

## **Review of infant formula and follow-on formula controls**

In 2007, the then Minister of State for Public Health, Dawn Primarolo, announced new regulations on infant formula and follow-on formula. At the same time, she committed to have the effectiveness of the new controls on the advertising and presentation of follow-on formula reviewed.

The independent panel of experts was asked: 'To assess whether the new controls on the way in which follow-on formula is presented and advertised have been effective in making clear to parents/parents to be and carers that advertisements for follow-on formula are meant only for babies over six months and are not perceived or confused as infant formula advertising, which is prohibited.'

This work was informed by three pieces of research:

- ways in which infant formula and follow-on formula is advertised
- whether infants under 6 months are being fed follow-on formula, the reasons why and whether consumers are clear that the presentation and advertising of follow-on formula relates to formula for older babies
- innovative use of loyalty card data to establish a link between purchase of follow-on formula and age of babies

Stakeholders were also involved throughout the process.

## **Review findings**

The review found:

- The controls are having the desired effect in the main, but some adverts are not always clearly understood as being for follow-on formula rather than infant formula.
- Infant formula is not allowed to be advertised. Some action is recommended to address this (see below).
- There is not sufficient evidence of confusion between infant formula and follow-on formula to justify a ban on the advertising of follow-on formula.

## **Recommendations from the review**

The review recommended:


- Manufacturers should make changes to advertising, to make it clear that follow-on formula is intended for babies over six months. This includes clearly representing the age of babies in the adverts.
- Any problems encountered with the enforcement of the regulations should be addressed accordingly.

The report has been submitted to Gillian Merron, Minister of State for Public Health, for her consideration. The full report can be viewed in full at the link below along with further information about the review panel.

Additional information can also be found on the Department of Health's website.

## **Related links**

[The Independent Review of the Controls on Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula](#) Read the review

 (pdf 700KB)

**External links** The Food Standards Agency has no responsibility for the content of external websites

[Department of Health](#)

## **Find out more**

### [About the review](#)

Objective, remit, processes and management arrangements for the review of the controls on infant formula and follow-on formula.

### [Consultation on the panel's draft report on infant formula and follow-on formula and material considered by the review panel](#)

The independent panel on the controls on infant formula and follow-on formula, is today publishing its draft report along with the reports of the three research projects that were commissioned specifically to support the review.

### [Independent panel on the controls on infant formula and follow-on formula](#)

An independent panel has been set up to review the effect of the infant and follow-on formula controls, introduced in 2008, on how follow-on formulas are presented and advertised. The review will be carried out over a year and will begin in June 2008.

### [Meetings of the independent review panel](#)

Minutes of the meetings and associated papers.

### [Membership of the review panel](#)

The review will be managed by a small group of independent experts (the review panel) with an independent chair. As agreed by the Minister, the review will be chaired by Professor Anne Murcott. The FSA and Department of Health (DH) will jointly provide the secretariat to the panel.

### [Research for the independent review of the controls on infant formula and follow-on formula](#)

The independent panel have asked that three pieces of research are carried out in order to provide the necessary evidence upon which they can assess whether the new controls on advertising and presentation are fulfilling their objectives or whether further action is needed and, if so, what future action may be appropriate.

## **Review timeline**

The timeline for the review of the controls on infant formula and follow-on formula.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/healthiereating/nutcomms/informreview/>