

PH2B: Periodically develop publicly available regulatory updates and water quality compliance reports

REGULATORY FUNCTION: PUBLIC HEALTH		PH2B
OBJECTIVE PH2 Regulatory compliance with water and sanitation safety plans is monitored through collected information on water quality	ACTION CARD PH2B <h1 style="margin: 0;">PERIODICALLY DEVELOP PUBLICLY AVAILABLE REGULATORY UPDATES AND WATER QUALITY COMPLIANCE REPORTS</h1>	
COST: Medium FREQUENCY: Regular TARGET GROUPS: Regulators, consumer associations, civil society, service operators		
DESCRIPTION <p>Information and data about drinking water quality become more relevant when accessible, and being open access enables the public to be properly informed. Regulators must therefore promote best practices through drinking water quality reports, including specific recommendations based on reported evidence and service performance. These reports often include the definition of water quality indicators, offered as steering tools and targeting results. Irrespective of its actual format, annual drinking water quality reports, being comparative in their structure, motivate operators to achieve even higher standards. Regulators, therefore, periodically assesses collected water quality regulatory compliance data, and make them accessible to the public through media, websites, or other means of communication.</p>		
EXPECTED OUTCOMES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public health information on the status of drinking water safety is widely available and accessible. • Service operators are compared through drinking water quality reports and are held accountable. • Consumer health is adequately protected. 		
EXAMPLE 1: NEW ZEALAND <p>In New Zealand, the Ministry of Health publishes annual reports on drinking-water quality and compliance, highlighting the significance of government reforms in this important area of public health. The release of its Annual Report on Drinking-water Quality 2017-18, for example, includes information on individual supplies, providing a better overall picture of water quality and associated risks. It reinforces key recommendations from an inquiry which followed the 2016 Havelock North outbreak of gastroenteritis in which more than 5000 people became ill. The inquiry found a widespread systemic failure of drinking-water suppliers.</p> <p>With safe drinking-water a government priority, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry for the Environment, and the Department of Internal Affairs have continued to push through improvements, including implementation of the inquiry's 51 recommendations. The resulting report contains information on drinking-water quality for all registered, networked supplies serving populations of more than 100 people from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, covering 3,839,000 people. Following a recommendation from the inquiry, the format has changed to improve clarity and accessibility, with non-compliance being highlighted.</p>		
EXAMPLE 2: UNITED KINGDOM <p>In the UK, the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) publishes publicly available quarterly and annual reports which assess drinking water quality at a national level from the perspective of the DWI Chief Inspector. The reports cover water quality testing and results, public confidence in drinking water, events, and technical audit activities. They also contain a summary of all results of the water companies regulatory sampling programme, and a list of all the cautions and prosecutions carried out by DWI.</p>		
LINKS New Zealand: https://www.health.govt.nz/news-media/media-releases/publication-annual-report-drinking-water-quality		

UK Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) webpage: <https://www.dwi.gov.uk/consumers/triennial-report-2017-2019/>

INTERNAL CAPACITIES NEEDED AND THE ROLE OF PARTNERS

Capacity required for preparing and publicly sharing drinking water regulatory compliance reports includes an understanding of what information is pertinent, and how to package and communicate best that information. Development partners could assist in either drafting or peer reviewing reports, and civil society organizations and media agencies can help regulators communicate information to the public.