



**RASFF WI 3.2:
RULES ON INFORMING INFOSAN
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All RASFF member countries are also State Parties to the International Health Regulations (IHR (2005)) of the World Health Organization (WHO) and therefore obliged to report to WHO when a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) is identified. A PHEIC is determined using a decision tree in Annex 2 of the IHR (2005) ¹.

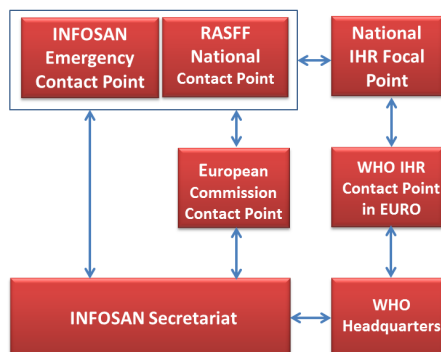
Each State Party is required to designate a National IHR Focal Point (IHR NFP) which has, among other responsibilities, the obligation to report to WHO when a PHEIC is identified. In Europe, the IHR NFP will make their report to the WHO IHR Contact Points at the WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO EURO) who will in turn notify WHO Headquarters.

Since 2004, the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) has managed food safety events with international implications at the WHO. INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points have the responsibility of informing the INFOSAN Secretariat at WHO of relevant food safety events as well as ensuring that counterparts in their respective national health authority are aware of notifications sent through INFOSAN to allow appropriate action to occur. In most cases, the RASFF Single Contact Point (SCP) has also been designated as the INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point.

It is important that the National IHR Focal Point and the INFOSAN Emergency CP / RASFF SCP work in close collaboration to ensure national and international public health security and the fulfilment of the requirements under the IHR(2005), including event detection, assessment, notification, reporting, consultation and information dissemination. The INFOSAN Secretariat recommends that collaborative agreements be documented and has provided a template in the INFOSAN Members' Guide.

Important to note is that while the requirements of the IHR(2005) state that communication between WHO and countries should occur through the National IHR Focal Points and the WHO IHR Contact Points, **this does not preclude technical discussions between country food safety officials (i.e. the INFOSAN Emergency CP / RASFF SCP) and the INFOSAN Secretariat with regard to food safety events.** There will be some food safety events which may not require notification or reporting under IHR(2005), but do call for action through INFOSAN. The INFOSAN Secretariat will also consult with the reporting members before posting an INFOSAN Alert or Notice about a reported event on the INFOSAN Community Website (for INFOSAN members only).

In order to avoid confusion and a double reporting burden on those RASFF NCPs who have the dual role of also being their country's INFOSAN Emergency CP, RASFF SCPs have agreed to an option of reporting to INFOSAN via the European Commission's Contact Point (ECCP)². Different lines of reporting between involved stakeholders are depicted in the following figure:



¹ http://www.who.int/ihr/IHR_2005_en.pdf; http://www.who.int/ihr/Intro_legislative_implementation.pdf - Introduction, Chapter 6, page 13

² See [summary report](#) of the SCoFCAH meeting of 20 September 2005, point 15.

WHEN SHOULD THE INFOSAN SECRETARIAT BE INFORMED?

The INFOSAN Secretariat should be systematically informed by the ECCP via online database RASFF Window on the notifications and relevant follow-ups to:

- 1) A foodborne outbreak that has been linked to a food product that has been either imported from or exported to non-member country.
- 2) A multi-country foodborne outbreak that has been identified, but the source of the food product has not yet been determined.
- 3) Contaminated food, feed or food contact material that has been identified as posing a serious health risk which has either been imported from a non-member country or has been exported to a non-member country. This means that border rejection notifications are not in the scope for systematically informing INFOSAN.

In all other cases the INFOSAN Secretariat will be informed by ECCP on a case by case basis after prior consultation and agreement with, or at the request of, the notifying country.