

# PH4A: Identify and investigate drinking water safety regulatory compliance failures and provide instructions for remediation measures

REGULATORY FUNCTION: PUBLIC HEALTH		PH4A
<p><b>OBJECTIVE PH4</b></p> <p>Penalty systems are adopted and enforced to penalize service operators for actions that infringe legal provisions on drinking water quality</p>	<p><b>ACTION CARD PH4A</b></p> <p><b>IDENTIFY AND INVESTIGATE DRINKING WATER SAFETY REGULATORY COMPLIANCE FAILURES AND PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS FOR REMEDIATION MEASURES</b></p>	
<p><b>COST:</b> Low                      <b>FREQUENCY:</b> Regular</p> <p><b>TARGET GROUPS:</b> Regulators, service operators, ministries of health</p>		
<p><b>DESCRIPTION</b></p> <p>Regulators audit service operators' compliance throughout the drinking water supply chain, and issue reports with instructions on remediation measures to be taken for non-compliance or non-statutory recommendations. After drinking water safety failure is identified through its monitoring procedures, regulators proceed with further investigation of such misconduct, to assess consequent risk and damage to public health. Prior to sanctions being applied, regulators have available a range of possible statutory recommendations and clean-up remedies to neutralize the risk or prevent further damage. They must, however, perform this action based on investigation protocols that specify clear steps and procedural roles.</p>		
<p><b>EXPECTED OUTCOMES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service operators are prevented from supplying drinking water that is not of adequate quality.</li> <li>• Consumer health is protected.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>EXAMPLE: IRELAND</b></p> <p>In <b>Ireland</b>, the Environmental Protection Agency carries out audits of public water suppliers that are an important way of checking how they are performing, and ensuring that drinking water regulations are being complied with. The EPA audits examines a number of areas including water sources, water treatment works, management of distribution systems, sampling and analytical methods used, and consumer contacts about water quality. When selecting suppliers to audit, the EPA adopts a risk-based approach to ensure that those in most need of attention have a greater degree of inspection and enforcement. Where the EPA finds any deficiencies, recommendations are made in the audit report as to the corrective actions water suppliers need to take. Most recommendations are technical and do not necessarily mean there is any immediate threat to drinking water quality. Water suppliers are required to reply within the timeframe specified in the audit report, setting out what they have done or propose to do in order to satisfy the recommended actions. The EPA then tracks progress in carrying out these actions. All audits and its corrective instructions, remedies and directions are available on the EPA website.</p>		
<p><b>LINKS</b></p> <p>EPA web page: <a href="http://www.epa.ie/water/dw/dwaudits/">http://www.epa.ie/water/dw/dwaudits/</a>  <a href="https://www.water.ie/docs/2017-DW-Report_web_Final.pdf">https://www.water.ie/docs/2017-DW-Report_web_Final.pdf</a></p>		

**INTERNAL CAPACITIES NEEDED AND THE ROLE OF PARTNERS**

Identifying and investigating drinking water safety regulatory compliance failures and providing instructions for associated remediation measures requires technical capacity in risk based assessment, quality assurance and auditing skills, in order to establish protocols and conduct inspections. Development partners can support regulators in providing targeted technical assistance and inspection capacity building workshops.