established in 2014 to progress implementation of the HSR system. It was suspended in 2019 pending consideration of the Food Ministers' Meeting response to the HSR Five Year Review Report (the Review). The HSRAC was re-established in 2020 with revised Terms of Reference (TORs) to guide the HSR system changes following the Review.

In November 2024, Food Ministers agreed that the changes to the system following the Review and implementation period were complete, and agreed that the HSRAC should continue for the foreseeable future under the oversight of the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC).

Role and Purpose

The role of the Advisory Committee is to provide guidance and support to the continued implementation of the HSR system.

The Advisory Committee will be responsible for providing advice to the Health Star Rating Unit as needed, in relation to:

- potential changes to the HSR system;
- the HSR Calculator and guidance materials;
- queries or complaints, and potential anomalies unable to be resolved by the HSR Unit;
- the content and scope of Australian marketing campaigns and other communications, informed by monitoring information;
- communicating with stakeholders; and
- other HSR matters as required.

If changes to the HSR system are proposed, the HSR Unit will provide advice to FRSC, including details of HSRAC's engagement on issues as appropriate. The FRSC will be responsible for providing policy advice relating to the HSR to the FMM.

Advisory Committee Members should participate in the provision of support and advice about the HSR system in good faith, and with open exchange of information and dialogue to support the efficacy and transparency of the HSR system.

Advisory Committee Members are expected to:

- act as a conduit for information to their stakeholders;
- provide input and feedback that reflects the interests of their stakeholders;
- maintain confidentiality as appropriate; and
- not publicly criticise the system without first raising the issue and attempting to resolve within the Advisory Committee, Australian Government and/or FRSC processes

The roles and responsibilities of FRSC and Food Ministers (in relation to the HSR system), and of the HSR Unit, are outlined below for clarity.

Transparency and Confidentiality

Policy issues are expected to be able to be openly discussed between Advisory Committee Members and their stakeholders or jurisdictions they represent, except in exceptional circumstances where confidentiality may be requested for sensitive matters.

Membership

The Advisory Committee will consist of up to 12 members. The Advisory Committee will include representation from:

- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (Chair)
- New Zealand government
- Australian state and territory governments (to be determined by FRSC)
- FSANZ
- New Zealand food industry*
- Australian food industry*
- Australian public health
- New Zealand public health
- Consumer representative body

**Industry representatives should represent broad industry interests rather than a single sector.*

The calling and holding of meetings of the Advisory Committee will be determined by the Chair on an as-needed basis, and matters may be progressed out-of-session as appropriate.

In the event that Advisory Committee Members are unable to attend a meeting, they can nominate a proxy to attend, to be approved by the Chair of the Advisory Committee.

Members will be endorsed by FRSC and formally appointed by the Chair. When a vacancy arises, the HSR Unit will seek nominations from relevant groups as appropriate to maintain a balanced representation of stakeholder groups and a diverse mix of skills and backgrounds of members.

Term

Advisory Committee Members will be appointed for a term of three years, with the opportunity to renew subject to endorsement by FRSC, and with mutual agreement of the Chair and the Member.

Roles and responsibilities in relation to the HSR system: other groups

Health Star Rating Unit	<p>Day to day oversight of the HSR system, including responding to enquiries from stakeholders and providing advice on the calculations of ratings.</p> <p>Administration of key infrastructure for the system (website, phone line).</p> <p>Development of key resources and reports.</p> <p>Seeks advice from HSRAC, FSANZ and food regulation officials as required.</p> <p>Provides advice to FRSC in relation to any proposed changes to the system.</p>
Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC)	<p>FRSC is a subcommittee of the Food Ministers' Meeting (FMM) and is responsible for coordinating the provision of policy advice on the Health Star Rating. FRSC is also responsible for ensuring a consistent approach to the implementation of the Health Star Rating system across Australia and New Zealand.</p> <p>FRSC membership closely mirrors the Ministers represented at the FMM, and includes senior officials of relevant government Departments responsible for developing food policy.</p>
Food Ministers' Meeting (FMM)	<p>The FMM is ultimately responsible for all decisions relating to the Health Star Rating system.</p> <p>The FMM includes Ministers responsible for food regulation from across Australia and New Zealand and is chaired by the Australian Government Minister responsible for the <i>Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) Act</i>.</p>