



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR RED TRACTOR TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

1. Purpose

Red Tractor **Technical Advisory Committees** (TACs) are sub-committees of Red Tractor Sector Boards and provide expert, technical scrutiny and recommendations in response to specific requests, made by a Sector Board. An effective TAC ensures the Sector Board has the best guidance and information to facilitate effective decision making. They may also support Red Tractor Technical Managers in their work, codifying governance process decisions into fit-for-purpose, written standards.

Their remit does not include a strategic or policy setting role. Their role is intentionally *ad hoc* and designed to provide input on a case-by-case basis in response to a mandate, issued by the Sector Board.

2. Duties

TACs are accountable to, and take instruction from the Sector Board to:

- Respond to specific requests from Sector Board for technical scrutiny
- Provide recommendations to Sector Board in response to a request
- Undertake detailed review of technical information
- Review draft standard content for utility, value and practicality
- Share knowledge and guidance on areas of individual expertise

3. Composition & Membership Criteria

- a. Red Tractor's owners represent every stage of food supply from farm to retailer, and the principle of balanced representation is replicated within the Main Board and in the membership of Sector Boards and TACs. Red Tractor's success is dependent upon utilising the distilled wisdom of the entire food chain. Achieving an equitable balance of interests across all supply-chain bodies is critical to successful decision making.
- b. The TAC may also include individuals who are independent of the food chain who provide specialist knowledge on topics relevant to farm assurance.
- c. TAC members should be supportive of the principle of credible, farm assurance.
- d. Members should understand the practicalities and challenges present within the sector and possess strong knowledge of their subject specialisms.
- e. Members should be able to draw upon a wide network of contacts, relevant to their sphere of expertise.
- f. The Sector Chair may choose to attend meetings of the TAC as an observer.

- g. The Red Tractor Technical Manager will participate within TAC meetings, in accordance with their role as the technical expert and writer who converts the decisions of the Sector Board (informed by the recommendation of the TAC) into fit-for-purpose, standards.

4. Recruitment Process

TAC Chair

- a. The TAC Chair must be appointed as a member of the Sector Board, via the Sector Board recruitment process.
- b. TAC Chairs serve three-year terms which may be renewed at the discretion of the Sector Chair and Sector Board members. While two, three-year terms may be considered as a default limit, there is no formal limit to the number of terms that may be served. All parties should seek to achieve a balance between continuity and freshness of approach.
- c. The TAC Chair should be independent of the supply chain wherever practical. Where there are compelling reasons to relax this requirement, the decision to do so should be reviewed and agreed by the Sector Board.
- d. The Sector Board should have a contingency plan to nominate, where necessary, an acting TAC Chair from within the TAC membership:
 - To chair meetings of the TAC when the Chair is unavailable
 - Where necessary to attend meetings of the Sector Board as an observer
- e. The TAC Chair shall possess the necessary knowledge and skills to act as a conduit for the views of TAC members and provide impartial, technical advice to the Sector Board to support effective horizon scanning.

TAC Members

- a. Ownership Bodies (the Farming Unions, BRC and where appropriate, AHDB and Dairy UK) will be represented on TACs wherever they choose to participate. Representatives selected should meet the composition and membership criteria outlined in section: **3. Composition & Membership Criteria.**
- b. Other TAC members will be selected by the Red Tractor Technical Manager, Sector Chair and TAC Chair and should also meet criteria outlined above in section: **3. Composition & Membership Criteria.**
- c. As vacancies occur, the Red Tractor Technical Manager, Sector Chair and TAC Chair will determine whether that specific expertise needs to be replaced or whether it presents an opportunity to bring new or different skills to the TAC.
- d. Additional members may be introduced where an opportunity is identified to increase the TACs collective skills and knowledge – either as an invited guest or as a permanent member.
- e. Guest members may be introduced on an *ad hoc* basis, where agreed by the Red Tractor Technical Manager, Sector Chair and TAC Chair.
- f. Any new, permanent TAC members will be communicated to Sector Boards who will have the opportunity to comment or exercise a veto if they believe an appointment unsuitable.
- g. TAC composition shall be reviewed annually, by the Red Tractor Technical Manager, Sector Chair and TAC Chair to balance continuity with ensuring the best available expertise. While membership is not restricted to time-limited terms, membership may be refreshed, based upon annual review and in consultation with the individuals affected. The following criteria may be considered (note this is offered as guidance and may not be exhaustive):
 - Attendance record

- Support for credible, farm assurance
- Any conduct or behaviour contrary to expectations in section 7 and section 8
- h. Membership of the Sector Board and TAC should be distinct and separate. With the exception of the TAC Chair, an individual should not typically be a member of both bodies. Where there are compelling reasons to relax this requirement, the decision to do so should be reviewed and agreed by other members of the Sector Board.
- i. Members unable to attend meetings may, with the agreement of the TAC Chair, designate a deputy with similar expertise to attend.
- j. The Sector Board may at their discretion issue a mandate to a smaller, working group with specialist knowledge of a specific topic, which may or may not include members of the TAC.

5. Meetings

TACs meet on an *ad hoc* basis, in response to an instruction from the Sector Board. It is recommended as a guide that TACs should meet at least once annually and the TAC Chair may – in their capacity as a Sector Board member – propose a TAC meeting, for the consideration of the Sector Board. Meetings may be conducted in-person, via video link or in a hybrid format – at the discretion of the Red Tractor Technical Manager and TAC Chair.

The TAC Chair will report TAC recommendations to the Sector Board. The Red Tractor Technical Manager and Sector Chair will support the TAC Chair in ensuring there is clear and effective communication between TAC and Sector Board. While the TAC shall by preference seek consensus wherever practical, the TAC Chair may also communicate recommendations made by majority or no-overall-conclusion where this accurately represents the conclusions of the TAC. The Sector Board will give due consideration to recommendations of the TAC and will not typically seek to duplicate their work but the decision of how best to proceed is decided by the Sector Board – whether the recommendation from TAC is definitive or ambiguous.

6. Outputs

The TAC makes recommendations to the Sector Board, in response to a mandate or specific instruction issued by the Sector Board.

7. Responsibility and Conduct

It is recognised that members of TACs are often also representatives of food chain bodies or associations and have a responsibility to act in the interests of their organisations. While the TAC is an advisory forum rather than a decision-making body, members should be mindful of any potential conflicts of interest and always role-model high standards of personal conduct.

TAC members should:

- a. Familiarise themselves with the Red Tractor Governance Handbook and act in accordance with all relevant sections: [Governance In Detail - Red Tractor Assurance](#)
- b. Endeavour to understand the policy position of organisations they represent (where applicable) and declare any conflict of interest.
- c. Be clear in discussion whether views expressed are personal or those of an organisation, especially where the two might differ.
- d. Take care to communicate to the organisation they represent any outputs with wider ramifications.

- e. Where necessary, facilitate dialogue between the organisation and Red Tractor executive team to clarify any points of concern.
- f. Conduct discussions with respect and courtesy for fellow TAC members. While members must be free to disagree with one another and present alternative views, all members should observe high standards of personal conduct and refrain from any behaviour that may be construed as offensive, aggressive or personally abusive.

8. Confidentiality

From time-to-time, information provided to members of the TAC may be deemed sensitive and confidential. Papers should be marked accordingly, and instructions should be given by the Chair as to how they may be shared, if at all. Members should respect the level of confidentiality requested.

Non-sensitive information can be shared more freely, and it will often be beneficial to convey information to colleagues where members also represent a business or organisation. Members should however always communicate with discretion and transparency and in a manner that is broadly supportive of the aims and reputation of Red Tractor.

9. Sanctions

Should any TAC member be found to have behaved contrary to the expectations set out in sections 7 and 8 of this document they may be removed from the TAC. The decision to remove a TAC member can be made in agreement between the TAC Chair, Sector Chair and Technical Manager. Where it is deemed that further input would be beneficial in ensuring fairness, a decision may be shared with or referred to the relevant Sector Board. Any decision to remove a TAC member will be communicated in writing (via email) to the affected individual.

Should an individual wish to challenge a decision to remove them from a TAC, they may invoke the grievance process (section 10). The recruitment process detail in section 4 will be invoked to determine if a replacement is needed and how this process will proceed.

10. Grievance Process

TAC members may raise a formal grievance if they have a complaint or feel they have been subject of or witness to unfair or unacceptable behaviour, bullying or harassment. Members are encouraged to seek informal resolution as a first step. Where an informal approach has not resolved the issue or where the person identifying a grievance deems a formal approach to be more appropriate, they should raise a grievance in writing with the Red Tractor Chair or Red Tractor CEO. Formal grievances will be managed in accordance with applicable elements of the **Acas Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures**.