Evaluation Framework



Evaluation framework for the Australia New Zealand food regulation system

October 2026

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Glossary

Compliance: A process or an end-state by which a food business (regulated entity) is deemed to be complying with necessary (statutory) requirements[1].

Enforcement: A regulatory activity which involves the regulator initiating or taking action against a food business (regulated entity) who are in breach of regulatory requirements (i.e. non-compliant)[1].

Enforcement Pyramid: Refers to the graduated hierarchy of actions by regulators to achieve compliance starting with education, persuasion, and voluntary compliance at the base and move up through civil penalties, suspensions and criminal sanctions at the top of the pyramid[2].

Evaluation: A systematic and objective assessment of the design, implementation or results of a government program or activity for the purposes of continuous improvement, accountability and decision making[3]

Impact evaluation: An evaluation that answers the question: What difference did the intervention make?[4]

Intervention or Program logic diagram: Visual depiction showing the assumed causal links between the inputs and activities of an intervention or program and the expected outputs and outcomes[5].

Process evaluation: An evaluation that answers the question: What can be learned from how the intervention was delivered?[6]

Regulatory stewardship: The governance, monitoring, and care of regulatory systems to ensure all the different parts of a regulatory system work well together to achieve its goals effectively, proportionately, and fairly, and to keep the system fit for purpose over the long term[7].

Theory of change: A narrative explanation of how the resources and actions of a particular intervention or program will achieve the desired outcomes and impacts expected. The theory of change is the logic that underpins an intervention or program logic diagram[5].

Value for money evaluation: An evaluation that answers the question: Was the intervention a good use of resources?[4]

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[1] Definition adapted from Pink, G. (2021) Navigating Regulatory Language: an A to Z guide.

[2] Ayres, I. & Braithwaite, J. (1992). *Responsive Regulation: Transcending the deregulation debate*. Oxford University Press.

[3] Australian Centre for Evaluation, Toolkit https://evaluation.treasury.gov.au/toolkit/what-evaluation

[4] Magenta Book: Central Government guidance on evaluation, HM Treasury, March 2020.

[5] The Australian Institute of Family Studies, Guide to theory of change https://aifs.gov.au/resources/practice-guides/what-theory-change

[6] Magenta Book: Central Government guidance on evaluation, HM Treasury, March 2020.

[7] New Zealand Ministry of Regulation, Regulatory Stewardship https://www.regulation.govt.nz/our-work/regulatory-stewardship/

1. Introduction

The Australia New Zealand Food Regulation System's (the System) vision is for communities 'to have a safe and healthy food supply, be empowered to make informed choices about their food, and benefit from thriving food economies'[8]. The System operates through policy, laws, standards and processes to achieve four outcomes: safe and suitable food, healthy food supply, informed and empowered consumers, and thriving food economies. The System operates in a way that is evidence-based, transparent and inclusive of stakeholders. The System promotes a consistent (though not uniform) approach to implementation, compliance and enforcement ensuring consumers have continued confidence that the food they eat is safe and healthy. system.

This is an Evaluation Framework for the Australia New Zealand Food Regulation System (the Framework). While evaluations have been undertaken in the past, this Framework provides an opportunity to extend and entrench the use of evaluation as a tool to achieve benefits for all System stakeholders.

The Australian Centre for Evaluation (ACE)[9] defines evaluation as 'a systematic and objective assessment of the design, implementation or results of a government program or activity for the purposes of continuous improvement, accountability and decision making'[3]. In the context of the System, 'government program or activity' includes the activities and initiatives the System undertakes to deliver on its four outcomes, including policy development: regulatory activities such as developing and implementing standards of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code); and non-regulatory activities such as incident response and education resources and guidance for food businesses and consumers.

Evaluation helps us to understand, drive and demonstrate the benefits of System activities and initiatives. It can help confirm that expected results are being achieved, unintended consequences are identified and indicate where changes may be appropriate. Evaluation can provide answers to questions about:

> *Effectiveness:* Is an activity achieving its intended health and safety goals? (e.g. Has mandatory fortification of bread with folic acid led to reduced incidence of neural tube defects in foetuses and babies?)
>
> *Efficiency:* Are the costs of developing and implementing an initiative justified by the benefits? (e.g. Are the costs of enhanced food safety training outweighed by reduced health care costs and improved productivity from lower food borne illness?)
>
> *Equity:* Is an activity impacting populations disproportionately? (e.g. Did the implementation of a new food standard take account of different capabilities and capacities of smaller and larger food businesses?)
>
> *Behavioural change:* Have consumer and/or industry behaviours changed in response to the System's initiatives? (e.g. Have consumers changed their behaviours in response to the inclusion of Health Star Rating information on packaged food?)

[8] The Australia New Zealand Food Regulation System https://www.foodregulation.gov.au/resources/publications/food-regulation-system-statement

[9] The Australian Centre for Evaluation is part of The Treasury of the Australian Government who promote and support improving the volume, quality and use of evaluation evidence in policy design and decision-making. See https://evaluation.treasury.gov.au/

The System is complex, operating across two national governments and three levels of government in Australia and numerous types and scales of food businesses. Furthermore, it intersects with a range of other agencies' responsibilities (e.g. biosecurity, fair trading, therapeutic goods). Evaluation can help us better understand the relationships between System activities and outcomes given complex causal relationships. Evaluation projects may help fill existing evidence gaps and provide guidance to improve the efficacy and efficiency of future activities and initiatives of the System.

It is not the intent of this Framework to, in any way, limit or direct evaluations being undertaken by agencies within the System on their own area of operation. Rather, outputs from the Framework will assist to prioritise and co-ordinate future activities of the System at the national level.

Section 2 outlines the purpose of the Framework and how individual evaluations can contribute to the achievements across the four System outcomes, namely safe and sustainable food, healthy food supply, informed and empowered consumers, and thriving food economies[10].

Section 3 discusses the scope of the Framework noting that evaluation could be considered at any point through policy development, the standards development process, the standard itself, and implementation of the standard, and equally voluntary versus regulatory approaches of the System.

Section 4 introduces logic diagrams and theory of change as tools to help understand how System activities and initiatives deliver their outcomes.

Section 5 highlights the different types of evaluations that can be used to answer specific questions about the implementation, impact and cost-effectiveness of activities and interventions of the System.

Section 6 presents factors that could be used to assist in prioritising evaluation projects.

Section 7 identifies some key considerations for evaluation in the System: stakeholders, independence and data.

Section 8 presents a 4-stage maturity model as a guide to monitoring the developing practise of evaluation in the System. While recognising that individual agencies may be further advanced in their evaluation practice, it is acknowledged that as a whole the System is at the beginning of its development.

Section 9 provides a list of evaluation resources.

Appendix 1 presents a draft Evaluation Plan Template to detail proposed evaluation projects.

[10] Australia New Zealand Food Regulation System Strategic Plan for 2025-2028 (available at: https://www.foodregulation.gov.au/resources/publications/strategic-plan-2025-2028).

2. Purpose

The System recognises the importance of ongoing evaluation of its activities and initiatives to ensure the system is achieving its intent and is supporting agreed national and bi-national objectives.

The purpose of this Framework is to:

- Inform regulatory and policy decisions by embedding systematic evaluation, feedback, and learning in the System underpinning effectiveness, accountability and continuous improvement.
- Encourage the initiation and planning for evaluation in the early stages of System activities and initiatives.
- Promote and raise the profile of evaluation among the System's agencies, officers and stakeholders, and provide an entry point for those seeking further information on evaluation in the System.

3. Scope

The scope of this Framework is broad and covers all activities and initiatives of the System, excluding enforcement actions against specific individuals or firms. Evaluation could be applied at any point through policy development, the standards development process, the standard itself, and implementation of the standard, and equally voluntary versus regulatory approaches of the System. Evaluation could be applied in relation to any stage from inception through to implementation and realisation of outcomes. The scope of an individual evaluation project is not pre-determined, but would be established when planning for that evaluation.

System activities differ across jurisdictional regulators providing 'natural experiments' that evaluation can use to identify successes. All elements of the enforcement pyramid (see glossary) from engagement, education, persuasion up to the application of formal penalties can be explored as part of an evaluation. To be explicit, enforcement as a regulatory activity against specific individuals or firms is excluded from the scope of this Framework. However, an observation that no formal prosecutions are being undertaken when non-compliance is suspected, could be a useful starting point if considering for example if a standard is sufficiently enforceable in the legal contexts of jurisdictional Food Acts.

Additionally, some System initiatives and activities are subject to existing processes of performance review and reporting, for example Australian Government entities have mandatory reporting under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and jurisdictional regulators may have requirements under legislative and administrative regimes[11]. The Framework does not seek to reproduce these regimes, though individual evaluations may contribute evidence and learnings that could inform them.

Importantly, this Framework doesn't seek to arbitrarily restrict the scope of what could be included in evaluation projects, beyond the explicit exclusion of enforcement actions against specific individuals or firms.

As noted, the scope of this Framework is broad. Evaluation projects could include:

- System activities and initiatives that contribute to any of the four outcome areas
- Food safety, and/or public health activities and initiatives by the System
- Food recalls and/or responses to food incidents
- Only Australian-located activities and initiatives or those that also include New Zealand.

Evaluation projects could focus on the implementation of activity or intervention, the impacts that they deliver or their cost-effectiveness (see Section 5). The stage of implementation of a specific activity or intervention will influence the nature of any proposed evaluation. For example, evaluating the impacts of an activity will be best undertaken after allowing enough time for the activity to take effect; evaluating the implementation of the activity may be appropriate at an earlier time. The Framework covers evaluations across the complete timeframe of System activities and interventions.

[11] For example, New South Wales Food Authority's Evaluation Framework (https://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/about-us/science/evaluating-what-we-do/framework).

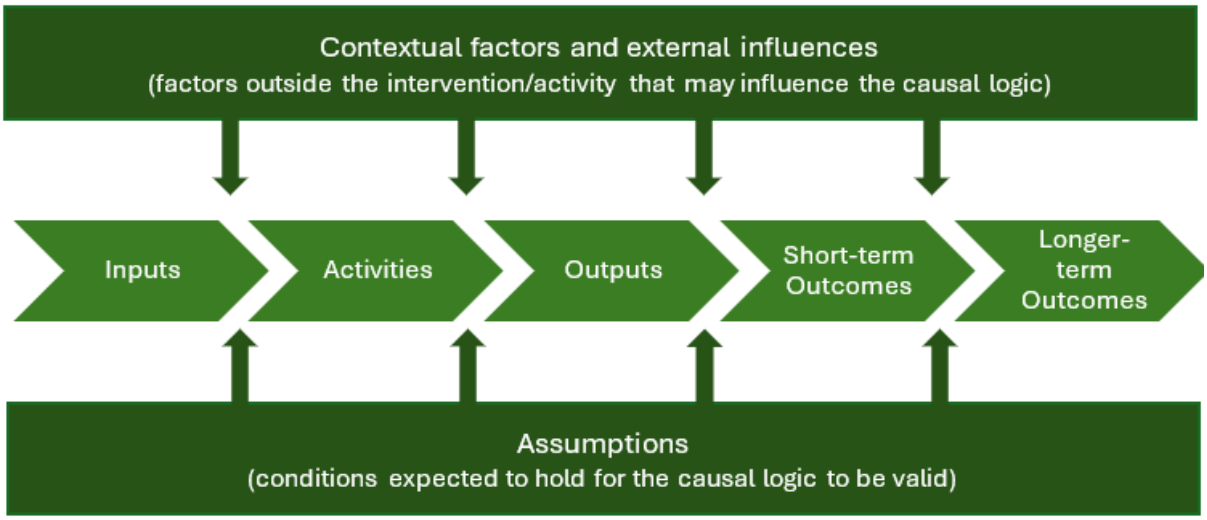
4. Intervention logic

System activities and initiatives are targeted at changing behaviour of individuals and/or food businesses. For example, provisions within the Food Standard Code for information about allergen presence in foods requires food businesses to label their products appropriately and enables consumers to select foods to reduce their risk of an allergenic reaction. Intervention logic diagrams and theory of change approaches can be used to make explicit how these types of changes (i.e. labelling by the business and consumer selection of products) are expected to take place. Typically, a theory of change will be a narrative description of the causal chain of events, while a logic diagram will be a visual representation.

The Figure 1 below is a generic logic diagram. Inputs represent the resources (e.g. people, money, time, resources) that are invested in activities (e.g. the things done like delivering a training course or developing a new food standard). Outputs are the things that are delivered or produced through the activities (e.g. a new food standard). Outcomes are the short to long-term results that develop, sometimes long-term outcomes are called impacts.

Underpinning the causal chain are the set of assumptions that are expected to hold, while contextual factors and external influences are outside influences on the causal logic.

Figure 1: Generic logic diagram



To illustrate, consider a training course on food safety for food handlers at a caterer's business. The trainers and materials for training would be considered inputs, with the delivery of the material to the participants being the activity. The outputs from the activity would include the successful completion of the training course, increased knowledge and new skills the participants take away, and any changes in their beliefs and attitudes about food safety. The short-term outcome will be the improved food safety behaviours by food handlers following the training. These behaviours will lead to longer-term outcomes including a reduction in the levels of pathogens in the food products, which will contribute to reduced incidence of food borne illness in the community.

In the example we can be more certain of the outputs and short-term outcomes from the activity – increased knowledge and skills and changed behaviours - than we can of longer-term outcomes such as reduced pathogens and reduced prevalence of food borne illness. If the activity or intervention is in early stages of implementation, then outcomes are unlikely to be

observable. Once an activity or intervention is implemented, then short-term outcomes may start to be observed. For many System activities and interventions linking to medium- and long-term outcomes will be challenging given complex causal relationships and external influences.

The logic diagram can highlight important assumptions underpinning the intervention or activity. For example, in the training course example – it assumes that knowledge or skills are lacking in the workforce and if these are provided through training then workers will know what to do and how to ensure safe food. However, if the barrier to those behaviours is not about knowledge or skills, but rather more environmental, for example access to appropriate personal hygiene facilities, then training is unlikely to be effective. The assumptions underpinning a particular intervention are important to acknowledge when considering evaluations.

Other factors or influences external to the specific action or intervention will impact its outputs and outcomes. For example, how the food is handled and stored after leaving the business will have an impact on the level of pathogens in the food and the level of food-borne disease in the community. In the food-training example the behaviour of those who handle food once it leaves the business is not behaviour that the training seeks to address, none-the-less such behaviours will have an impact on the long-term outcomes that the training is seeking to address.

5. Types of evaluation

Evaluations can be categorised by the types of questions they seek to answer: process evaluation, impact evaluation and value-for money evaluation, though typically an evaluation project may have elements of all three.

Process evaluations focus on the actions and processes involved in implementing a particular activity or intervention. They seek to answer the question: 'What can be learned from how the intervention was delivered?'[12]. Looking at the logic diagram a process evaluation is seeking to learn from how the inputs and activities delivered outputs and identify potential improvements and efficiencies in that implementation. Table 1 highlights the types of questions that a process evaluation can address.

An *impact evaluation* focuses on the changes caused by an activity or intervention which contribute to short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. They seek to answer the question: 'What difference has an intervention made?'[12]. Looking at the logic diagram above, an impact evaluation would seek to measure if the inputs and activities undertaken delivered the expected short-term and longer-term outcomes. Even though many activities of an impact evaluation typically occur at later stages than for an implementation evaluation, planning an impact evaluation should start as early as possible so baseline data can be effectively identified and collected.

A *value for money evaluation* focuses on the costs and benefits of the activity or intervention and whether the costs are outweighed by the derived benefits (i.e. the outcomes) or vice versa. It seeks to answer the question 'Is this intervention a good use of resources?'[12]. Looking at the logic diagram a value for money evaluation will seek to compare the cost of the inputs with the value of the outcomes that were delivered by the intervention. They use economic techniques such as cost-effective analysis, cost benefit analysis and the valuation of non-market impacts. Table 1 highlights the types of questions that a value for money evaluation can address.

In practice an evaluation project may draw on all three types of evaluations to develop a picture of the implementation, effectiveness and value for money of an intervention.

[12] Magenta Book: Central Government guidance on evaluation, HM Treasury, March 2020.

Table 1: Evaluation types and evaluation questions (adapted from HM Treasury (2000))

Evaluation type	Purpose	Key questions
Process evaluation	What can be learned from how the intervention was delivered?	Was the intervention delivered as intended? • Were there enough resources to deliver the intervention? • Were there any unexpected or unintended issues in the delivery of the intervention? • Did the intervention reach all the stakeholders that it was intended to? What worked well, or less well, for whom and why? What could be improved? What can be learned from the delivery methods used? • Could the intervention have been purchased and delivered for less cost? How has the context influenced delivery? • How did external factors influence the delivery and functioning of interventions? • How did external factors influence the attitudes and behaviours of target groups?
Impact evaluation	What difference did the intervention make?	Did the intervention achieve the expected outcomes? • To what extent? Did the intervention cause the difference? • To what extent can the outcomes be attributed to the intervention? • How much can be attributed to external factors? • How confident can we be in the attribution? • What would have happened anyway? How has the context influenced outcomes? • Were there any unintended outcomes? • Have the outcomes been influenced by any other external factors? To what extent have different groups been impacted in different ways, how and why? Can the intervention be reproduced?

Evaluation type	Purpose	Key questions
		Are there generalisable lessons to be learned about the intervention and its impact?
Value for money evaluation	Was the intervention a good use of resources?	How cost-effective was the intervention? • What were the costs of delivering the intervention? • Cost per unit (outcome, participant, etc.) • Has the intervention been cost-effective (compared to alternatives and compared to doing nothing)? • What is the most cost-effective option? What was the value-for-money of the intervention? • What were the benefits? • What were the costs? • Do the benefits outweigh the costs? • What is the ratio of costs to benefits? Is the intervention the best use of resources? • How does the ratio of costs to benefits compare to that of alternative interventions?

6. Prioritising Evaluation

Prioritisation of evaluation projects will be necessary in directing resources to this activity and balancing other priorities, activities and initiatives of the System. The following factors can be used to assist in prioritising evaluation projects:

- *Public health/Food safety impact*: Where the activity or intervention is dealing with a public health/food safety issue where the potential impact is large, long-term, widespread or where there may be a high degree of uncertainty.
- *Evidence uncertainty:* Where there is significant uncertainty regarding the nature of the problem, the effectiveness of the intervention, its implementation, or its outcomes, and evaluation could materially improve the evidence base.
- *Stakeholder interest and confidence:* Where there is significant stakeholder concern, contestability or public interest, and evaluation could improve transparency, confidence and trust in decision making.
- *Regulatory and implementation costs:* Where the activity or initiative imposes significant costs, administrative burden or resource commitments on food businesses, governments, or consumers.
- *Strategic significance:* The activity is a major system priority, involves a novel regulatory approach, has significant ministerial interest, or could influence future food regulation policy and practice.
- *National consistency:* Where evaluation could generate insights into how activities across multiple jurisdictions, agencies or regulatory activities can deliver consistent outcomes for the community.

These factors are not mutually exclusive, and combinations of these are likely. Measures to deal with a significant food safety/public health concern, are likely to also incur significant regulatory costs and precipitate high levels of stakeholder interest. In such cases, evaluation can assist in uncovering issues and enable refinements to activities or initiatives.

7. Evaluation for the System

This framework is not a manual for undertaking evaluations; there are many resources that can provide those details (See Section 8). Nonetheless there are three key considerations that warrant highlighting. Additionally, a draft Evaluation Plan Template is provided at Appendix 1 and discussed below.

7.1 Stakeholders

Being inclusive of stakeholders and transparent are central to the manner with which the System seeks to operate. In many instances there will be a need for stakeholders to inform evaluations through the provision of data, knowledge and lived experience of System impacts. Involving stakeholders in the planning and implementation of evaluation projects will improve the quality of evaluation projects.

7.2 Internal or external evaluations

Consideration of who undertakes an evaluation will be important. An external evaluating team may be perceived by stakeholders as more independent than an internally based. However, the former may lack the detailed knowledge of the intervention or activity under consideration and may require more resources than if completed in-house. Internal specialist teams at some distance from implementing team may provide some level of independence. External peer-review of evaluation by appropriately qualified experts could provide additional assurance if resources do not permit the commissioning of external teams.

7.3 Data

The data for evaluations in the System will come in many forms. It will include administrative data held about industries and businesses, costing and financial data about proposed interventions and modelled savings, data about the lived experience of food businesses complying with regulations, and data about expected outcomes such as changed behaviours, and changes in the nature and levels of risks and hazards. The data required will be driven by the evaluation questions being asked.

Baseline data, that being data which indicates the situation prior to implementing an intervention, is crucial for impact and value for money evaluation projects. Consideration should be given to this prior to the implementation of an intervention or activity. This is best managed by the consideration of evaluation in the development of interventions and activities.

The Implementation Sub-Committee for Food Regulation (ISFR) works to improve data and information sharing and monitoring across the System. Information sharing and collaboration across the members of the System will not only contribute to the implementation of the System's activities and initiatives but will also assist and add value to evaluation projects and this framework. Similarly, evaluation will inform data and information sharing across the System.

7.4 Evaluation Plan Template

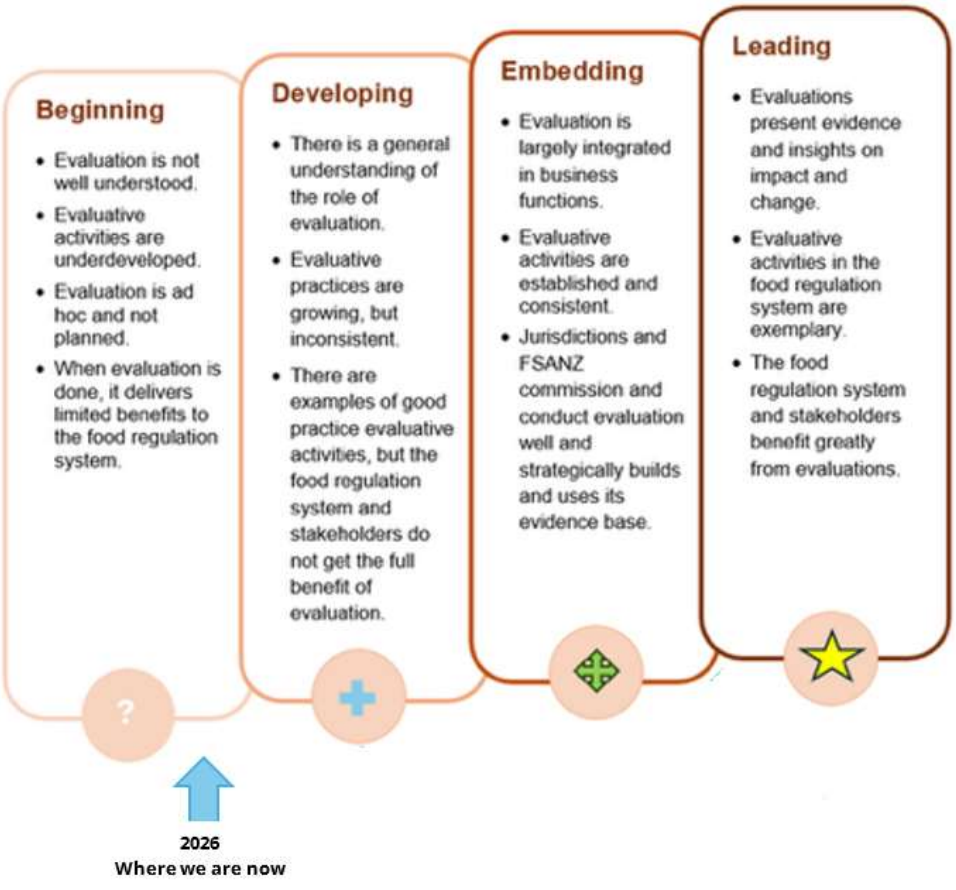
Appendix 1 contains a Evaluation Plan Template. Key evaluation questions, methodology, stakeholder engagement, timelines and resources can be detailed within the template. The completed template can be useful in gaining feedback and input from other members of the System, and from stakeholders who may be affected by the proposed evaluation.

8. Monitoring our evaluation maturity

This Evaluation Framework is supported by a maturity model (Figure 2) outlining the characteristics of an evaluation practice at 4 levels of maturity: beginning, developing, embedded and leading[13].

The System is at the start of incorporating evaluation in its activities, processes and culture, placing us at the Beginning stage of this maturity model. The development of this Framework and the planning and implementation of selected evaluations will assist in developing the System's maturity. This assessment is based on the System as a whole, rather than that of individual System members.

Figure 2: Evaluation Framework maturity model



The maturity model explicitly recognises that evaluation is a growing practice within the System. The expectation is that we improve over time. Undertaking individual evaluations will be a key process through which the System will develop and improve the collective understanding of how and when evaluations contribute to achieving outcomes. Advancement in evaluation maturity is expected to come from:

- ensuring new food regulatory measures consider evaluation in their planning stages, making explicit their intervention logic in a logic diagram or theory of change narrative
- better data collection and monitoring occurring within the System, and in particular ensuring baseline data for new interventions are collected

[13] The maturity model was based on one developed by DISR.

- process development to ensure appropriate prioritisation, co-operation and co-ordination.
- staff knowledge and skill development.

A review of the System's evaluation practice against the maturity model would enable the framework may be revised and updated to take account of changes in the System and achievements to date. Such a review could take place in the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2030.

9. Further resources

The Australian Centre for Evaluation (ACE) was established to help put evaluation evidence at the heart of policy design and decision-making across Australian Government. ACE seeks to improve the volume, quality, and use of evaluation evidence to support better policy and programs that improve the lives of Australians. ACE has detailed Templates, tools and resources for evaluation, plus the ACE Evaluation Library.

The Evaluation standards for Aotearoa New Zealand gives guidance on New Zealand-specific evaluation standards. Its website promotes good practice for evaluation and assists policy and program development and delivery. Its outlined standards are part of a wider evaluation quality strategy that includes evaluator competencies, ethical conduct and guidelines.

The UK Treasury's Magenta Book also provides detailed guidance about evaluation in the UK government.

The Australian Department of Industry Science and Resources Evaluation Strategy 2024–2028 sets-out DISR's vision for evaluation. Evaluation helps the following in this context: building a better future for all Australians through enabling a productive, resilient and sustainable economy. This DISR link includes an evaluation maturity matrix.

The Australian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) website gives guidance about evaluation and monitoring in the civil defence emergency management sector (CDEM). Like the Food Regulatory System multiple jurisdictions are involved in managing risk.

Logic models – useful links to developing program logic and logic models and how they relate to evaluation can be found at: NSW Health Developing and Using Program Logic: A Guide and NZ Treasury - basics of developing an intervention logic at initiative level

The Reg Value Tool is a tool for evaluation that (at July 2026) could be used as a reference-point to help answer evaluation questions at different stages. The tool assumes post-implementation but can also be applied to an implementation evaluation. RegValue Tool can be a 'health check' on how regulatory measures are landing with different stakeholder groups. It can be a relatively quick empirical way to show:

- how different stakeholders understand the purpose of a standard (or other measure);
- stakeholders' views about the standard's value (positive and negative views);
- how responsive stakeholders perceive the regulators who implement the standard, and
- how stakeholders experience different and new types of 'regulatory burden'.

Appendix 1 – Evaluation Plan Template

The following template can be adjusted as needed to support your proposed evaluation. A shorter outline covering key sections may be appropriate at the initiation/seeking FRSC approval stage.

Title of Evaluation	<Insert text>
Lead Agency	<Insert text>
Lead Sponsor	<Lead person sponsoring this evaluation after approval from FRSC>
Involved Agencies and other organisations	<Agencies and other organisations involved in conducting and/or contracting-out the evaluation>
Type of Evaluation	<E.g. impact evaluation, process / implementation evaluation, value-for-money evaluation.>
Level of priority for this Evaluation	<Priority level / ranking compared to other FRSC priorities, whether evaluation or non-evaluation>
Project Manager	<Insert text>
Project Team members	<Insert text>
Other key people	<People contributing to this project>
Timeframe	Start: Finish:

Background

Provide any relevant background information about the broader context of the project. How was the evaluation proposed? What consultation has been done to-date?

Purpose – Why this evaluation is valuable

Briefly Summarise:

1. Who wants this evaluation and why?
2. What are the most important questions that this evaluation needs to answer and by when?
3. Why do those questions need to be answered? Is the reason strong enough to invest resourcing to answer each proposed evaluation question?
4. How would answers to those questions be used or acted on and when?
5. What is the current strength of evidence about possible problems or opportunities with a food regulatory measure or area within scope of the evaluation?
6. What are the most likely risks or unintended consequences of a food regulatory measure? Refer to any key stakeholder concerns e.g. disproportionate costs. This may also lead to evaluation questions.

7. Is this evaluation meeting the purpose of the System's Evaluation Framework?
8. How does this evaluation meet the prioritisation criteria of the Evaluation Framework (Section 6)?

Please also use and refer to a logic model underpinning this evaluation, which can be included as an Appendix to this plan.

Scope of this evaluation

What will be in-scope and out-of-scope of this evaluation?

In-scope

Out-of-scope

Methodology

What methods will this evaluation involve? For example, surveys, interviews, analysis of existing data, literature reviews, etc.

Refer back to the Purpose section, including the evaluation questions and why they need to be answered. Confine the scope of the evaluation methods to the evaluation questions to keep the evaluation manageable. Research questions would address part of an evaluation question. The following table may be useful to consider.

See the Resources section of the Evaluation Framework for links to evaluation methods and approaches including the Reg Value Tool.

Method	Evaluation question or part of evaluation question (research question) the method will answer	Other purposes (if applicable)

Key Deliverables

What are the key deliverables from this evaluation? What are the main things that will be produced? These should be the end results, rather than repeating the methods or activities.

Examples: literature review report, data sets, research report, market trends report, synthesised evaluation report.

Limitations to this evaluation

What are the key limitations? Identifying limitations here is useful for informing realistic expectations internally and for external stakeholders about what information this evaluation can and can't tell us, can and can't cover, data weaknesses, etc.

Risks of this evaluation

Are there any ethical risks (e.g. how surveys are conducted?), reputational risks, or legal risks from this evaluation? Are there any other risks?

What risks exist around not being able to complete this evaluation?

How will the above risks be mitigated?

Key deadlines

Key Stage / Deliverable (from key deliverables above)	Estimated Timing (completion)	Implications for other deliverables

Roles and Responsibilities

Provide details about who is responsible for what tasks. If the people or organisations are not yet known at the time of drafting the evaluation plan, describe the persons generically via role title, e.g. lead evaluator, specialist in x field, etc.

Role	Responsibilities

Contracts and third parties

Briefly specify what aspects / parts of the evaluation will be contracted out to third parties.

Activity	Third-party involvement
	<Specify if the third party will conduct all or some aspects of the activity>

Budget

Specify required budgets for financial years.

Item Financial year>	Current 2026-27 (adjust as needed)	Next 2027-28
Item 1		
Item 2, etc		
Total Cost		

Specify whether costs are finalised vs. estimates only (e.g., if formal quotes are still required).

Skills and/or training needs

If there is uncertainty in which staff members will be involved, list what skills/experience will be required for each role. Training may or may not be required depending on the person's existing skills and experiences.

Person	Training needs

Consultation strategy

Who needs to be consulted, when and why? Particularly consider external stakeholders and their needs / perspectives.

Project Governance

Provide more details of how this evaluation will be governed and by who. For instance, is there a steering committee, several senior sponsors from different jurisdictions, or a reference group?