

# Information note on risk assessments



The Inspectorate acts for the Secretary of State in making returns to the European Commission to demonstrate compliance with the Drinking Water Directive and any failure to meet our obligations could result in the Commission initiating infraction proceedings against the UK government. It is mandatory for returns to contain information about Regulation 9 supplies but the Commission also requests information about all other private supplies and it is in the interests of the UK government to provide as complete a return as practicable, as the Commission uses these returns to publish reports on drinking water quality and to decide on the need for revisions to the Drinking Water Directive. For these reasons local authorities were asked to prioritise risk assessing and monitoring Regulation 9 supplies early in the five year period of the implementation of the Private Water Supplies Regulations and then to make progress with Regulation 10 supplies. The vast majority of local authorities, being aware of the timescale involved, and of the number and location of most of their private water supplies, have scheduled risk assessments and sampling visits to meet the requirements of the Regulations fully by the end of 2014 (beginning of February 2015 in Wales). However, we are aware that the task has been challenging for some local authorities who are doubtful about fully meeting their obligations by the deadline and wish to know how they should be dealing with any shortfall. This Information Note therefore addresses this question.

The Inspectorate has consistently advised local authorities to prioritise risk assessing Regulation 9 supplies and it is expected that in line with advice from the Inspectorate, these will all be complete by the end of 2014. There should also have been a plan in place for risk assessing Regulation 10 and any known Regulation 8 supplies that gave priority to those supplies serving the most consumers together with any supply with a known history of quality or sufficiency problems. Any local authority which at this stage believes it will not have completed all of the required Regulation 8, 9 or 10 risk assessments in the five year period, should now write to the Inspectorate setting out the background to the shortfall providing a copy of the original work programme for risk assessments together with a copy of the current work plan showing how and by when the shortfall is to be addressed. These documents will then enable the Inspectorate to demonstrate to the Commission that steps are being taken to remedy any shortfall in the UK returns.