

Site Visit Report

Under the *European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2023*, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the supervisory authority in relation to Uisce Éireann and its role in the provision of public drinking water supplies. This audit was carried out to assess the performance of Uisce Éireann in providing clean and wholesome water to the public water supply named below.

The audit process is a sample of the performance of a water treatment plant and public water supply on a given date.

Water Supply Zone	
Name of Installation	Bantry Cahernacrin
Organisation	Uisce Éireann
Scheme Code	0500PUB4111
County	Cork
Site Visit Reference No.	SV34836

Report Detail	
Issue Date	05/05/2026
Prepared By	Maeve McHugh

Site Visit Detail			
Date Of Inspection	26/03/2026	Announced	Yes
Time In	12:30	Time Out	14:30
EPA Inspector(s)	Maeve McHugh Sean O'Leary		
Additional Visitors			
Company Personnel	Uisce Éireann: Brian Harrington, Alan Harrington, Claire Hurley and Michael Sheehan.		

> Summary of Key Findings

1. Plant performance trends are not adequately accessible by operational staff at the water treatment plant.
2. The audit found that the Bantry Cahernacrin Water Treatment Plant was operating satisfactorily at the time of the audit.

Uisce Éireann should submit a report to the EPA on or before 05/06/2026 detailing the actions taken and planned, with timescales, to close out the ten recommendations in this audit report.

> Introduction

The Bantry Cahernacrin Public Water Supply (PWS) supplies an average of 1,429 m³/day, serving a population of 2,234. It is a dual surface water supply with intakes from both the River Mealagh and Drumbow Lake. The EDEN volume and population figures are incorrect as is some of the treatment process information. These should be updated.

Treatment at the Bantry Cahernacrin WTP includes pH balancing with caustic (sodium hydroxide), coagulation (with flow-proportionate dosing of poly aluminium chloride (PAC) based on jar testing), flocculation in 3 clarifier units, three rapid gravity filters followed by chlorination. Sludge and backwash waste water are pumped directly to sewer. There is an on-site reservoir.

This audit was undertaken to assess Uisce Éireann's performance in producing clean and wholesome water with a focus on the operation of the plant.

> Supply Zones Areas Inspected

The clarifier tanks, rapid gravity filters, chlorine and PAC dosing system were inspected. A backwash cycle on Filter 1 was observed.



1. Management and Control

		Answer
1.1	Is the water treatment plant resilient enough to cope with significant variations in raw water quality or demand?	No
Comment		
1. There is no ammonia monitor and no turbidity monitor on the raw water. Uisce Éireann confirmed their intention to install an ammonia monitor on the river water intake as part of planned upgrades.		
Recommendation:		
1. Install turbidity and ammonia monitors on the raw water, as appropriate.		

		Answer
1.2	Has the protozoal log treatment requirement been identified for the water treatment plant?	No
Comment		
1. Uisce Éireann confirmed that the details of the log treatment requirement for the WTP need to be updated and clarified.		
Recommendation:		
2. Uisce Éireann should: (i) confirm the log treatment requirement for the plant, and (ii) confirm how any log treatment will be addressed.		

		Answer
1.3	Have the recommendations from the previous EPA audit been satisfactorily addressed?	No
Comment		
1. The following recommendations from the previous audit undertaken on 16/11/2018 have not been adequately addressed:		
(i) Previous Recommendation: <i>Irish Water should undertake an assessment to confirm that UV disinfection is not required in light of the current level of treatment and provide a report to the Agency on the findings of the assessment. If UV disinfection is required the unit should be validated in accordance with an appropriate internationally accepted validation system and be operated within its validated range at all times.</i>		
Update: The most recent update from Uisce Éireann, dated 04/02/2026, stated that a 'scope of work will be handed over to IDD to carry out a site upgrade in Q2 2026. A contractor will be appointed with UV design work to commence in 2026. Construction works will be progressed in 2027. An update will be provided once available'.		
Recommendation:		
3. It is noted that an update on the UV installation is required by 30/09/2026, as part of the existing compliance plan. Uisce Éireann should also provide an interim update as part of their response to this audit.		



	Answer
2.1 Is there a documented alarm response procedure?	No
Comment	
1. Uisce Éireann confirmed that there was no site specific documented alarm response procedure.	
Recommendation:	
4. Ensure that (i) a formal documented site-specific alarm response procedure is in place at the treatment plant and (ii) provide training to relevant staff (including relief and temporary staff) on the requirements of the alarm response procedure.	

	Answer
2.2 Are plant performance trends accessible by operational staff at the water treatment plant?	No
Comment	
1. Some data on plant performance is accessible by operational staff onsite at the WTP for the period of the three prior days approximately. This includes data on raw water inlet flow rate, reservoir inlet and outlet flow to distribution and turbidity data for the filters and reservoir. pH data is available onsite for a period of one day approximately. The lack of access to longer term trends from the site of the WTP is due to the poor internet connection currently available there. Operational staff at the plant have access to further trend data at home in the evenings.	
Recommendation:	
5. Ensure that operational staff at the WTP have adequate access to plant performance trends over time.	



3. Site Specific Issues

	Answer	
3.1	Are the details regarding the supply zone in the EDEN portal correct?	No
Comment		
1. The following details in EDEN regarding the the supply zone are incorrect: population, volume and treatment type.		
Recommendation:		
6. Ensure that the details provided in the EDEN portal are correct including population, volume and treatment type.		

	Answer	
3.2	Are filter media depth gauges clearly visible?	No
Comment		
1. The filter media depth gauge on Filter 3 was worn and not clearly visible.		
Recommendation:		
7. Ensure that all filter media depth gauges are clearly visible.		

	Answer	
3.3	Are treatment process chemicals appropriately managed and stored?	No
Comment		
1. It was noted that both chemicals storage and bunding at the WTP were inadequate and that the transfer pump for sodium hypochlorite was not in a bunded area. Uisce Éireann confirmed their intention to upgrade the chemicals storage and bunding arrangements at the WTP as part of planned upgrades.		
Recommendation:		
8. Review chemical storage arrangements at the treatment plant. Fill points/transfer points for storage tanks should be within appropriately bunded areas.		

	Answer	
3.4	Was there a plan in place for repair of any pump not in operation during the audit?	No
Comment		

1. It was noted that the sodium hypochlorite transfer pump needs to be replaced and that there is no standby pump at present.

Recommendation:

9. Install duty and standby transfer pumps for sodium hypochlorite.

3.5

Is chlorine dosed appropriately?

Answer

No

Comment

1. There is residual chlorine monitor after contact time has been achieved. There is no post-dosing chlorine residual monitor in place at the treatment plant.

Recommendation:

10. Consider installing a post-dosing chlorine residual monitor at the treatment plant with suitable warning alarm/plant shutdown setpoints.

Recommendations

Actions required by Uisce Éireann

During the audit, Uisce Éireann representatives were advised of the audit findings and that action must be taken by Uisce Éireann to address the issues raised.

Uisce Éireann is responsible for ensuring a clean and wholesome supply of drinking water and should implement the recommendations raised in this report without delay.

Response to Audit Report

Uisce Éireann should submit a report to the EPA on or before the date specified in the Summary of Key Findings detailing the actions taken and planned, with timescales, to close out the recommendations in this audit report.

The EPA advises that the findings and recommendations from this report should, where relevant, be addressed at other public water supplies.

Publication of Reports

Audit reports are published to the EPA's website, www.epa.ie, typically 1 month after the audit report is issued to Uisce Éireann.