



# Drinking Water England 2024

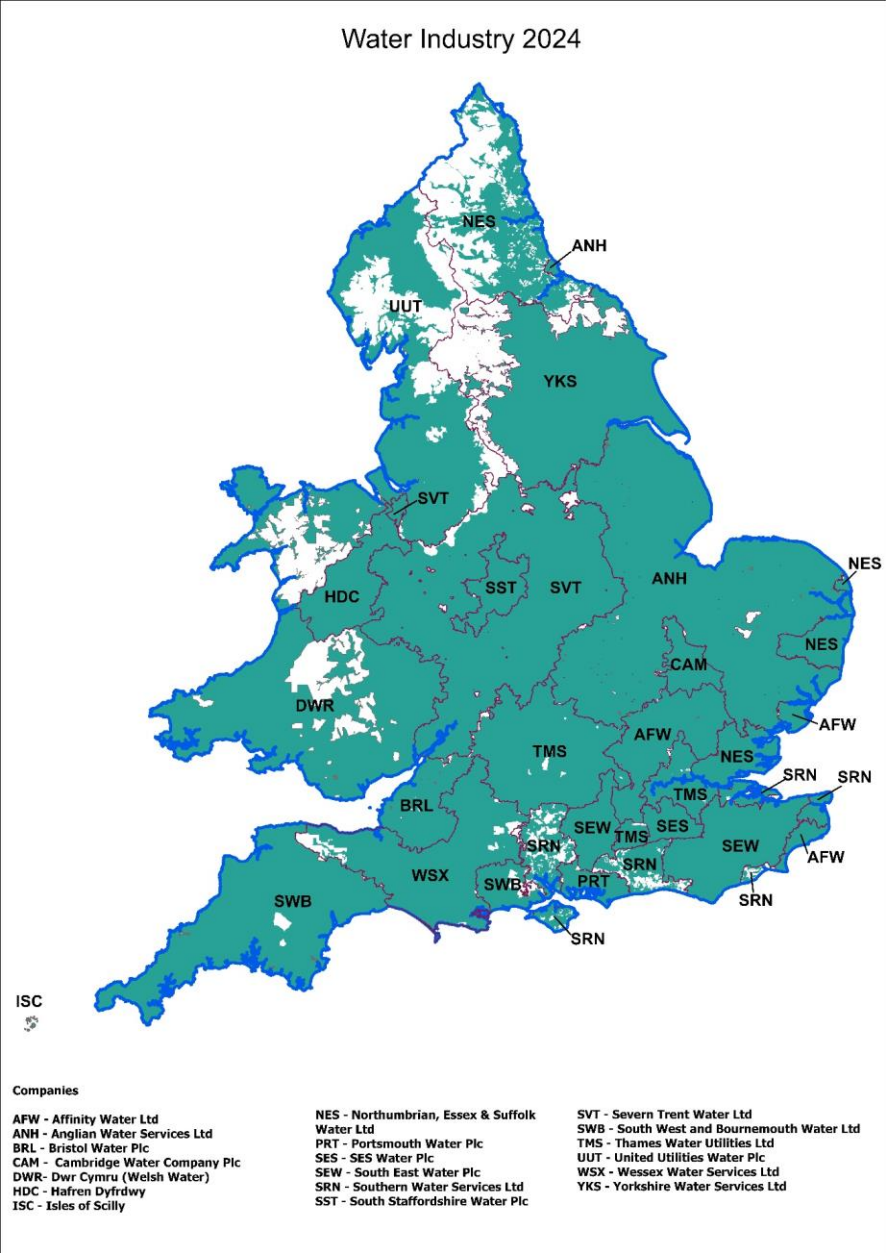
**Marcus Rink**  
**Chief Inspector of**  
**Drinking Water**

July 2025

# Industry statistics

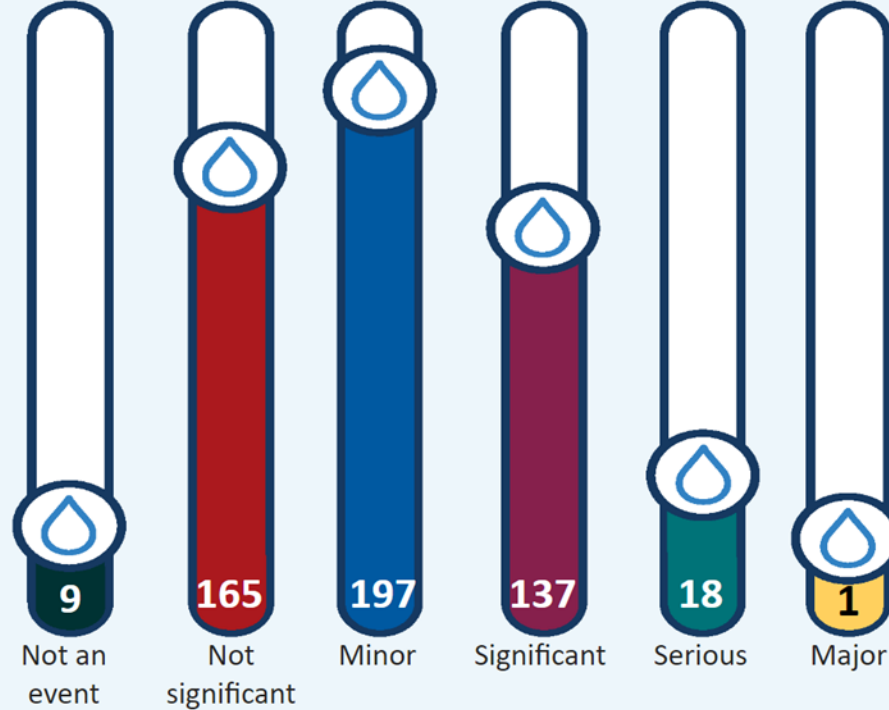
Public supply key fact	Statistics
Number of water companies	25
Population supplied	58.82M
Water supplied (L/day)	13.93bn
Treatment works	998
Service reservoirs	3632
Water supply zones	1917
Length of mains pipe (km)	321866
Surface sources	1,144
Groundwater sources	1,009
Mixed water sources	347

July 2025



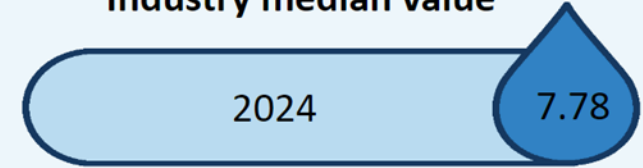
# Industry statistics

Parameter Group	% Compliance
Chemical Parameters	99.95%
Indicator Parameters	99.97%
Micro-Biological Parameters	99.98%
Micro-Biological Parameters (Reservoirs)	99.96%
Micro-Biological Parameters (Treatment Works)	99.98%
Pesticides	100%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>99.97%</b>



Water safety planning risk assessment risk index

Industry median value



Compliance with standards

99.97%

Median compliance risk index

2024

1.741

2023

3.02\*

Consumer complaints on acceptability contacts per 1000 population

England

1.21

Industry average

1.30

Enforcement

Recommendations

836

Legal instruments served

201

Companies in transformation

5

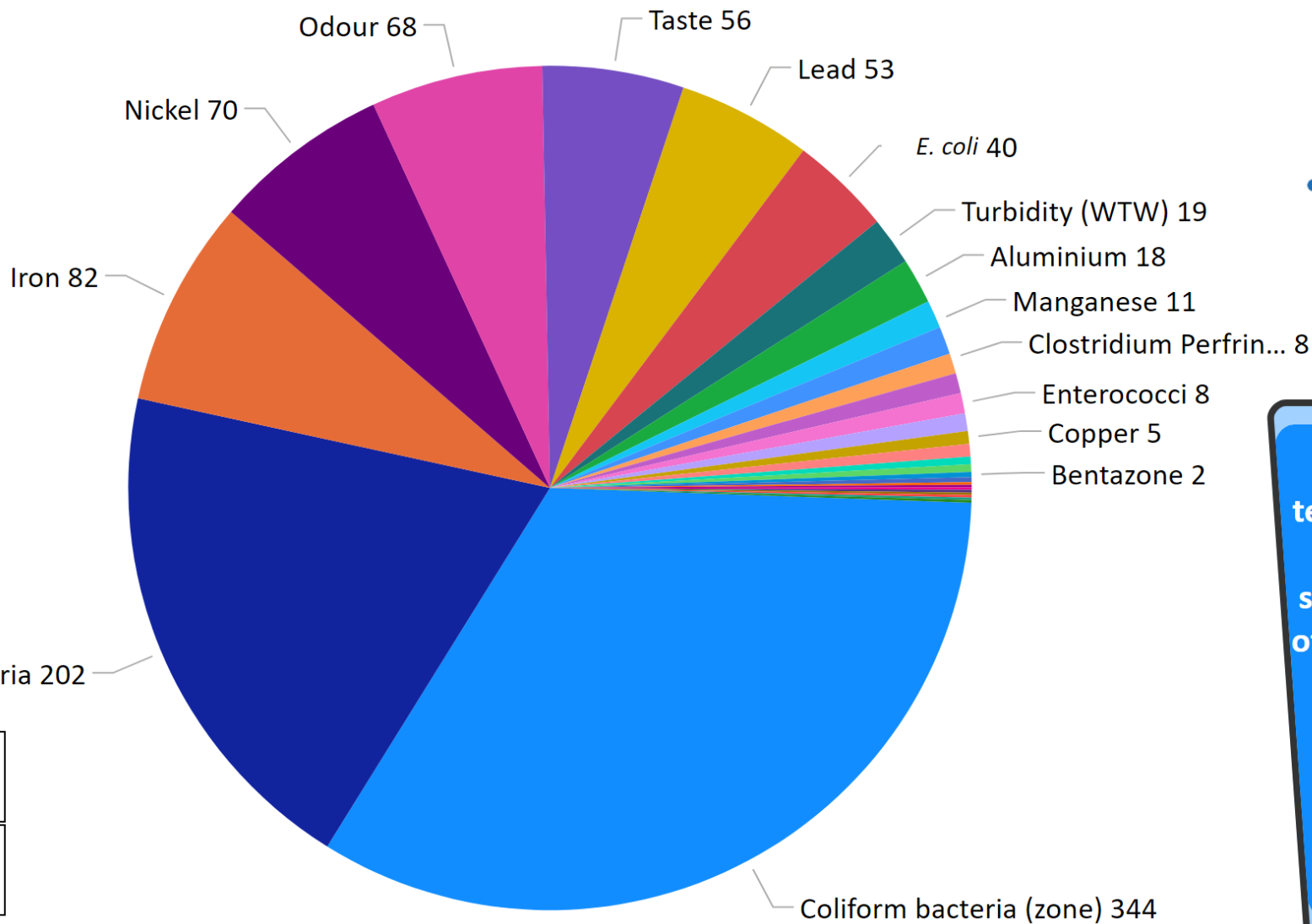
# Compliance

*E. coli* failures at WTW

3

*E. coli* failures at reservoir

7



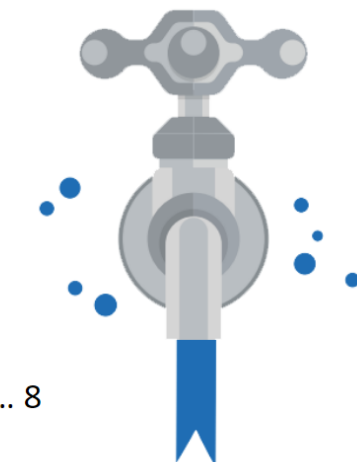
Coliform bacteria 202

Coliform failures at treatment works

80

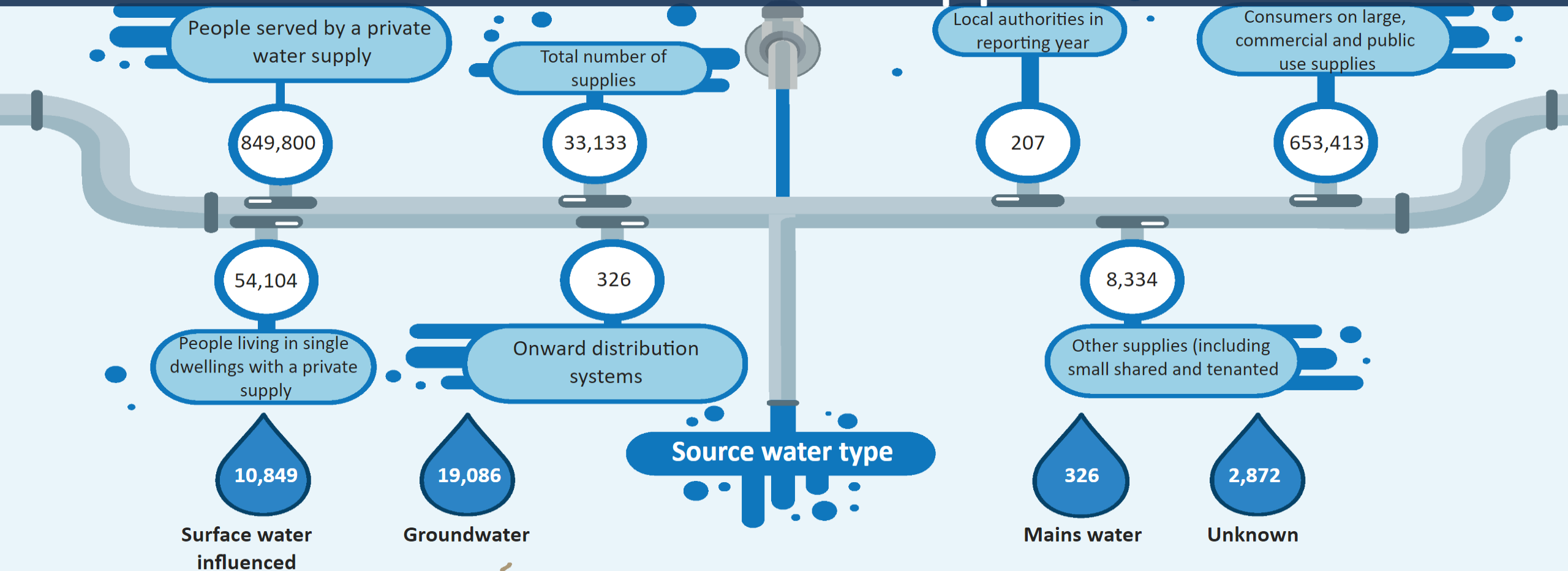
Coliform failures at reservoir

122

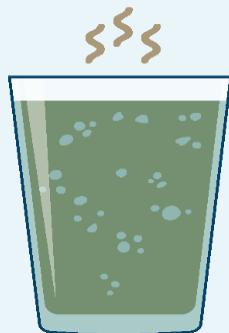


England - 1033 tests breached the water quality standards in 2024 of which 472 were due to the domestic distribution system

# Private water supplies



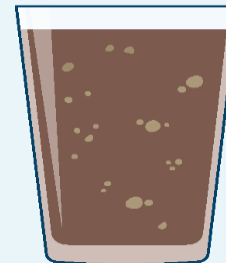
4.46% of sites tested for *E. coli* contamination were positive as were 5.40% for Enterococci. These supplies are consumed by almost 17,000 people.



3.94% of samples tested for taste and 4.01% for odours were positive. These were therefore 'unwholesome'.



0.96% of samples tested for turbidity and 1.52% of samples tested for colour failed the standards. These cause discoloured or cloudy water.

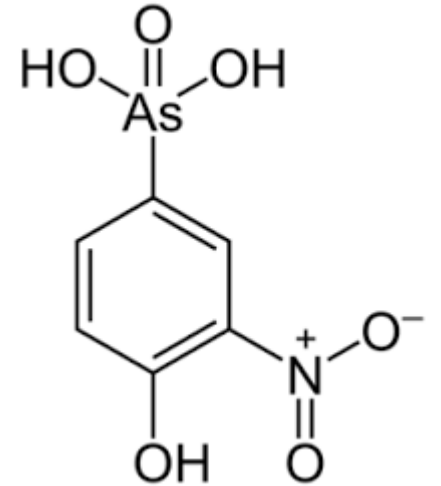


3.81% of tests for iron, 4.79% of tests for manganese and 1.14% of tests for aluminium failed the relevant standards. These metals can make water look discoloured.

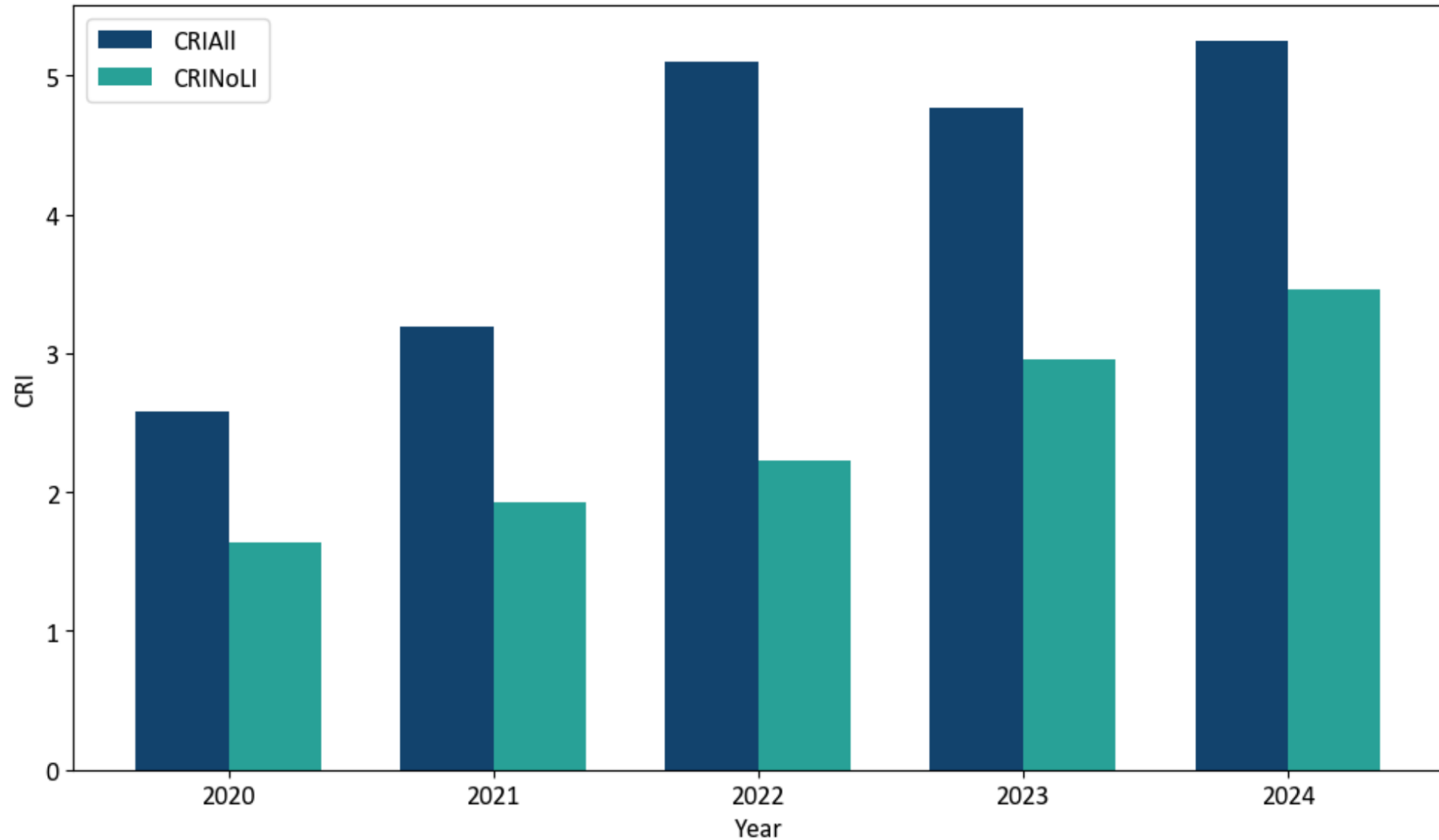


# Private water supply Challenges

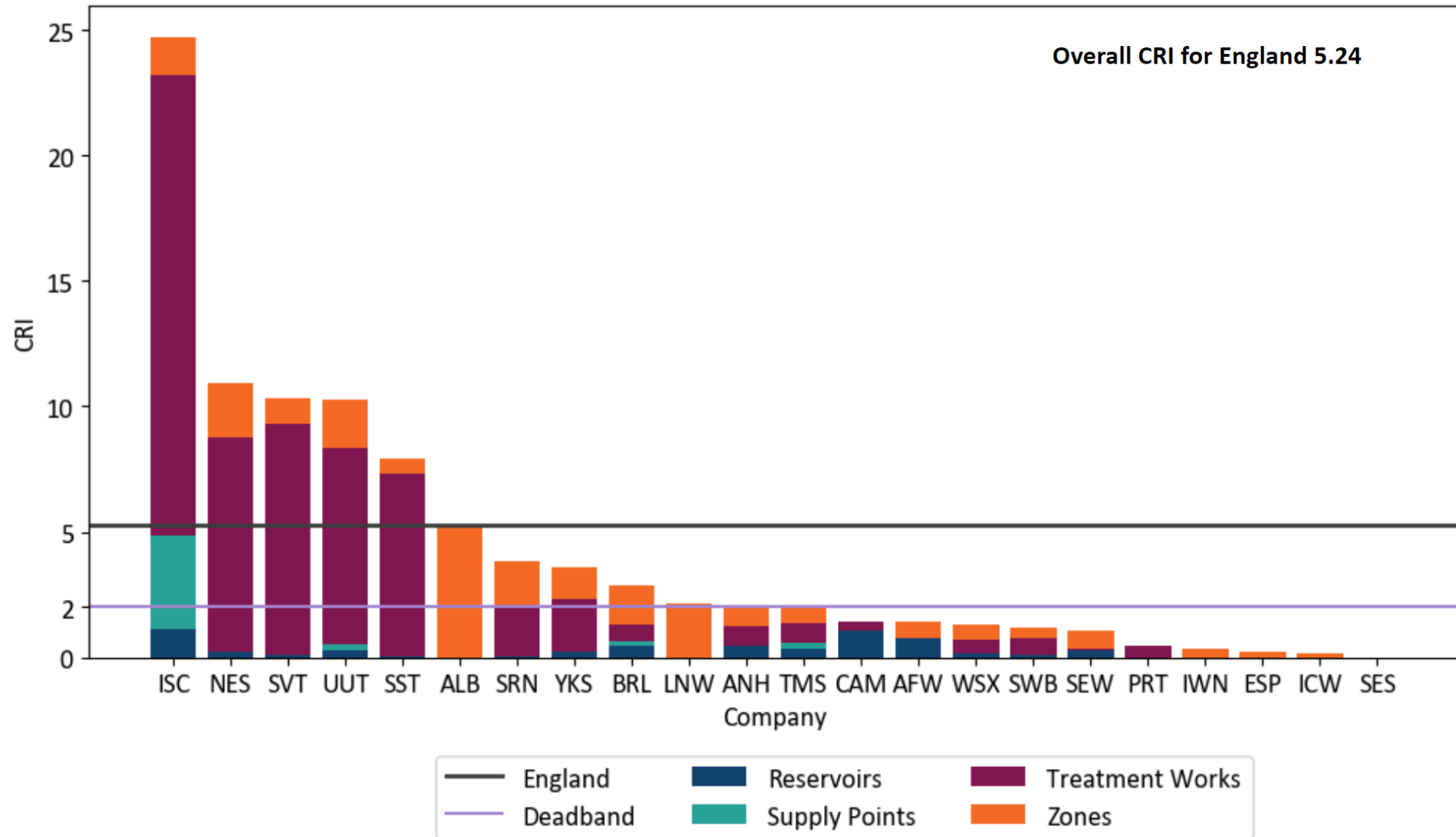
- Water Quality
  - E.g. Arsenic to 300 consumers with a peak approaching 60ug/l
  - In response notices were served to maintain the onsite treatment and switch to the back-up mains supply.
- Regulation 8
  - Legislative gaps include onward supply connections, cost recovery, r.8 supply description
  - Heathrow, new housing developments, dual pipe systems and temporary events



# Compliance risk index

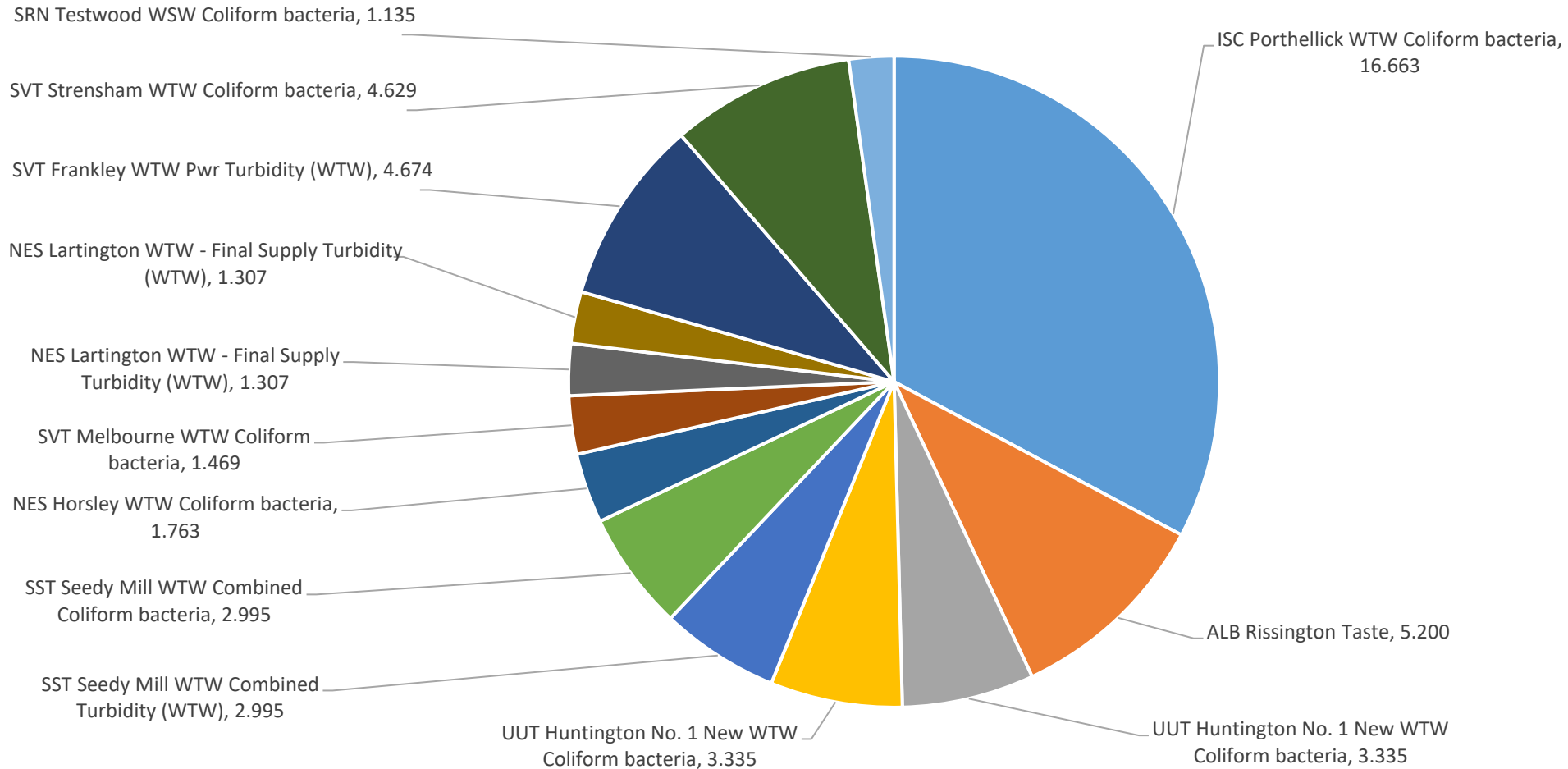


# Compliance risk index





# CRI by Parameter



# Events

## Raw water

Raw water deterioration	13
Ground Contamination / Spillage	69

## Other

Vandalism	2
Use of unapproved materials/products	3
Satisfactory investigation, did not identify root cause	9
Other	87

## Treatment works

Cryptosporidium in Final Water	1
Gastric Illness - Report from Health Authority	1
Treatment failure upstream of final disinfection	7
Plant failure	23

## Caused by company

Planned work	29
Emergency Work	3

## Consumer acceptability

Discoloured water - cause unknown at present	8
Cross Connection	4
Consumers distribution system	174
Back Siphonage	9
Animacules	1

## Company communication pipe

Company communication pipe problem	14
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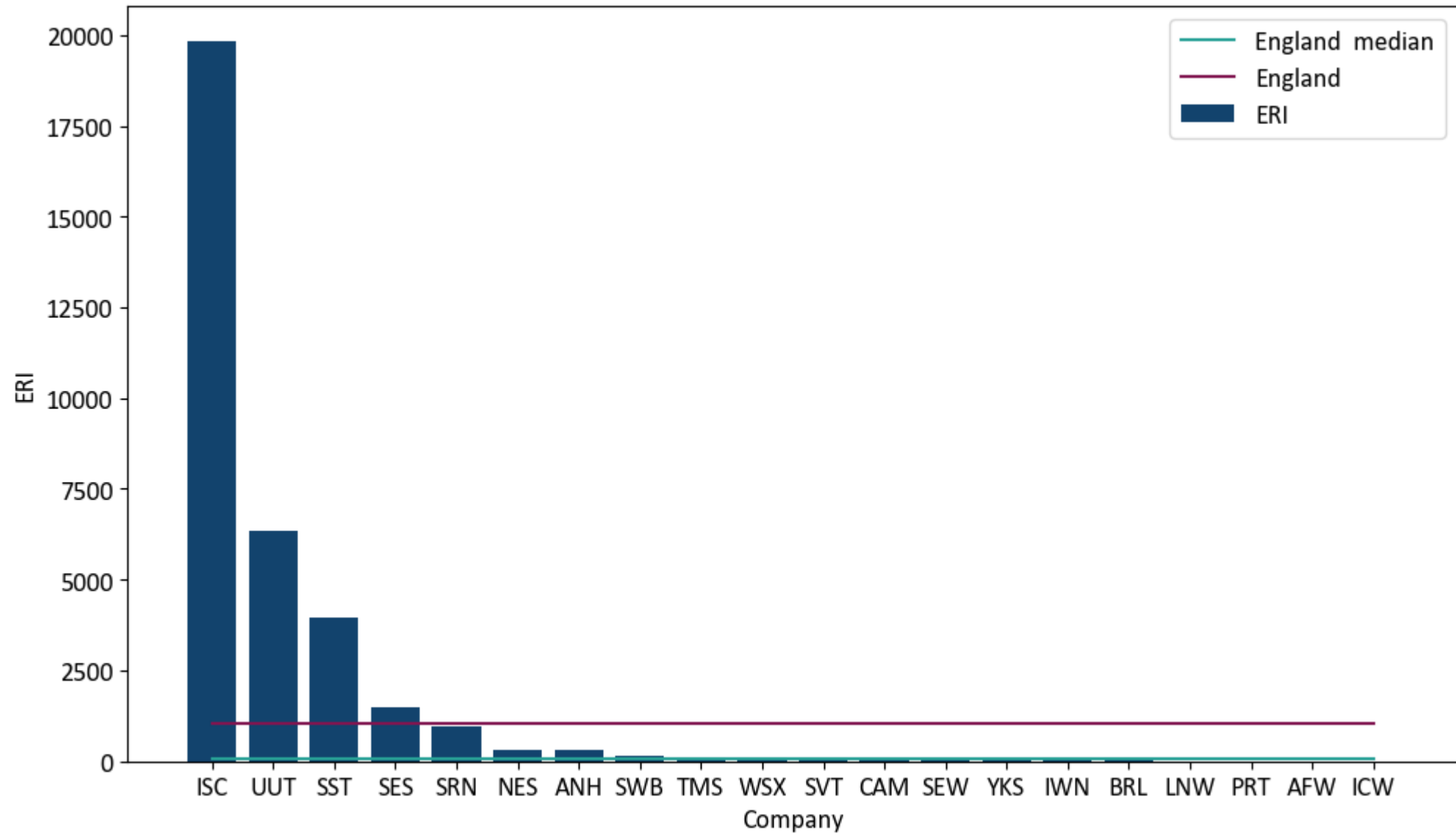
## Reservoir

Structural failure	12
Microbiological Contamination	28

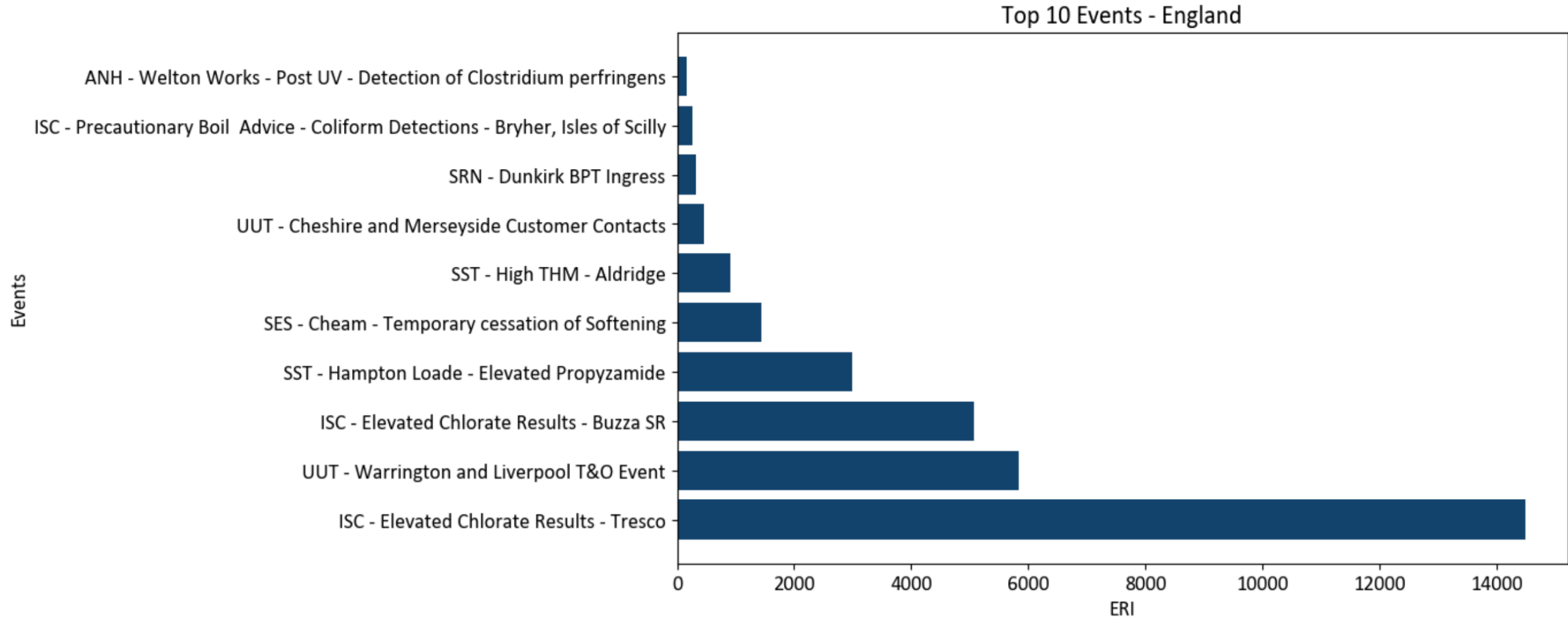
## Company mains

Mains - Damage by Contract Staff	1
Mains - Damage by Third Party/Unknown	17
Mains - Burst	47

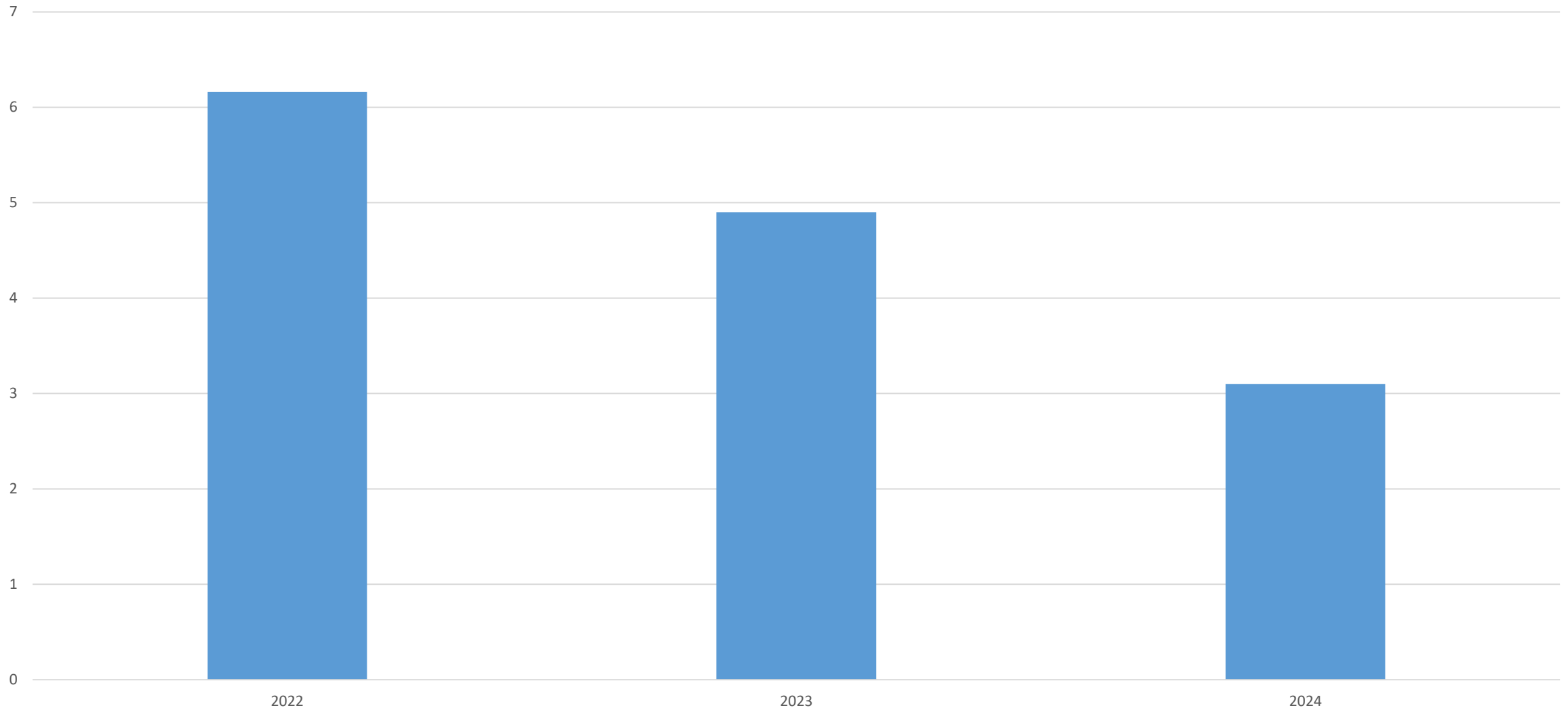
# Event risk index



# Event risk index - Top 10

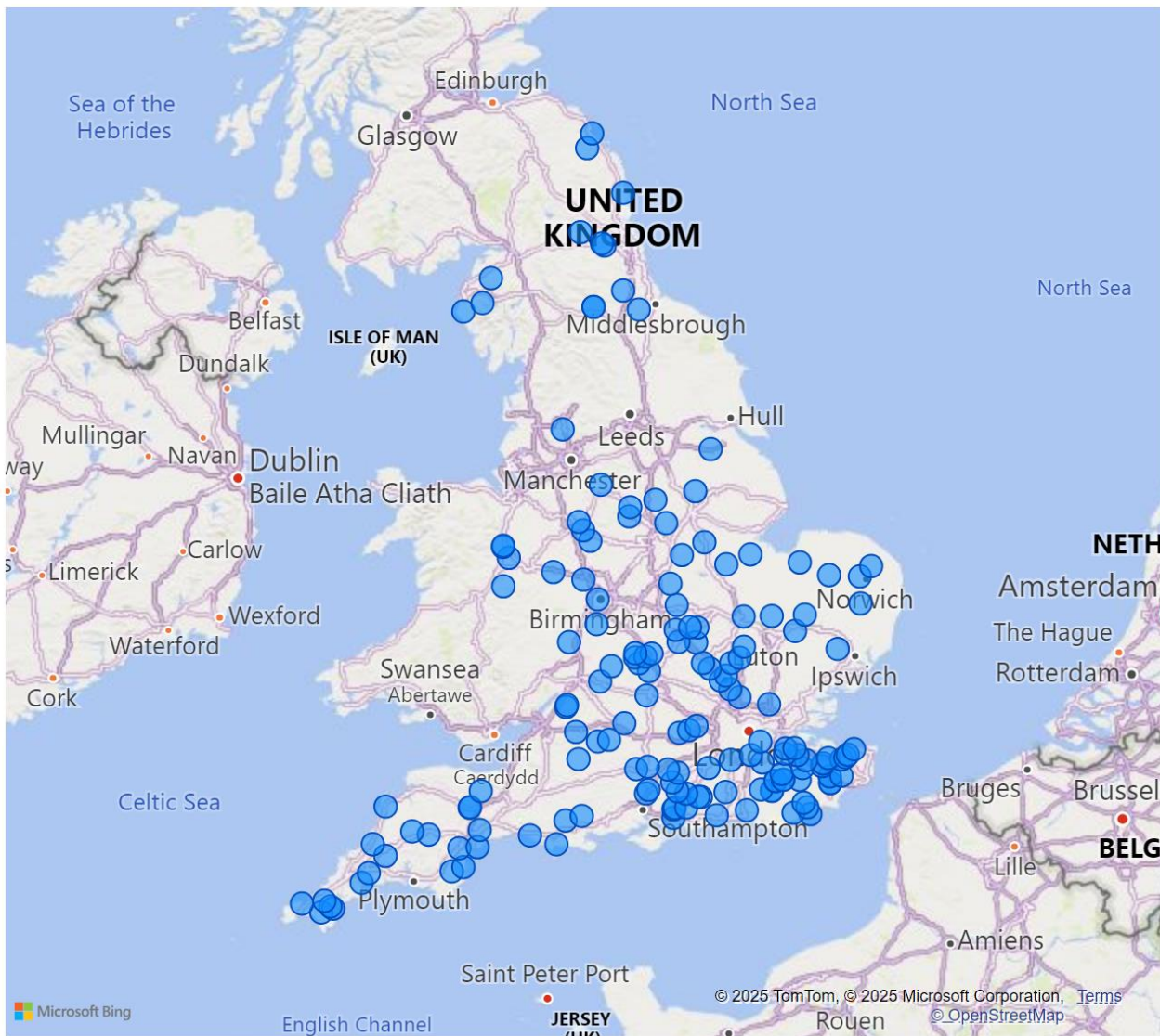


# Percentage of Reservoirs >10yrs Service





# Service reservoirs overdue for inspection



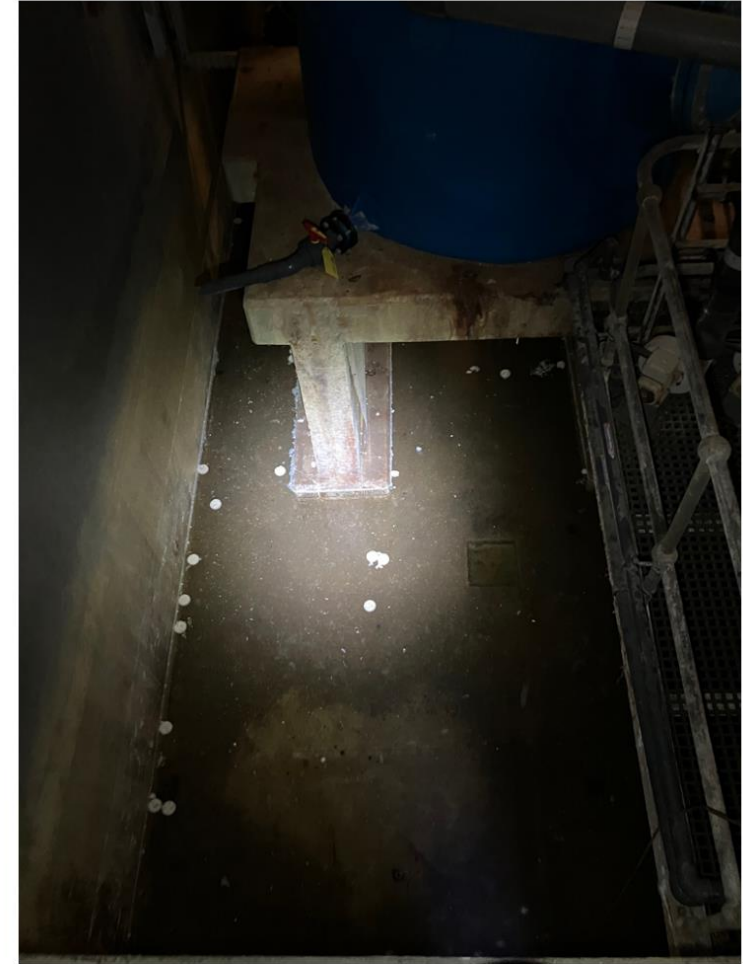
Code	No	Yes	Total	% Overdue
AFW	239	6	245	2.51%
ANH	747	27	774	3.61%
BRL	187		187	0.00%
CAM	40		40	0.00%
NES	514	13	527	2.53%
PRT	29	5	34	17.24%
SES	71	3	74	4.23%
SEW	315	37	352	11.75%
SRN	323	19	342	5.88%
SST	74		74	0.00%
SVT	808	25	833	3.09%
SWB	481	25	506	5.20%
TMS	636	22	658	3.46%
UUT	648	9	657	1.39%
VWP	6		6	0.00%
WSX	557	9	566	1.62%
YKS	715		715	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6390</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>6590</b>	

July 2025

Data correct at time of submission in April 2025 - 'out of service' and 'removed' from supply reservoirs not included in filter. Only includes reservoirs with known dates



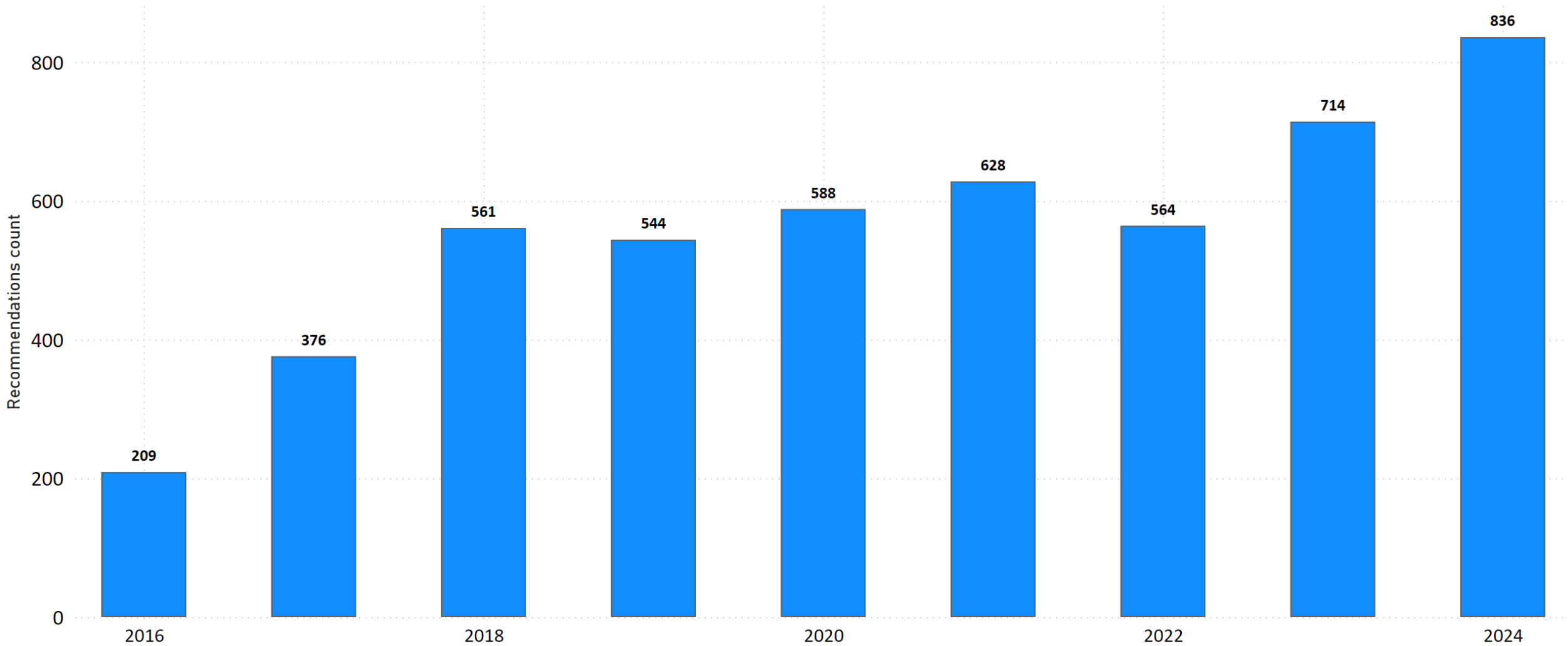
# Audits



July 2025

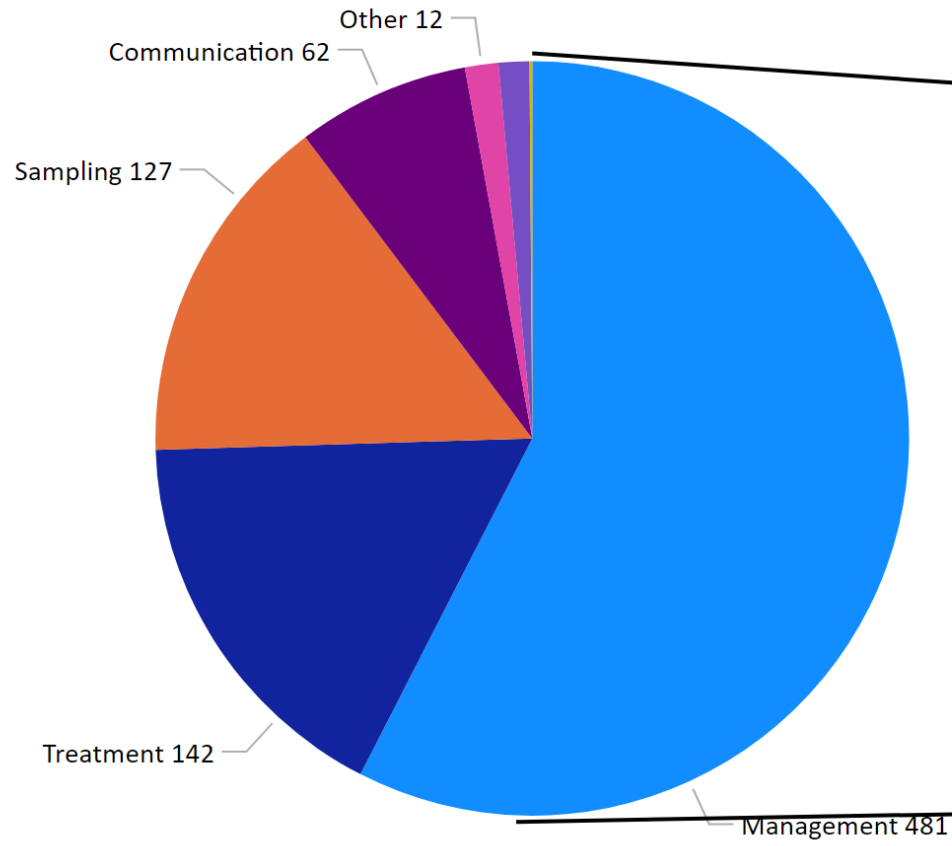


# Recommendations by year

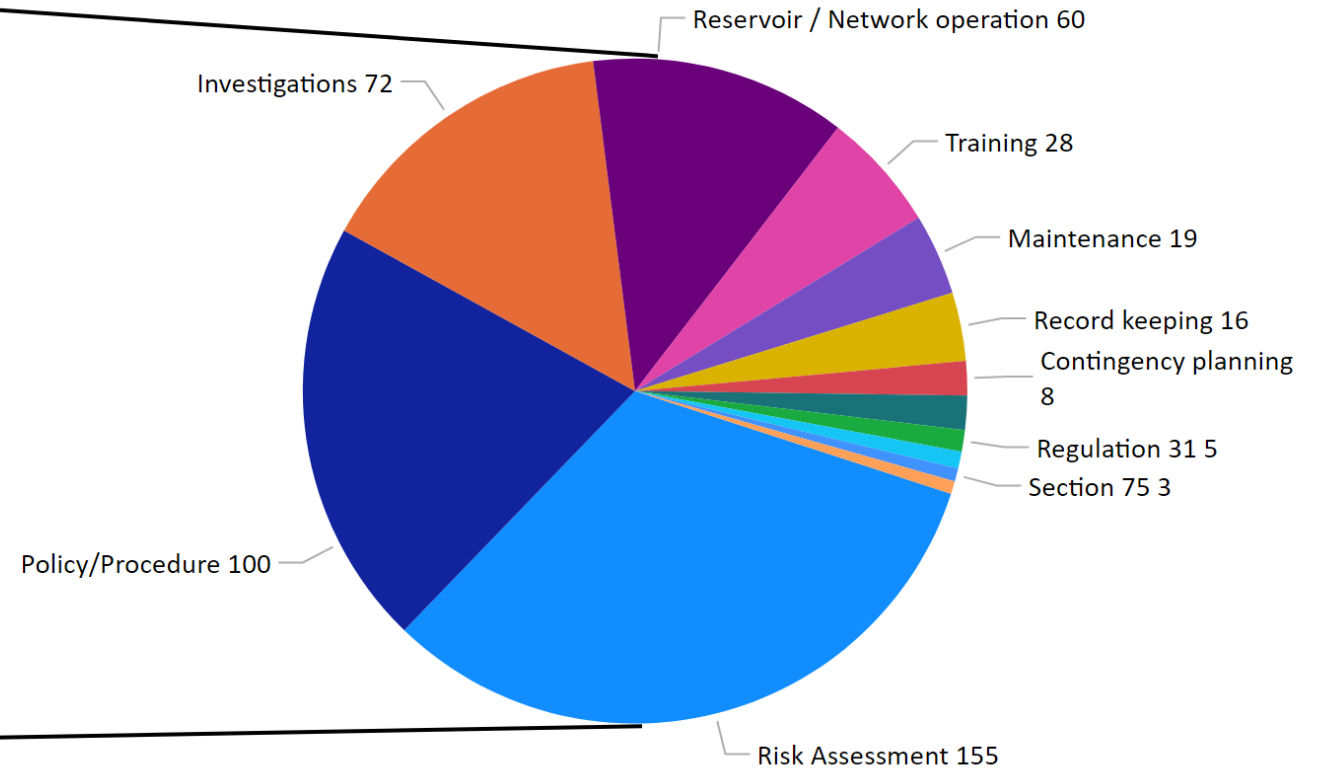


# Recommendations by category

All recommendations



Management related recommendations

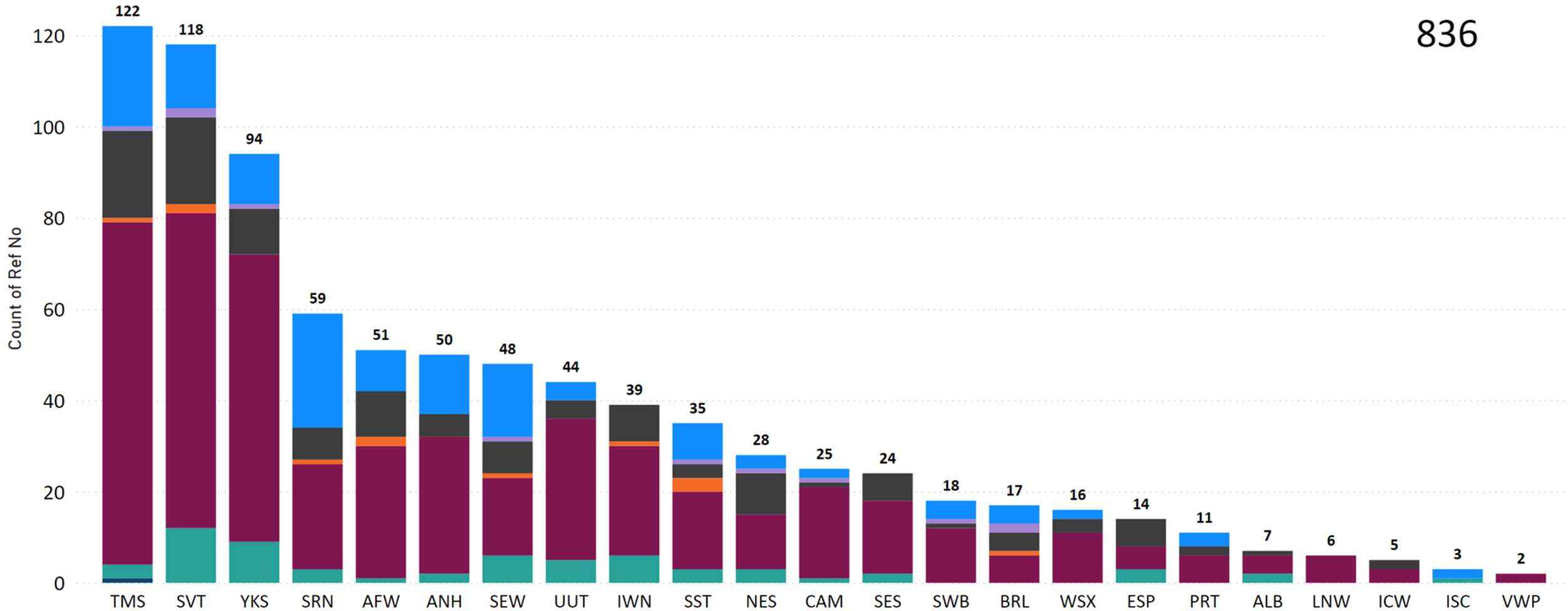


# Recommendations by company and type

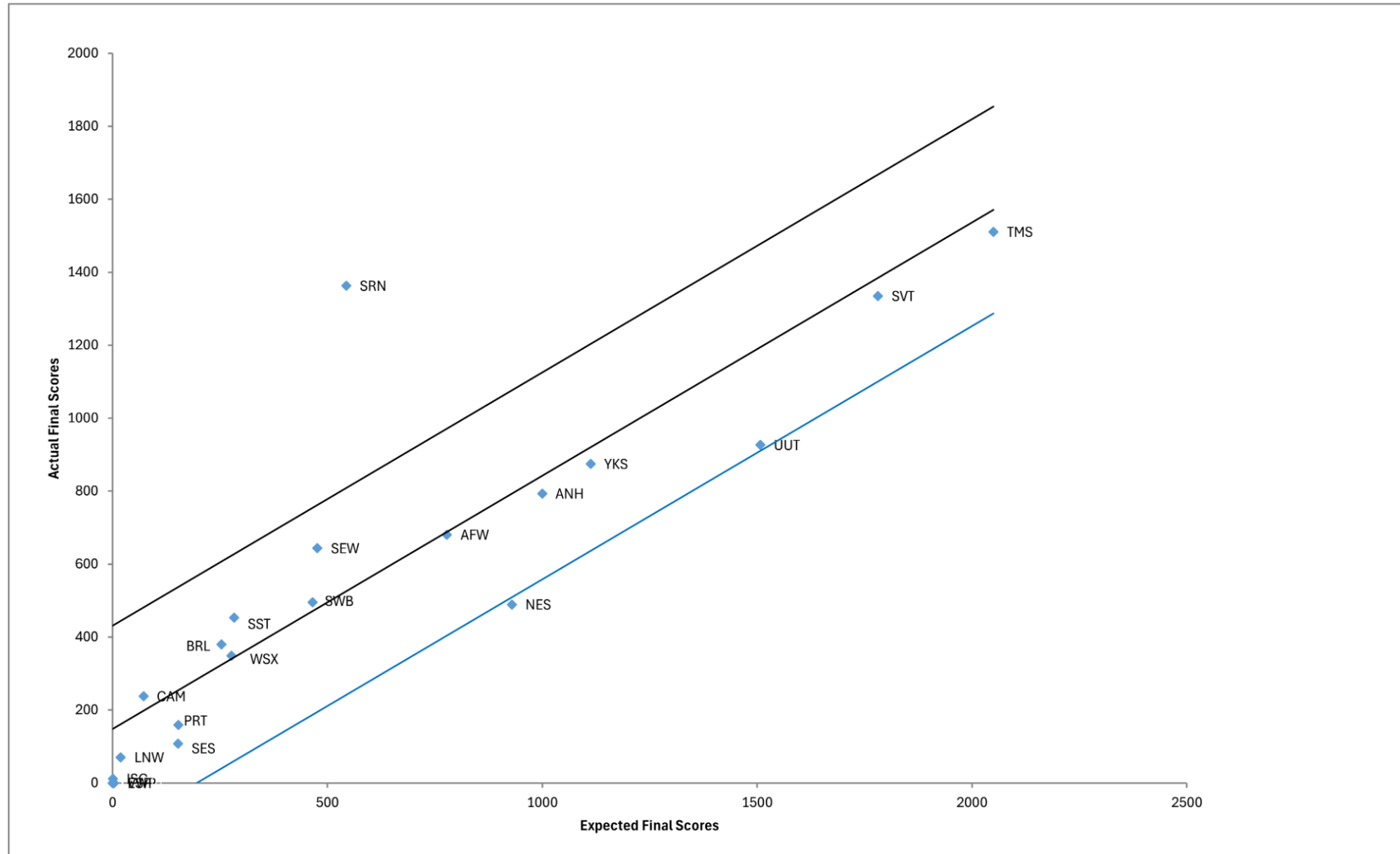
● Catchment ● Communication ● Management ● Other ● Sampling ● Storage and Distribution ● Treatment

Total number of  
recommendations

836



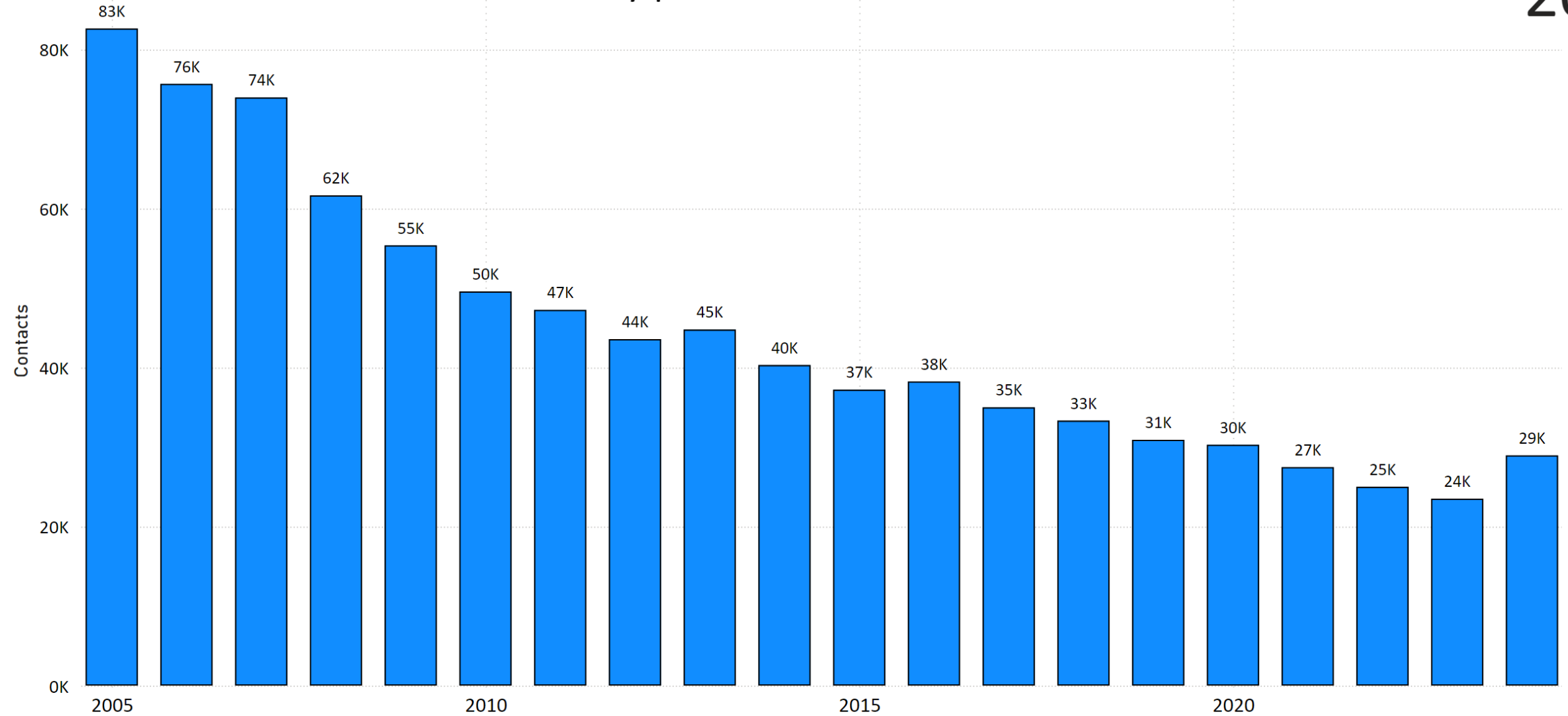
# Recommendation risk index



# Consumer contacts - Black, brown and orange water

Whole industry picture - total BBO contacts since 2005

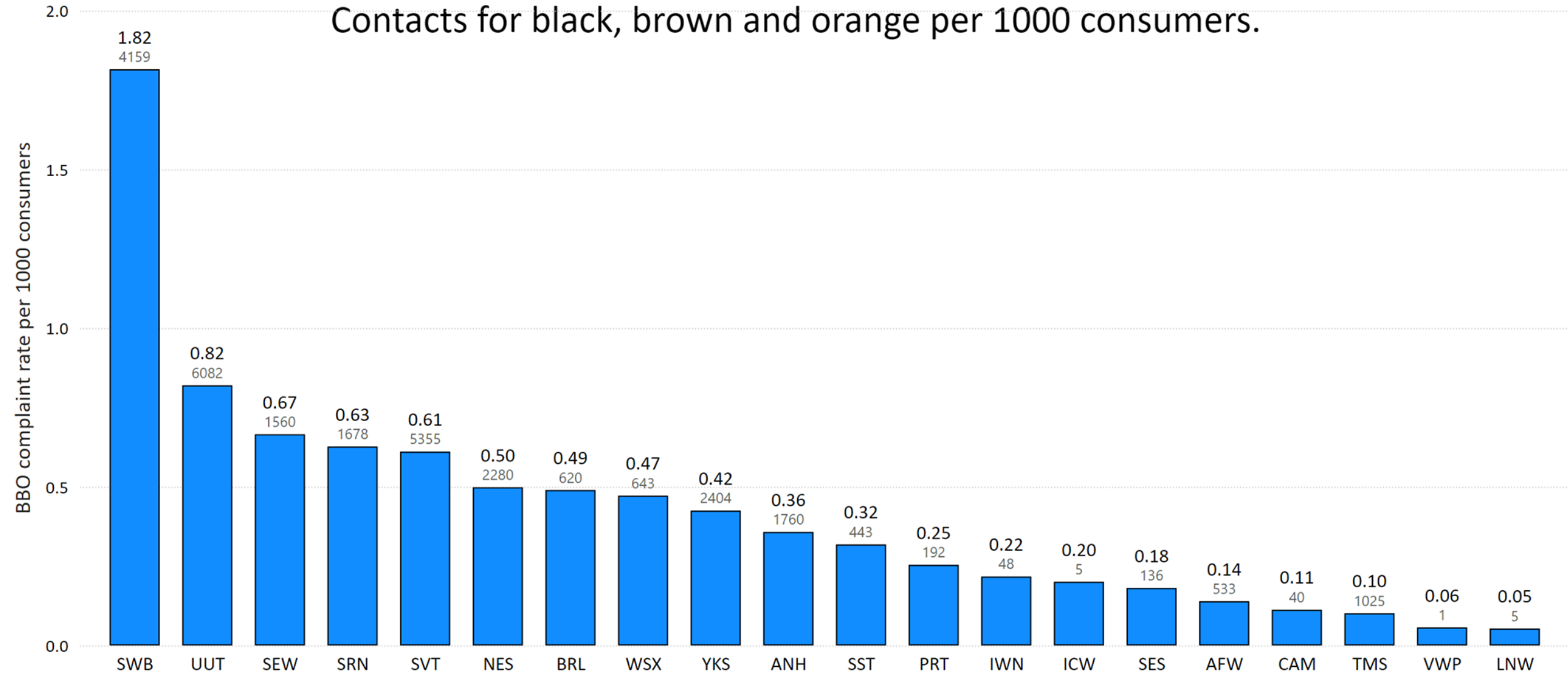
2024



July 2025

# Consumer contact rate

Contacts for black, brown and orange per 1000 consumers.



# PFAS surveillance

## PFAS tests above detection limit

Tier	Treated water	Raw water
Tier1	12,855	14,451
Tier2	1,729	2,056
Tier3		292

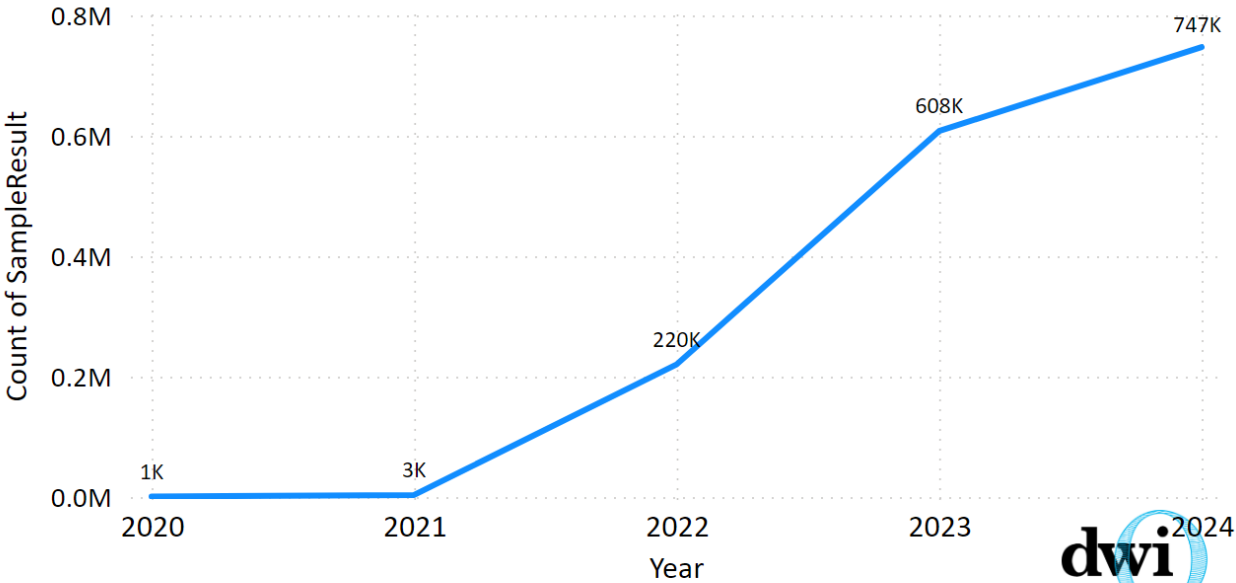
## Number of PFAS tests taken in the year

747,386

## Tier 3 detections in treated water

0

## PFAS tests results per year





# PFAS surveillance - tests >LOD per company

	Tests	Sampling sites
Company	Tier2	
Affinity Water Ltd	266	7
Anglian Water Services Ltd	1097	16
Bristol Water Plc	24	2
Isles of Scilly	4	1
Northumbrian Essex and Suffolk Water	6	2
SES Water	3	1
Severn Trent Water Ltd	3	1
South Staffordshire Water Plc	43	6
Southern Water Services Ltd	240	2
Thames Water Utilities Ltd	8	4
United Utilities Water Ltd	2	1
Wessex Water Services Ltd	33	3

Individual treated water detections which are greater than the limit of detection

Total

1,729

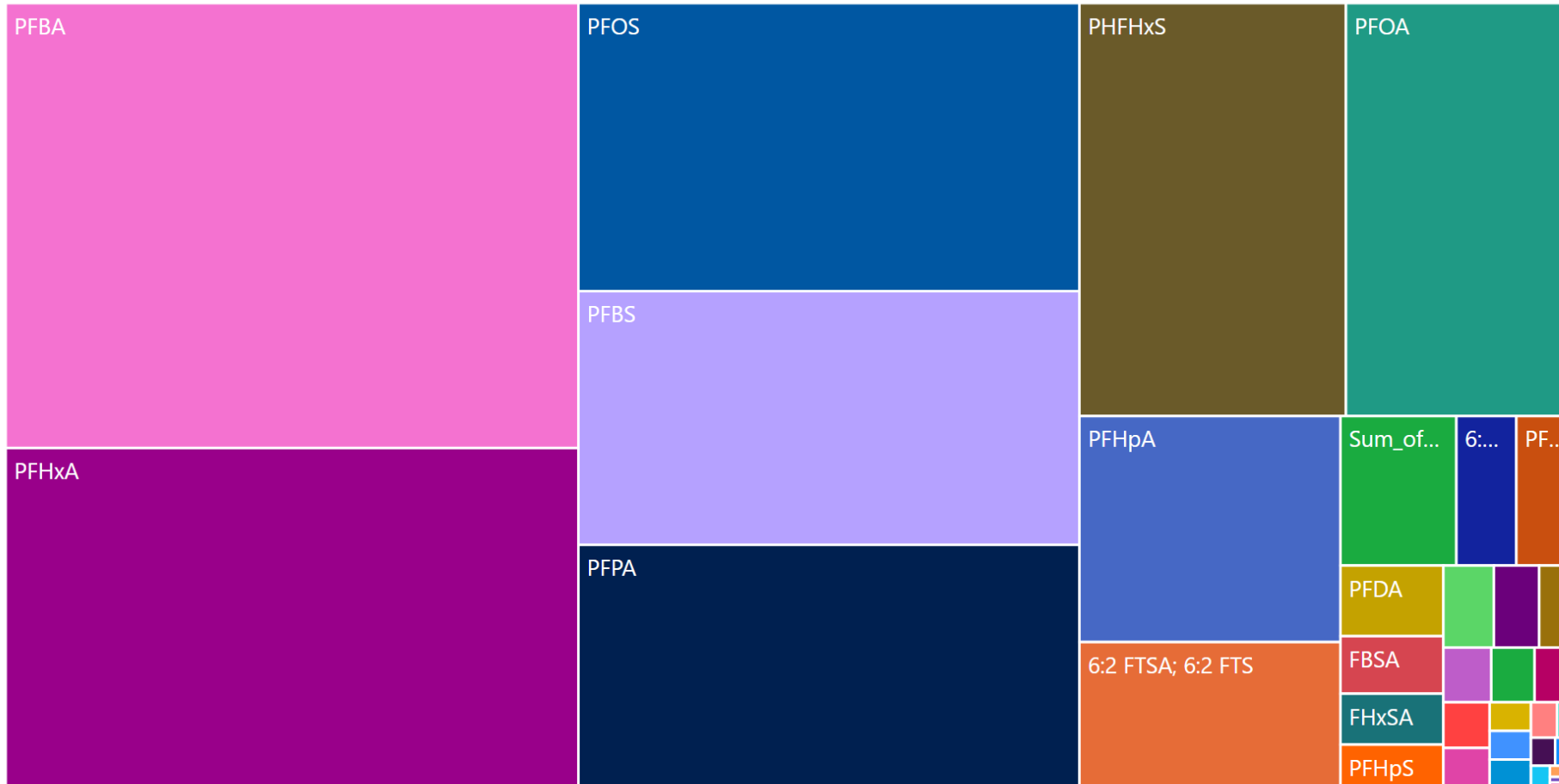
Treated tests > LOD

415,723

Treated tests < LOD

# PFAS surveillance - Tier 2 parameters

Count of treated water samples which are greater than the limit of detection.  
In total 38 different parameter have been detected.



Parameters with >20 detections

Parameter name	Count
PFBA	3,014
PFHxA	2,304
PFOS	1,707
PFBS	1,503
PFPA	1,442
PHFHxS	1,302
PFOA	1,125
PFHpA	698
6:2 FTSA; 6:2 FTS	451
6:2 FTAB	106
PFPS	106
PFDA	86
FBSA	70
FHxSA	62
PFHpS	53
PFecHS	49
8:2 FTSA	44
PFNA	36
NFDHA	31
FOSA	28
PFUnDA	27
PFNS	25
9CI-F3ONS	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,291</b>

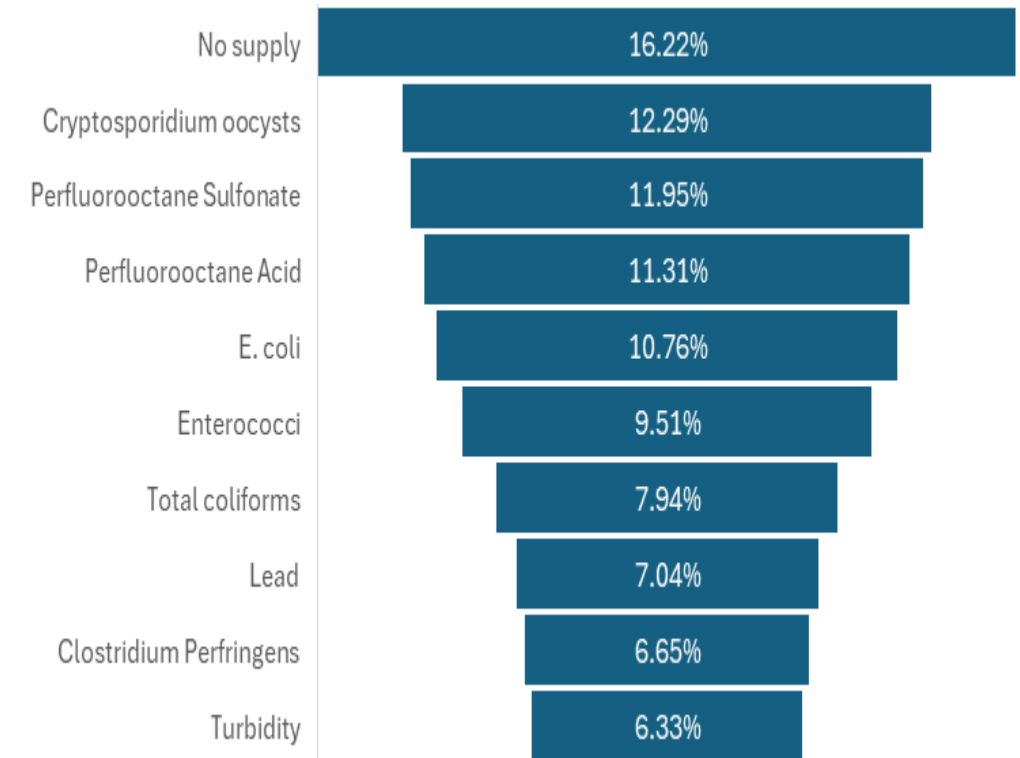
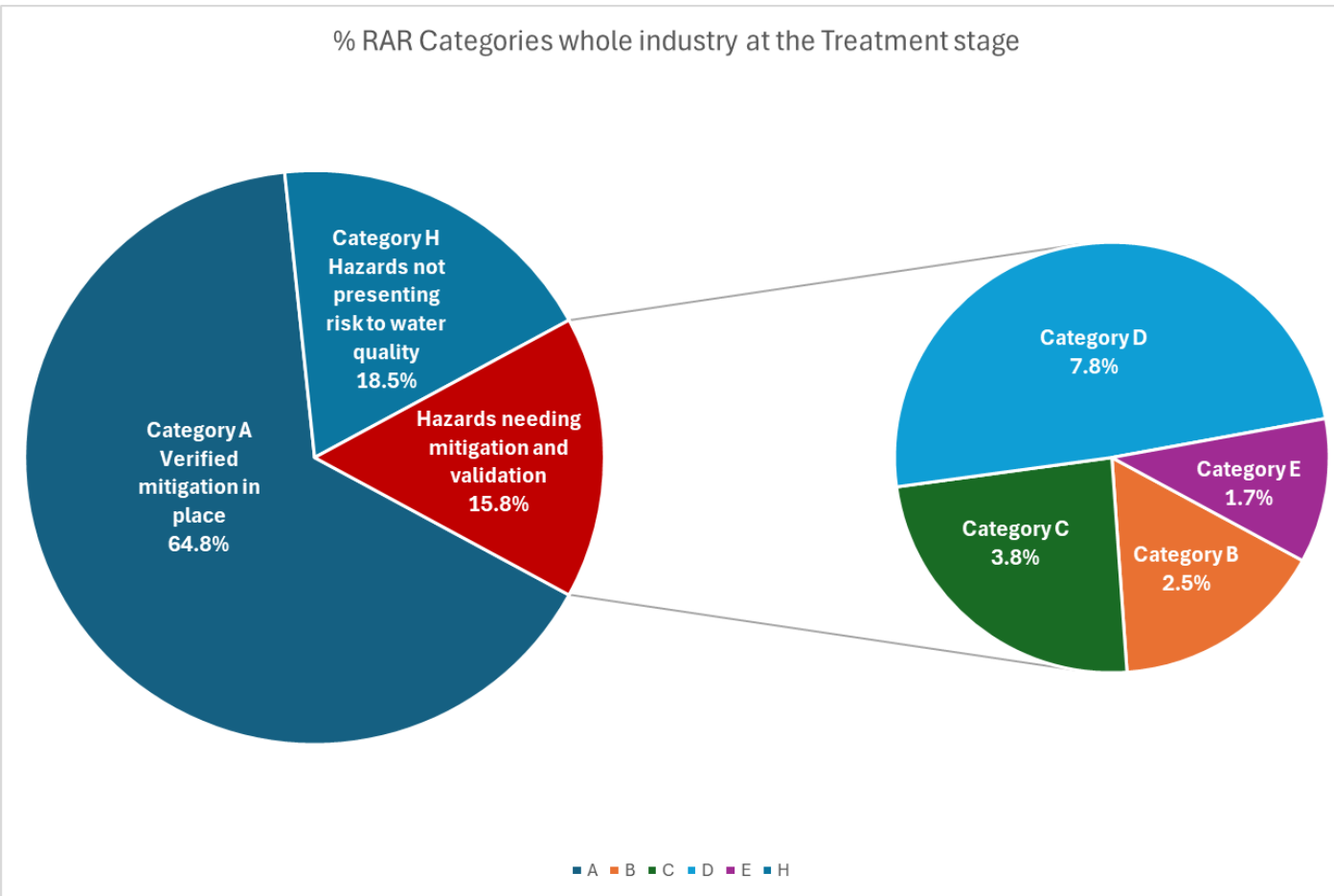
# Enforcement - areas of active enforcement

Legal Instrument type	AMP 8 (2025 - 2030)	Not Linked to AMP	Transformation Programme	Total ▲
DWQ s.18 Final Enforcement Order		1		1
Radioactivity Notice		2		2
SEMD s.18 Final Enforcement Order		2		2
DWQ Regulation 27(4) Notice		5		5
Acknowledged Actions	10			10
NIS Regulation 17(1) Notice	15	1		16
SEMD s.19 Undertaking	19	4		23
DWQ s.19 Undertaking	29	2		31
DWQ Regulation 28(4) Notice	78	25	8	111
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>201</b>



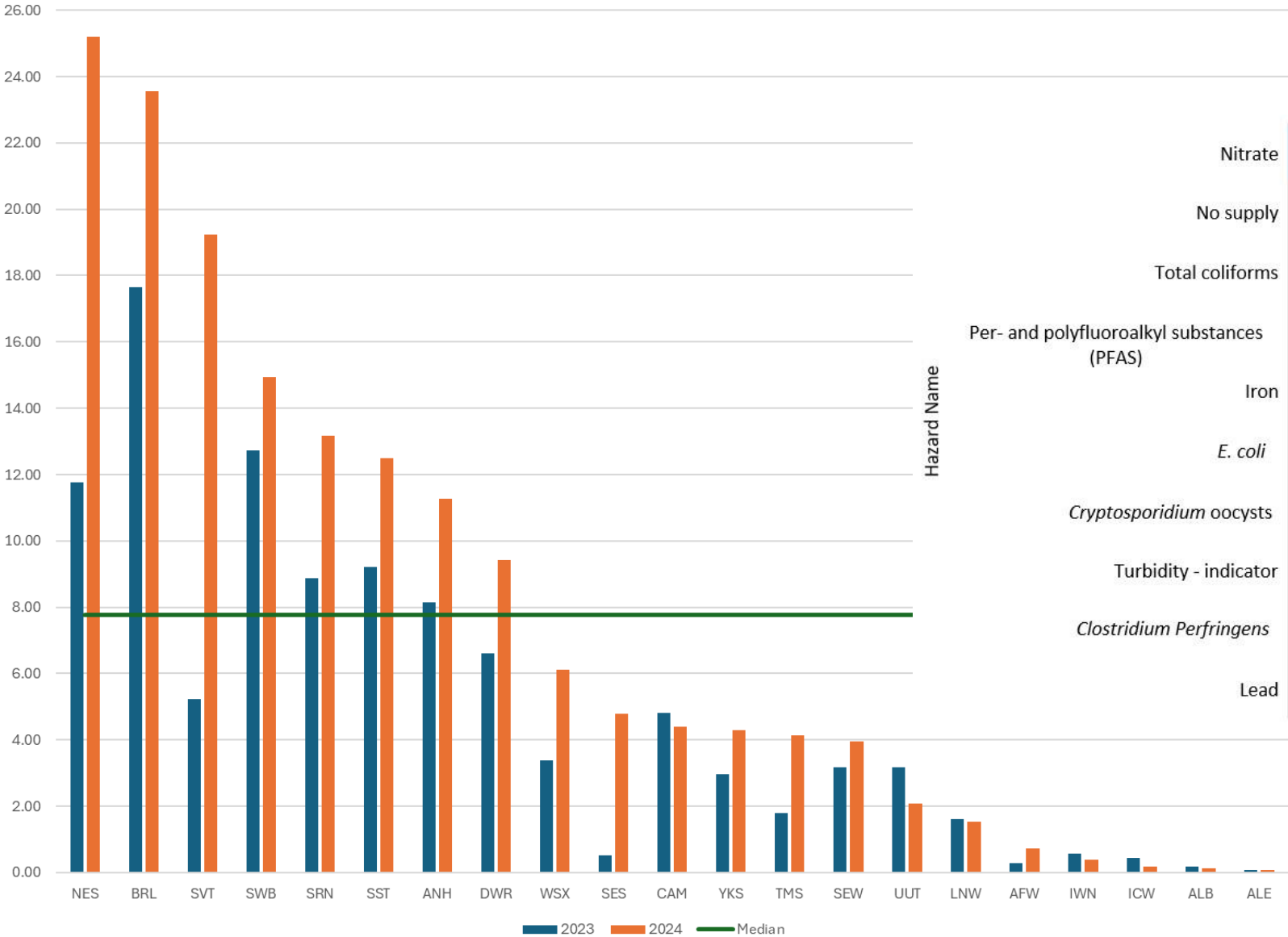
# RARI

% RAR Categories whole industry at the Treatment stage

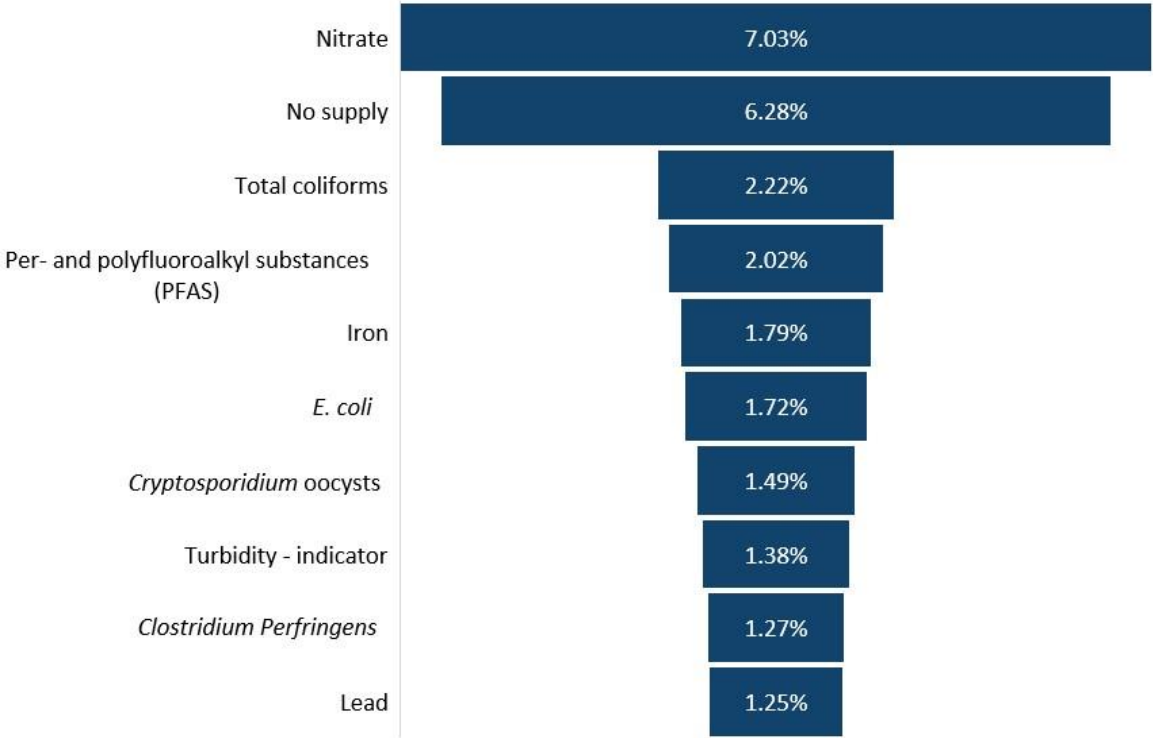


# Risk assessment risk index

Company Average RARI scores 2023 and 2024



Future risks





# Purpose of Regulation 31



It is the responsibility of the water supplier to ensure that products used in the production, supply and distribution of drinking water meet the requirements of regulation 31 or are appropriately approved, under regulation 31(4) (a), or meet the requirements of regulation 31(4) (b) or (c) before introducing them into the water supply.

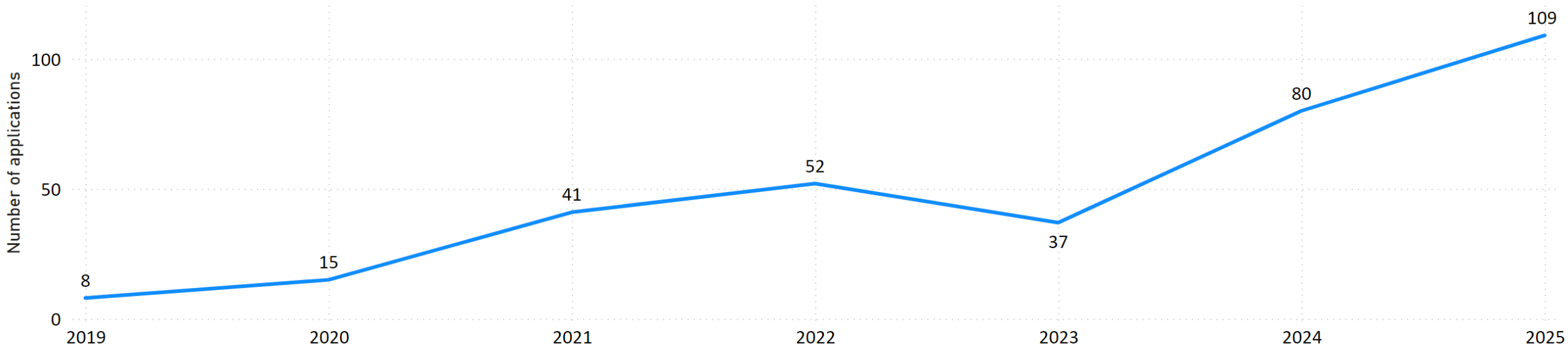


# Regulation 31

2 new staff  
members recruited

5 new BS6920  
laboratories accepted

## Applications received



Current number of approved products	Current number of change applications	Current number ongoing applications	Current number of reapprovals	Current number of expired and revoked products
328	37	51	8	2



# Regulatory strategy

## Recognition of Gaps

### Water Supply Regulations

New Contaminants, Responsible Person, Regulatory Reach  
Sampling Schedules

### Sufficiency and Resilience

This is likely to become more of an issue with climate change impacts such as more extreme weather events and the resilience of network infrastructure

### Resource and Recycling

Absence of Clarity on who Regulates and what is Regulated

### Advisory group work

### Recommendation to update regulations ?

### Schedule SI legislation ?





July 2025

