



DRINKING WATER INSPECTORATE

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DWI Information Letter 02/2026

3 August 2026

To: Board Level and Day to Day Contacts of Water and Sewerage Companies and Water Companies in England and Wales

To whom it may concern

Guidance on delivering water sufficiency using the drinking water safety planning (DWSP) approach

1. Purpose

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Inspectorate has published new guidance on delivering water sufficiency using the drinking water safety planning (DWSP) approach.

2. Background

- i. The guidance on delivering water sufficiency using the DWSP approach provides a comprehensive methodology to managing the risk of loss of supply using the DWSP process as described in the WHO water safety planning manual (World Health Organization, 2023). The DWSP concept is endorsed by the Inspectorate. It provides a structured way to documenting hazards, hazardous events, risk scoring and applying control measures to reduce risk from drinking water supplies.
- ii. This new guidance aligns with the previous guidance on risk assessment and risk management specific to drinking water safety plans (DWSPs) published in June 2025 with Information Letter 04/2025.

3. Inspectorate expectations of companies

- i. Companies' overall aim must be to prevent the occurrence of loss of supplies, to deliver their duty under section 52(1)(a) of the Water Industry Act 1991, within a degree of tolerance within their consumer base. This means

understanding consumer vulnerability and assigning appropriate levels of criticality to those assets supplying vulnerable consumers.

- ii. Companies are expected to submit the data regarding the points below by **31 October 2027**, however a first iteration of data may be submitted earlier and by **31 March 2027** to allow for ongoing method development and industry feedback.
- iii. Companies are expected to follow the guidance for delivering sufficient water supplies by assessing the supply systems they operate for risks impacting the sufficiency of supply.
- iv. Companies should use the hazardous event matrices provided in the guidance to identify and assess critical points from source to tap where there could be a cause of loss of supply, taking criticality of assets and asset health into consideration as part of the assessment.
- v. A reasonable worst-case scenario approach should be used in applying hazardous event methodology to understand common and rare risk scenarios. It is expected that companies reduce the risk of insufficient water supplies to as low as reasonably practicable in a prioritised way.
- vi. Companies are expected to improve the sufficiency of water supplied in the systems they control from source to tap. Where parts of the supply system are outside of companies' control, the expectation is for companies to forecast, plan and implement mitigation measures to become more resilient to any changes outside of their control.
- vii. It is expected that companies should aim to provide a continuous supply of tap water via rezoning, tankering to storage or distribution mains as opposed to using bottled water as a validated contingency for loss of supply
- viii. Companies should submit their sufficiency risk assessment reports for each supply system, using the reporting template in Appendix 4 of the guidance by 31 October 2027.
- ix. Companies should include details of any realised sufficiency risk within notification to the Inspectorate for water quality events, effective from the date of this letter. Events that include the following circumstances should include details of the sufficiency risk in the event notification description:
 - ≥ 24 h pressure drop with impact on continuous supply to consumers.

- when a critical asset(s), as determined by the company applying the scoring guidance in Appendix 5, has been taken out of service for planned or unplanned maintenance leading to a water quality event.
- when there are any site restrictions in output flow from a treatment works or storage volume at any treated water tank caused by a water quality event or result in a loss of supply to consumers.

This letter is being sent electronically to board level and day to day contacts. Please acknowledge receipt by email to dwf.enquiries@defra.gov.uk. Hard copies are not being sent but the letter may be freely copied.

Copies of this letter are being sent to: David Henderson, Chief Executive, Water UK; Martin Woolhead, Deputy Director Water Services, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; David Reynolds, Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland; Berni Corr, Drinking Water Inspectorate for Northern Ireland; Tom Price, Welsh Government; Karen Gibbs, Mike Keil and Catherine Jones, CCW; David Beesley, Ofwat; Stewart Mounsey and Richard Thompson, Environment Agency; Nadeem Raja, Food Standards Agency; Stephen Robjohns, UK Health Security Agency.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'N. Adjei', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nicholas Adjei
Deputy Chief Inspector