

# Lessons learned and recommendations for Water Safety Plans



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Safe drinking water is vital for the health and wellbeing of all. However, providing safe drinking water can be a complex challenge. With this document the FAIRWAY team strives to stimulate the improvement of drinking water safety across the European Union by sharing context, best practices and lessons learned on Water Safety Planning (WSP) for both small and large water supplies. This task is executed in close collaboration with the 13 FAIRWAY case studies.

The WSP is a step-wise approach to ensure the safety of drinking water. It is a comprehensive risk assessment and risk management approach, that covers all steps in the water supply. The goal of a WSP is to ensure, through good water supply practice, that drinking water is safe.

In the study it was found that in all FAIRWAY case study countries RA/RM is embedded in national regulations. There are differences between case studies whether the same regulations apply to large and small supplies. Also the responsible authority/authorities vary between the case studies. Although, in most case studies the water supply company is responsible for RA/RM. In many case study countries some form of agreed methodology for RA/RM / Water Safety Planning is in place.

Key lessons learned are that

- 1) engagement of stakeholders is essential during all phases of RA/RM / Water Safety Planning;
- 2) the designation of a process owner helps in bringing together departments and stakeholders, spreading information throughout organizations and providing congruence between different RA/RM systems; and
- 3) an agreed upon methodology and content enhances the effectiveness of Water Safety Planning and cooperation and communication between those involved.

The information received from the FAIRWAY case study leaders mainly applies to large supplies. Nevertheless, some recommendations are made for small supplies based on general information on water safety planning and experience and procedures participating countries apply for small supplies. Regarding small supplies a main challenge relates to the limited availability of specialized knowledge and expertise, and access to information and technical support. It is recommended to assess the risks, for example via a quick scan, by analysing the specific vulnerability and local threats. Furthermore, small suppliers can be aided by developing networks for cooperation, for example in such a way that small suppliers can cooperate with large suppliers to get access to necessary competence and knowledge.



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