Chartered Trading Standards Institute qualifications

Examiners report

CTSI Professional Competency Framework

Stage 2 Professional Interviews Regulating Markets December 2019

General

This was the first year of the Professional Interviews for Stage 2 subjects.

A total of fourteen candidates attempted the Regulating Markets professional interview this round and I am pleased to announce that all passed. There was a total of four scenarios set and candidates were allocated these prior to the day and provided with the scenario ten minutes before the interview to allow for reading and the making of notes.

Marks ranged from the mid-forties to seventy per cent and there was no one question which candidates appeared to find easier than others. As the syllabus is focussed on the more general process of regulation and regulatory intervention rather than detail of regulation themselves candidates who had not studied either product safety or food previously were able to answer questions about scenarios from these specific areas of market surveillance and enforcement.

Example Scenario

This scenario related to a potentially dangerous USB charger, and all candidates were able to determine that the thrust of the questioning didn't relate to the detail of the product safety legal framework but instead the way in which information and conformity assessment documentation is used in a risk assessment of the product which determines the regulatory response to the scenario presented. All candidates demonstrated an understanding of how conformity assessment impacts on safety and risk, and also developed an appropriate regulatory strategy and tactics to address these issues.

> You receive a complaint about a faulty USB charger, which is alleged to have 'blown up' whilst plugged in and charging a mobile phone. You have the product examined by an electrical engineer who states that the construction is defective and, in some circumstances, could cause a fire or electrocution. Despite having no markings, you trace the importer of the product as a trader in your area.

Questions Asked during the interview:

1. **How would you approach the risk assessment on the product? What further information would you seek?**
2. **There is no technical documentation available for the product. Explain how you would carry out the risk assessment and what assumptions you would make in these circumstances.**
3. **How would the risk assessment differ if technical documentation was available?**
4. **The risk assessment indicates that the product presents an intolerable risk of harm. What are the obligations of the market surveillance authority and the economic operator in these circumstances?**
5. **What further actions would arise from this investigation and assessment in respect of the rest of the market?**

Knowledge to be demonstrated
Q1 Knowledge of the way in which risk assessments are built, documents, other complaints, reviews, intelligence product, RAPEX, technical documentation etc Further sample of the product for testing – use of these results
Q2. Knowledge of statistical assumptions including use of Normal Distribution of attributes and modelling using a single data point. Homogeneity vs. product diversity
Q3. Knowledge of technical documentation audit strategies demonstrating product specification and internal production control. Allows for assumptions to be confirmed. Relevance of other test results. Traceability.
Q4. Knowledge of obligations and corrective actions to reduce the risk of harm arising from the product to a tolerable level. Different types of corrective actions and choosing the correct strategy to maximise risk reduction.
Q5. Knowledge of intelligence systems and data sharing, RAPEX and ICSMS (or UK systems if Brexit happens). Future targeting of this type of product/economic operator/supply chain. Will the non-conformity detected indicate

The above table illustrates what the examiner was looking for in the responses to the questions.

Summary

Overall the answers provided by candidates lacked some detail in relation to the methodologies adopted to collect information and develop an intelligence product to inform a regulatory response to the scenario presented although nearly all demonstrated a clear understanding of risk assessment in this context and the way in which this evolves in light of the information collected during an intervention.

The interviews were video recorded for moderation purposes as the moderator was not required to be present at the interview. Some recordings were difficult to hear however, so it is suggested that in future a microphone is attached to the video camera and placed closer to the candidate to ensure clarity of the recording to assist both the examiner and moderator in marking the answers that candidates provided.