

Scope and Responsibilities

- The North East Trading Standards Association (NETSA) continues to take a key partnership role across the 12 local authorities in the region and delivers on various core projects on behalf of national partners, which include the National Trading Standards Board (NTSB) and the Food Standards Agency (FSA); together with regional partners.

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What is the North East Trading Standards Association (NETSA)?

NETSA is a partnership body which brings together the twelve Local Authority Trading Standards Services (LATSS's) in the North East of England, in order to enhance services and contribute to meeting local, regional, and national priorities

What are our objectives?

- Work in partnership to enhance local service delivery
- Create informed confident consumers and protect the vulnerable
- Support legitimate businesses by ensuring a fair and safe trading environment
- Co-ordinate local, regional, and national priorities to enhance service provision

Key Priorities for Action 2020-2022

1. Attract and strive to maintain resources to enhance the provision for Trading Standards Services in the North East region
2. Ensure consistency of interpretation and sharing best practice
3. Working collaboratively to ensure effectiveness, efficiency, and value for money
4. Use evidence/intelligence gathered locally, regionally, and nationally to target resources
5. To carefully consider the implications of and respond effectively to the devolutionary process within the region. Based on the political process.
6. To carefully consider the implications of and respond effectively to the UK leaving the EU.
7. To carefully consider the implications of and respond effectively to the setting up of the Office of Product Safety and Standards.
8. To carefully consider the implications of the Final Report: "Regulation of Property Agents Working Group".
9. To carefully consider the implications of the publication of the UK Government's "Economic Crime Plan 2019-2022".
10. To monitor the impact of the proposed multi agency approach to prevention and tackling of serious violence.
11. To carefully consider the implications of the Government's response to the Hackitt Report – the Building Safety Bill 2019-2020. Including the announcement on construction products.
12. To monitor the reaction to the Report published by Which? On product safety and online markets.
13. To evaluate and respond fully to the implications of the Covid 19 pandemic and the easing of lockdown as it continues to affect both consumers and businesses across the UK.

Impact and Outcomes

- Achievement of best practice through shared learning and expertise, relevant and timely information exchange, and development of new and innovative approaches
- Consistent and intelligence led action with all partners.
- Maximise the delivery of initiatives within the limitations of reducing resources
- Contribute to public health and wellbeing
- Contribute to building safer and stronger local communities
- Protect the vulnerable

Governance Arrangements

NETSA consists of the Heads of Service from the 12 LATSS's within the region. A Regional Coordinator, who is retained through grant funding received from the NTSB, supports our work. NETSA will continue to provide the strategic leadership for all sub regional groups and promote effective partnership working throughout the region in order to protect and improve the health, wellbeing and safety of local communities whilst supporting local businesses to achieve better regulatory outcomes.

Governance Arrangements (Continued)

All finances received through NETSA will be subject to independent scrutiny and audit. NETSA, and its subordinate groups, will take actions that are customer-focussed and will be subject to a robust performance and financial management framework.

No decisions will be actioned unless they provide value for money for our constituent Authorities, communities, businesses, or partners.

NETSA is committed to effective, strategic planning and developing policies through dynamic and successful leadership. This will be informed utilising data from the Annual Strategic Assessment.

Challenges

In developing its policies and plans NETSA will recognise the challenges presented by:

- a) Reducing resources in the public sector particularly those prevalent in the regulatory field and will maximise potential to secure additional resources for the regional LATSS's.
- b) To continue to support legitimate business and protect our local communities. This agenda has developed through the implementation of the "Regulators Code" and having regard to the policies outlined in the Local Government Association's "Open for Business" document.
- c) The continuing implementation of new consumer protection legislation. This includes: abolition of letting fees (May 2018); prohibition of F & G energy rated domestic properties under EPC legislation (May 2020); the banning of sales of offensive and dangerous substances to under 18's (Offensive Weapons Act 2019); the banning of sales of energy drinks to those under 16/18, animal licensing provisions (October 2018), the Tenant Fees Act 2019 (1 June 2019) and the amendment to Pet shop licensing (Lucy's Law) (April 2020).
- d) The need to carefully consider the implications of and respond effectively to the devolutionary process within the region. Based on the political process.
- e) To carefully consider the implications of and respond effectively to the UK leaving the EU.
- f) To carefully consider the implications of and respond effectively to the setting up of the Office of Product Safety and Standards.
- g) To carefully consider the implications of the Final Report: "Regulation of Property Agents Working Group".
- h) To monitor the impact of the publication of the UK Government's "Economic Crime Plan 2019-2022".
- i) To monitor the impact of the proposed multi agency approach to prevention and tackling of serious violence.
- j) To carefully consider the implications of the Government's response to the Hackitt Report – the Building Safety Bill 2019-2020. Including the announcement on construction products.
- k) To monitor the reaction to the Report published by Which? On product safety and online markets.
- l) To evaluate and respond fully to the implications of the Covid 19 pandemic and the easing of lockdown as it continues to affect both consumers and businesses across the UK.

Partnership Working

NETSA continues to work with a range of national and regional partners including the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), the Home Office and the Food Standards Agency (FSA), the three regional police services, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and other enforcement agencies as well as Balance and Fresh for the northern 7 LA's.

Our Planning Context





Global

National



Regional
 Regional Strategy 2020-2022
 September 2021





Local


Key Priorities for Action 2020-2022			
1. Attract resources to enhance the provision for Trading Standards Services in the North East region			
	Action	Timescale	Current Status
1.1	<p>Support the NTSB in exercising all of its functions devolved from the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Each English region plus Wales is allocated a seat on the NTSB. Observers from BEIS, the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI), the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and Scotland are also present at these meetings.</p> <p>The governance of the NTSB is delivered on behalf of local government by a political oversight group. The grant funding is delivered on behalf of BEIS.</p> <p>Office of Product Safety and Standards.</p>	April 2020 – April 2022	<p>Regional representation delivered by NETSA Chair and the local/regional governance of activities and decisions carried out by NETSA Executive.</p> <p>All the meetings of the NTSB & Governance groups 2020/2022 to be supported.</p> <p>NETSA Executive Meeting September 2021.</p> <p>NTSB. Meeting 24 September 2021</p> <p>10 August 2018 new Strategy: Strengthening National Capacity for Product Safety 2018-2020 published.</p> <p> Safety-and-standards-product-safety-st</p> <p>Announcement on Product Safety Sampling Protocol 2021/2022.</p> <p>Funding for safety testing of selected products including ladders and cosmetics through regional test houses.</p>

			 2018 OPSS Product Safety Sampling Pro Announcement on 19 January 2021 that OPSS to lead on the enforcement of construction products legislation.
1.2	Ensure that the scheduled Animal Feed Inspection programme (grant funded by the FSA via the NTSB) is delivered upon.	April 2020 – April 2022	Animal Health and Feed Group delivering inspection programme agreed with the NTSB. Co-ordinated through Northumberland CC. Funding granted.
1.3	<p>Maintain Regional Investigations Team (RIT) (funded by NTSB) in order to act against level 2/3 criminality in accordance with the Intelligence Operating Model (IOM).</p> <p>Tasking effected from both local and regional intelligence through the Regional Tasking Group (RTG) and in line with referral processes agreed by the National Tasking Group (NTG).</p>	<p>April 2020 – April 2022</p> <p>April 2020 – April 2022</p>	<p>RIT Manager and host authority have taken actions in accordance with the IOM and governance procedures</p> <p>Governance group carrying out ongoing monitoring of delivery programme.</p>

	Action	Timescale	Current Status
1.4	Maintain a Regional Intelligence Analyst (RIA) (funded by NTSB) in line with nationally agreed strategy.	April 2020 – April 2022	RIT Manager and host authority has maintained the RIA in compliance with the terms of a funding agreement in line with the IOM.






1.5	Carefully consider regional bidding in order to host projects/functions devolved from the delivery of the strategy as and when appropriate.	April 2020 – April 2022	Successful funding bid on Operation Arwen (Oak). Successful bid from Northumberland on a business of concern. Successful bids on Operation Quattro & Operation Piccolo.
1.6	To co-ordinate joint arrangements in respect of enforcement provisions of Energy Performance Certificates in local authorities.  uksi_20151681_en.pdf	April 2020 – April 2022	9 October 2015 legislation implemented. Response required by all LA's. Annual reporting regime to Secretary of State. Several LA's organising partnership arrangements. 7 pilot studies on EPC's including Newcastle. 29 November 2019. Final update in London. Durham CC engaged in phase 2.
1.7	To monitor implementation of the Tenant Fees, Act 2019.	1 June 2019 implemented	Effects of legislation on regulatory services and marketplace.
1.8	To monitor the Final Report: "Regulation of Property Agents Working Group".  Regulation_of_Property_Agents_final_repor	July 2019	Potential effects on the property business sector.
1.9	To monitor implementation of the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 related to bladed implements and corrosive substances.	16 May 2019 Royal Assent	Effects of legislation on regulatory services and safety issues. Awaiting full implementation.
1.10	To monitor the impact of the UK Government's "Economic Crime Plan 2019-2022".	July 2019	Effects of Economic Crime Plan on scams and POCA.


	 2019-22_Economic_C rime_Plan.pdf		
1.11	To monitor the impact of the proposed multi agency approach to prevention and tackling of serious violence.  Serious Violence review 2019.pdf  Government_Response_-_Serious_Violence	July 2019	Effects of proposals on service provision.
1.12	To monitor the reaction to the Report published by Which? On product safety and online markets.  Online marketplaces and pr	November 2019	Reaction to the publication of the Report from Government.
1.13	To carefully consider and respond to the CTSI consultation on the Qualifications Review.	April 2021 Completed	Officers have provided a full response.
1.14	To carefully consider and respond to the BEIS consultation on the reforming of competition and consumer policy.	July 2021 Completed	Officers have provided a full response via ACTSO/NTS.
Key Priorities for Action 2020 -2022			
2. Ensure consistency of interpretation and sharing best practice			
	Action	Timescale	Current Status
2.1	Respond to all consultations affecting Regulatory Services	April 2020 – April 2022	As and when consultations emerge.
2.2	METROLOGY GROUP a) Project Work to be determined.	April 2020 – April 2022	Agreement to deliver projects on breakfast cereal and alcohol spirits survey and educational work on medical weighing equipment.
2.3	FAIR TRADING GROUP Now responsibility on delivery rests with RTG. a) Engage with Police led Operation Bombay in combating doorstep crime.	April 2020 – April 2022	Lead Officer Fair Trading Group and RIA have established links and fully engaged

			with these operations.
	b) Participate in Scams Awareness campaign with key task of increasing reporting of scams.	June 2021	Regional LATSS's to participate.
	c) Partnership working with the Anti-Counterfeiting Group (ACG).	April 2020 – April 2022	Operation Jasper. RIA co-ordinated regional activity around illegal trade through social media sites on the internet.
	d) Participation and involvement with National Consumer Week.	April 2020 – April 2022	Regional LATSS's to be involved with National Consumer Week 2020/2021.
	e) To co-ordinate joint arrangements in respect of enforcement provisions of Energy Performance Certificates in local authorities.	April 2020 – April 2022	9 October 2015 legislation implemented.
	 uks_i_20151681_en.pdf		Response required by all LA's. Also, annual reporting regime to Secretary of State. Several LA's organising partnership arrangements.
	f) Bankers protocol development	April 2020 – April 2022	12 July 2018. Meeting with regional police services. Majority of matters are fraudulent and safeguarding procedures initiated by police.
	g) Response to Covid 19 pandemic and price gouging issues.	March 2020 - ongoing	Liaison with CMA taskforce related to investigations into local businesses.


	h) Second-hand car market.	October 2020-ongoing	Operation Quattro
	i) Doorstep crime.	October 2020-ongoing	Operation Piccolo
2.4	CONSUMER AND PRODUCT SAFETY GROUP a) Respond to all localised enquiries and respond to requests as made for intelligence from BEIS and the national Product Safety Focus group. Business plan developed. b) Undertake intelligence led product safety projects in respect of consumer products i.e. sun beds, fancy dress costumes and laser pointers. c) Participation with Child Safety Week 2021.	April 2020 – April 2022 April 2020 – April 2022 April 2020 – April 2022	Lead officer Consumer and Product Safety Group. Localised enquiries dealt with and some 52 national/EU enquiries dealt with in 2019 with respect of a range of consumer products including balloons, cosmetics, toys, drones, food imitations, boron, and sequinned toys. 10 September 2020 meeting of national Safety Group. 10 February 2021 Meeting of national Product Safety Group. All regional LATSS's now fully engaged with assessments around sunbeds. High levels of publicity attracted including at national level. National retailers have introduced voluntary bans on sale of corrosive

	<p>d) Monitor national/regional developments in respect of underage sales and take appropriate action.</p> <p>e) Monitor the development of the Office of Product Safety and Standards.</p>	<p>April 2020 – April 2022</p> <p>April 2020 – April 2022</p>	<p>substances to those under 18 and energy drinks to those under 16.</p> <p>The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) enabling the UK to meet the evolving challenges of product safety by responding to expanding international trade, the growth in online shopping and the increasing rate of product innovation. In addition to providing support and advice for local authority Trading Standards teams, the office will co-ordinate work across local authorities where action is needed on a national scale and will ensure the UK continues to carry out appropriate border checks on imported products once the UK leaves the European Union.</p> <p>7 March 2018. Launch of new Code of Practice (PAS 7100) for product safety recall in the UK.</p> <p>10 August 2018 new Strategy: Strengthening National Capacity for Product Safety</p>
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	<p>f) Monitor the proposals to upgrade the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988.</p> <p>g) Monitor the reaction of Government to the publication of the Report from the House of Commons Report on Fireworks.</p> <p>h) Monitor the reaction of Government to the publication of the Which? Report on product safety and online markets.</p> <p>i) Response to any product safety issues related to the Covid 19 pandemic – PPE.</p>	<p>2018-2020 published.</p> <p>October 2019</p> <p>November 2019</p> <p>March 2020 ongoing</p> <p>April 2020 – April 2022</p>	<p> Safety-and-standards-product-safety-st</p> <p>October 2018. Announcement on Product Safety Sampling Protocol 2020/2021. Funding for safety testing of selected products including ladders and cosmetics through regional test houses.</p> <p> 2018 OPSS Product Safety Sampling Pro</p> <p> furniture-fire-regulations-2016-consultation</p> <p> Fireworks Petition Committee 2019.pdf</p> <p> Online marketplaces and p</p> <p>Main issue related to safety of PPE products imported and manufactured in the UK.</p>
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	<p>TOBACCO CONTROL a) National Tobacco strategy now published</p>	<p>April 2020 – April 2022</p>	<p>Control strategy now published.</p>  <p>Tobacco Control Plan 2017-2022.pdf</p>
	<p>b) Undertake intelligence led action utilising sniffer dogs in the detection of illegal tobacco in the North East</p>	<p>April 2020 – April 2022</p>	<p>LATSS utilising tobacco dog teams and roadshows. LA7 continuing to participate. Very good response on local intelligence.</p>
	<p>c) Participated with re-launch of regional “Keep it Out” campaign.</p>	<p>April 2020- April 2022</p>	<p>Working group formed and to report back to CTSI/DHSC.</p>
	<p>e) Operation CeCe National enforcement project to be delivered for HMRC by NTS. Full regional reporting regime in place.</p>	<p>January 2021</p>	<p>Ongoing enforcement actions.</p>

2.5	<p>ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE GROUP a) To respond to all localised enquiries and respond to requests as made for assistance from Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the FSA and the national Animal Health Focus group.</p>	<p>April 2020 – April 2022</p>	<p>Meetings attended, and updates disseminated.</p>
	<p>b) To ensure the delivery of the national Feed Hygiene programme on behalf of the NTSB for the FSA.</p>	<p>April 2020 – April 2022</p>	<p>Effective regional delivery of feed hygiene project through co-ordinator. (Northumberland CC).</p>
	<p>c) Tasked to evaluate and update contingency plans in respect of notifiable diseases including rabies and avian flu.</p>	<p>April 2020 – April 2022</p>	<p>Work ongoing.</p>


	d) Tasked to evaluate conditions on animal licences in response to legislative changes (October 2018) and the amendment to Pet shop licensing (Lucy's Law) (April 2020).	April 2020 – April 2022	Work ongoing.
	e) Tasked to run NTS pilot project on competency of animal feed sampling.	April 2020 – April 2022	Hartlepool delivered on project.
	f) National Farming Policy.	December 2019 -	December 2019 Stacey Report on Farm Inspection Review published.  Farm Inspection and Regulation Revi

Key priorities For Action 2020-2022

3. Working collaboratively to ensure effectiveness, efficiency, and value for money


	Action	Timescale	Current Status
3.1	To identify skills gaps in current regional workforce and make appropriate provision for training/resource funding	April 2020 – April 2022	Regional Coordinator and the Training and Competency task and finish group identified various skills gaps. Training to be delivered on IDB system use. 1) FSA grant to provide training on the Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (OCR). 30 & 31 March 2020. 2) IPO Intellectual Property Legal Update course. 3) RIPA Approver courses. April 2021 4) BTHA Toy safety courses. April /May 2021.

			5) HSE chemicals training 22 September 2021.
3.2	To identify appropriate opportunities for regional joint purchasing initiatives to reduce costs	April 2020 – April 2022	NETSA developed a collective purchasing initiative for the purchase on a regional basis at a reduced rate of the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) interlink for the 12 LATSS's. 5% coordination fee paid to NETSA which has been utilised to provide training opportunities.
3.3	Support the England Illegal Moneylending Team (IMLT) funded by Treasury and delivered by NTS in its activities in the region.	April 2020 – April 2022	LATSS's currently authorise IMLT to take actions in the North East. Complaints and intelligence are referred and shared with the IMLT as appropriate. All regional LATSS's have participated in special events to promote awareness of the work of the IMLT in our local communities. Levy on finance industry to fund IMLT. Bank of England and Financial Services Act. 21 July 2020: A 51-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of illegal money lending and money laundering in Sunderland.

			The man was arrested after England Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT), working in partnership with Sunderland City Council Trading Standards and Northumbria Police, executed a warrant a home in Hendon.
3.4	Support the national Safety at Ports Project managed by OPSS by engagement via RIA ensuring all referrals of dangerous goods inland are investigated.	April 2020 – April 2022	Referral letters now arriving from LATSS's at border points. Actions on dangerous and illegal consumer products now been actioned. Actions taken in North Tyneside and Newcastle against a range of consumer products. Optimity Report published.  NTSFINALREPORTM arch1pdf.pdf
3.5	Support the partner organisations Balance and Fresh by supporting campaigns in respect of underage sales, illegal and counterfeit alcohol, and tobacco products. Now representing the northern 7 LA's.	April 2020 – April 2022	NETSA Executive through the Tobacco Control project continues to fully support the work of the regional partners: Balance and Fresh. Representatives from NETSA attend both the Balance Champions group and the Crime and Disorder Group which facilitate the sharing of best practice across a range of activities.

			NETSA has also contributed to a number of surveys in respect of alcohol/ tobacco products. Fresh Regulatory Forum's scheduled in for 2021.
3.6	<p>COMPETENCY AND TRAINING TASK & FINISH GROUP</p> <p>Identify all training opportunities in conjunction with partners, including barristers and the private sector to maintain competency</p>	April 2020 – April 2022	<p>NETSA continues to be very successful in providing a number of training events with partners including CTSI.</p> <p>1) FSA grant to provide training on the Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (OCR). 30 & 31 March 2020.</p> <p>2) IPO Intellectual Property Legal Update course.</p> <p>3) RIPA Approver courses. April 2021</p> <p>4) BTHA Toy safety courses. April /May 2021.</p> <p>5) HSE chemicals training 22 September 2021.</p>
Key Priorities for Action 2020-2022			
4. Use evidence/intelligence gathered locally, regionally, and nationally to target resources			
	Action	Timescale	Current Status
4.1	Establish and maintain a RTG to consistently consider intelligence with a view to appropriate tasking via the SB Team. Where considered appropriate to seek national	April 2020 - April 2022	RTG has been established and is operating well. All meetings scheduled.

	resources from the NTG in line with the IOM. Develop an annual Regional Strategic Assessment to provide intelligence led recommendations for consideration by NETSA in determining its strategic and operational planning. RIA to develop Regional Tactical Assessments for use of Regional Tasking Group (RTG) Develop and implement a Regional Intelligence Group (RIG).	Completed April 2020 Ongoing	Document produced. Documents produced and utilised by RTG. RIG established and meetings all scheduled in.
4.2	Engage fully with the local Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN) to ensure dissemination of intelligence and relevant joint actions are taken with member agencies.	April 2020 – April 2022	NETSA through the RTG has full information exchange arrangements with the local GAIN co-ordinator who attends RTG.
4.3	Support the national CACS in the provision of their services in respect of the Consumer Helpline and their advice services.	April 2020 – April 2022	Liaison from NETSA at the working group set up to ensure effective support/referral procedures in place.
4.4	Support and respond effectively to the devolutionary process in the region. Based on political process. May 2019. Jamie Driscoll elected as North of Tyne Mayor. May 2021. Ben Houchen re-elected as Tees Valley Mayor.	April 2020 – April 2022	Officers carefully monitoring outcomes.
4.5	To carefully consider the implications of and consider the implications of and respond to the results of the General Election.	12 December 2019	Officers carefully monitoring outcomes.
4.6	To carefully consider the implications of and respond to the UK leaving the EU.	June 2016 ongoing	31 January 2020 EU Exit day. 1 January 2021 end of transition period.
4.7	To carefully monitor and respond to the Covid 19	March 2020 ongoing	Officers carefully managing new

	pandemic and in particular the full implications on the resources and working practices of all partners during lockdown.		demands placed on all services and also tackling new issues i.e. – scams, price gouging and safety of PPE.
4.8	To carefully consider the announcement on the 19 January 2021 that OPSS to be the new regulator for construction products.	January 2021 ongoing	Officers carefully monitoring outcomes.
4.9	To carefully consider and respond to the CTSI consultation on the Qualifications Review.	Completed	Officers to provide a full response.  05 Qualifications review 2021 Consult:
5.0	To carefully consider and respond to the BEIS consultation on the reforming of competition and consumer policy.	July 2021 Completed	Officers have provided a full response via ACTSO/NTS.

Chair of NETSA. September 2021