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	Gortahork-Falcarragh
Organisation	Uisce Éireann
Scheme Code	0600PUB1059
County	Donegal
Site Visit Reference No.	SV34845

Report Detail

Issue Date	08/09/2026
Prepared By	Veronica Boland

Site Visit Detail

Date Of Inspection	18/08/2026	**Announced**	Yes
Time In	11:00	**Time Out**	14:05
EPA Inspector(s) **Additional Visitors**	Veronica Boland Mary Grimes		
Company Personnel	Uisce Éireann: Kevin Walsh, Eamonn Gallagher, Geraldine Friel, Adrian Gillespie, Columba Heena.		

Summary of Key Findings

1. The audit found that the Ardsbeg water treatment plant (WTP) was operating and performing well in providing clean and wholesome water to the public supply.
2. Treated water storage capacity at the Ardsbeg WTP is limited, with a maximum of 3 hours supply in the event of plant shutdown posing a risk to the continuity of supply on activation of critical process shutdowns.

Uisce Éireann should submit a report to the EPA on or before the 08/10/2026 detailing the actions taken and planned, with timescales, to close out the 5 recommendations in this audit report.

Introduction

The Gortahork-Falcarragh public water supply (PWS) is supplied from the Ardbeg water treatment plant (WTP) and produces an average of 2,138m3/day of treated water, serving a population of 3,906. The raw water source is Lough Na Lughraman. Treatment at the WTP consists of raw water flocculation with pH adjustment, dissolved air flotation with filtration (DAFF), chlorination, and treated water pH correction. Vunerable customers in network are supplemented from Kildarragh WTP during peak demand.

The audit was undertaken to assess Uisce Éireann's performance in producing clean and wholesome water with a focus on operations.

Supply Zones Areas Inspected

The site areas inspected during the audit included the WTP treatment processes.

1. Operational Audits 2026

		Answer
1.1	Is there a documented alarm response procedure?	No

Comment

1. The one page Uisce Éireann incident escalation sheet was on display at the WTP outlining when to escalate a treatment issue and who to contact.
2. The plant operator had handwritten instructions in the plant diary of what to do when there are changes in circumstances including adjustments to the DAFF and sludge thickening.
3. However, there was no site specific procedure detailing what response would be made to alarms, specific steps to be taken by operators and other responders.

Recommendation:

1. Ensure that there is a documented procedure in place for responding to and escalating all alarms generated at the water treatment plant. The procedure should clearly document the corrective actions and set out delegation of responsibilities. Ensure that all relevant staff are trained and aware of the alarm response procedure.

		Answer
1.2	Are online monitors operational?	No

Comment

1. The multi probe 'Raw water colour turbidity pH UVT' monitor (QT01) had a service/calibration sticker within date (last service 12/08//2026). However, staff advised that there are ongoing issues with this monitor such that they do not rely on it and take manual readings of the raw water. This monitor is not linked to any of the automatic dosing processes at the WTP and does not impact on the treatment provided at the plant. Uisce Éireann representatives stated that there was a plan to replace this monitor.

Recommendation:

2. Investigate the feasibility of repairing or replacing the monitor on the raw water line as soon as possible.

		Answer
1.3	Did process trends demonstrate that data was being captured and recorded at all times?	Yes

Comment

1. A review of process performance trends demonstrated that data was being captured and recorded. However, the *Treated/Final water* turbidity trend (TUR007) maximum scale range was up to only 0.28 NTU. A few spikes above the 0.28 NTU range could not be interrogated.
2. The *Treated/Final water* shutdown setpoint is 0.3 NTU.
3. At the audit Uisce Éireann advised that they would increase the scaling range for this turbidity trend.

Recommendation:

3. Increase the final water turbidity trend scale value to ensure that any spikes above 1 NTU are captured.

2. Site Specific Issues

		Answer
2.1	Are the details recorded in EDEN correct?	No

Comment

1. Treatment processes listed on the EPA EDEN webpage for Ardsbeg WTP include UV, Fluoridation and poly dosing. At the audit it was confirmed that these treatment processes are not in place at the Ardsbeg WTP.

Recommendation:

4. Update EDEN with the correct treatment types in place for the Gortahork-Falcarragh PWS (Ardsbeg WTP).

		Answer
2.2	Is the treated water on-site reservoir capacity sufficient?	No

Comment

1. The on-site treated water reservoir has a capacity of 3 hours storage which may lead to a risk of supply outage in the event of a shutdown on critical WTP processes.

Recommendation:

5. Uisce Éireann should consider the provision of additional treated water storage to enhance the resilience and security of the Gortahork-Falcarragh PWS.

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.