

Local Authority Environmental Enforcement Performance Report 2025



Key Messages

What did local authorities do well in 2025?



83% of assessments rated strong or excellent with high overall performance on National Enforcement Priorities (NEPs).



All local authorities met the required standard on illegal waste enforcement.



Farm inspection and enforcement activity increased significantly under the National Agricultural Inspection Programme.



Increase in enforcement actions under the Solid Fuel Regulations.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Galway City Council and South Dublin County Council achieved the required standard across all NEPs.

What did local authorities not do well in 2025?



17% of National Enforcement Priority assessments fell below the required standard.



Addressing transport noise under the Environmental Noise Directive remained the lowest performing of all NEPs.



Poor compliance and inadequate enforcement of trade and sewage effluent discharge licences to water.



Consistent waste enforcement across non-compliant households and apartment complexes, to support waste segregation and use of the three bin system.

Leitrim County Council and Sligo County Council failed to meet the required standard across multiple NEPs. Addressing these performance gaps should be a key priority for both authorities.

Key Messages

What local authorities need to do:



Prioritise and deliver the National Enforcement Priorities.



Maintain the solid fuels inspection campaign.



Sustain the increased level of farm inspection activity and strengthen enforcement of non-compliance.



Improve implementation of Noise Action Plans.



Take stronger action to enforce trade and sewage effluent discharge licences to water.



Target waste enforcement actions at household and commercial premises, using a consistent approach to improve waste segregation.

Local Authority Environmental Enforcement Performance 2025

Table 1: Delivery of the National Enforcement Priorities

Local Authority	Number of NEPs that met the standard (Strong or Excellent) (15 NEPs in total)	Percentage of NEPs that met the standard
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Galway City*, South Dublin	15	100%
Carlow, Cork City, Dublin City*, Kerry, Kildare, Monaghan, Roscommon	14	93%
Cork County, Fingal, Galway County, Limerick, Longford, Louth, Meath, Offaly, Tipperary, Waterford	13	87%
Cavan, Donegal, Mayo, Westmeath, Wicklow	12	80%
Clare, Wexford	11	73%
Kilkenny, Laois	10	67%
Sligo	8	53%
Leitrim	5	33%

* Two agriculture NEPs do not apply to Dublin City Council and Galway City Council. Galway City Council met the standard in 13 of the 13 NEPs. Dublin City Council met the standard in 12 of the 13 NEPs.

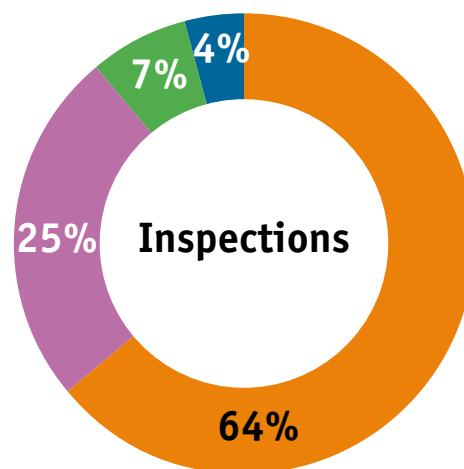
Local Authority Environmental Enforcement Performance 2025

Table 2: RMCEI* Data Summary

Total Number	2024	2025
Environmental Staff	630	668
Licences/Permits/ Certificates enforced	10,700	10,700
Inspections undertaken	227,400	252,000
Environmental Complaints Received	76,500	85,500
Enforcement actions taken	18,050	23,550
Prosecutions initiated**	414	386

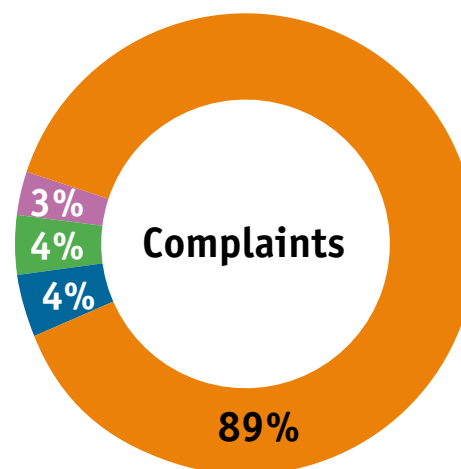
* Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections – Recommendation 2001/331/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council

** Does not include prosecutions initiated under the Litter Pollution Act (728 in 2024 and 440 in 2025).



● Waste
 ● Water
 ● Environmental Planning
 ● Air & Noise

- Local authorities carried out 252,000 environmental inspections in 2025, an **11% increase** since 2024.
- The **majority of inspections related to waste (64%)**, followed by water (25%), environmental planning (7%), air and noise (4%).
- Litter patrols** made up 66% of the waste inspections.



● Waste
 ● Noise
 ● Air
 ● Water

- Complaints are a key source of intelligence** for local authorities to identify illegal or unauthorised activities which are potentially damaging the environment.
- Local authorities received 85,500 complaints from the public in 2025, a **12% increase** since 2024.
- The **majority of complaints related to waste (89%)**, followed by water (4%), air (4%) and noise (3%).

1. Introduction

This report sets out the results of the EPA's assessment of local authority environmental enforcement performance for 2025. This assessment is based on the EPA's Local Authority Performance Framework (LAPF) where performance is measured and reported against National Enforcement Priorities (NEPs). There are 15 NEPs in total, as shown in Figure 1; five in waste, four in water, four in air and noise, and two in governance processes.

The assessment process is focused on improving environmental compliance and achieving positive outcomes for waste, water, air and noise. The LAPF operates on a three-year cycle. The first cycle ran from 2022-2024, followed by the second cycle from 2025-2027. This report relates to the first year of the second cycle.

Figure 1: National Enforcement Priorities (NEPs) 2025-2027

Waste		Water	
	▲ Tackling illegal waste activities and Multi-Agency Sites/ Operators of Concern ▲ Construction & Demolition Material ▲ Household Waste ▲ Commercial Waste ▲ Plastics and Producer Responsibility Initiatives		▲ Pressures from Agriculture (Farm Yards) – slurry/soiled water collection and storage ▲ Pressures from Agriculture (Farmland) – slurry and fertiliser spreading ▲ Discharge Licences / Misconnections ▲ Local Water Quality Pressures including Septic Tanks and Private Water Supplies
Air and Noise		Governance Processes	
	▲ Solid Fuel ▲ Air Quality Monitoring & Data Use ▲ Environmental Noise Directives (END) Activities ▲ Local Air & Noise Investigations		▲ Planning for Environmental Inspections & Compliance ▲ Recording & Reporting of Environmental Inspections, Compliance and Enforcement Data

The unauthorised large scale extraction of peat continues to be a significant environmental issue for some local authorities. While large scale peat extraction is not a National Enforcement Priority, the EPA has identified 44 sites of interest in at least eight local authority areas - Longford, Westmeath, Roscommon, Sligo, Offaly, Kildare, Tipperary and Galway. Local authorities need to ensure that, where large peat extraction is taking place, it is properly authorised and approved under Planning legislation. The EPA published a report on [Large Scale Illegal Peat Extraction](#) in June 2025.

2. Overall Performance Results 2025

Key findings:

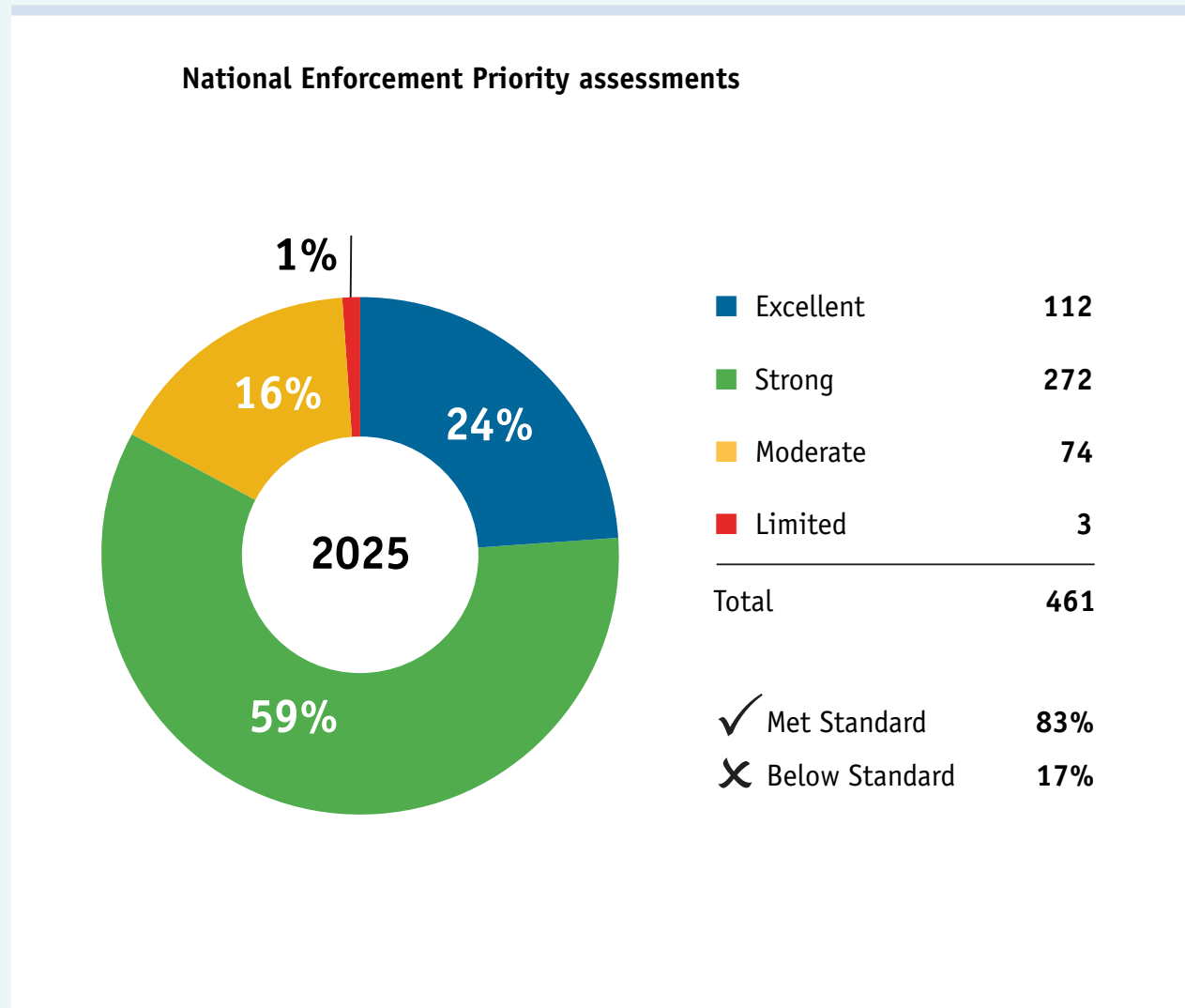
In 2025, 83% of the 461 NEP assessments were rated as Strong or Excellent, reflecting a 4% improvement compared to 2024.

However, 17% of NEP assessments were rated as Moderate or Limited and did not meet the required standard. This represents a slight improvement from 2024, when 20% fell below the standard.

Figure 3 presents the breakdown of 2025 performance results for each local authority.

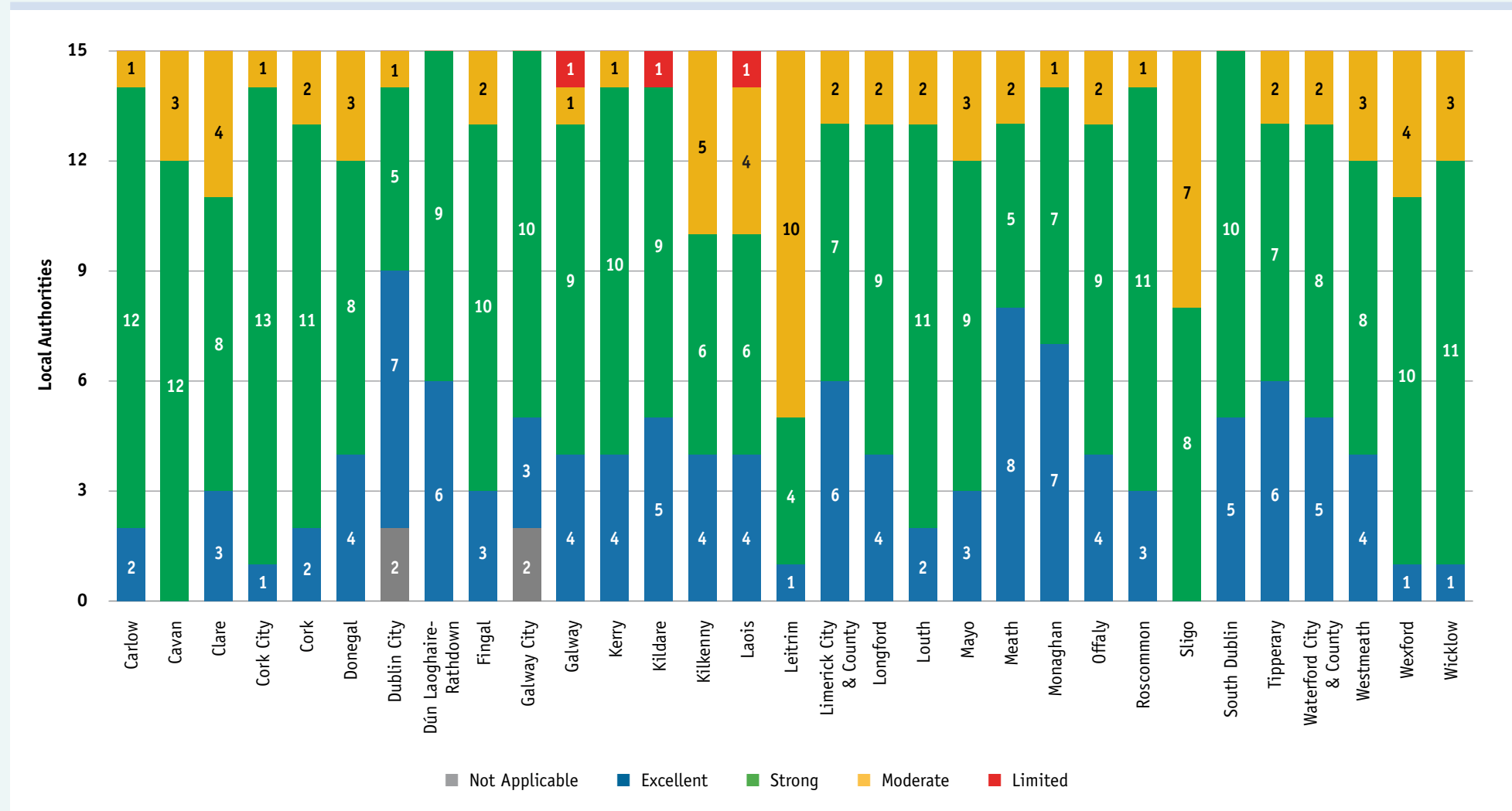
- Three local authorities – Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Galway City Council and South Dublin County Council - met the required standard across all applicable NEPs.
- Meath County Council achieved Excellent ratings in eight NEPs, the highest number among all local authorities, followed by Dublin City Council and Monaghan County Council with seven Excellent ratings each.
- Two local authorities scored Moderate in multiple NEPs – Leitrim County Council (ten Moderate ratings) and Sligo County Council (seven Moderate ratings).
- Three local authorities received a Limited rating for activities under the Environmental Noise Directive – Galway County Council, Kildare County Council and Laois County Council.

Figure 2: Local Authority Overall Performance Results 2025



2. Overall Performance Results 2025

Figure 3: 2025 Performance Results for each Local Authority



2. Overall Performance Results 2025

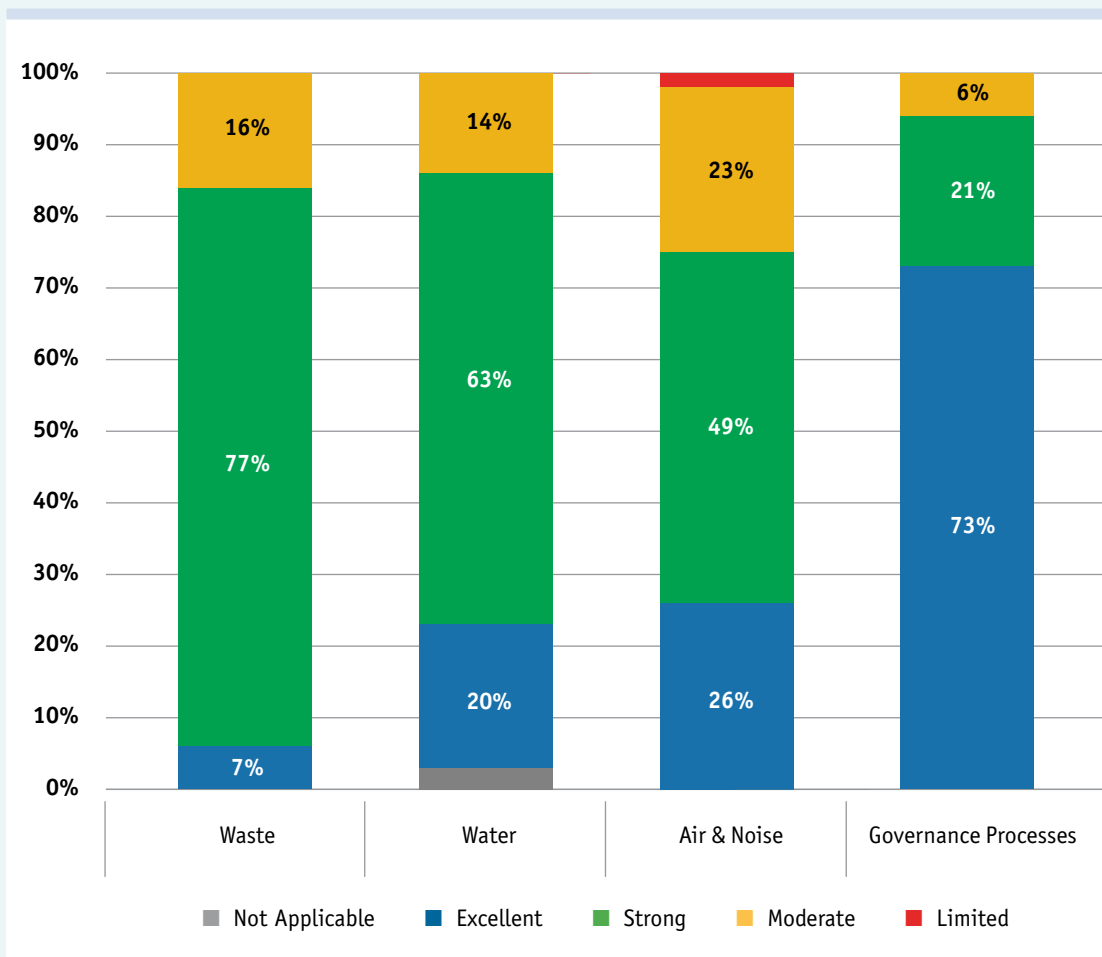
Figure 4 presents the breakdown of 2025 performance results by the four thematic areas; waste, water, air and noise, governance processes.

- ▲ Governance processes performed strongest, with 94% of NEP assessments achieving a rating of Strong or Excellent.
- ▲ Performance in waste and water was similar, with 84% (waste) and 83% (water) of NEP assessments meeting the required standard.
- ▲ Air and noise enforcement was the lowest performing area, with 75% of NEP assessments meeting the required standard.

Figure 5 presents the breakdown of 2025 performance results for each NEP.

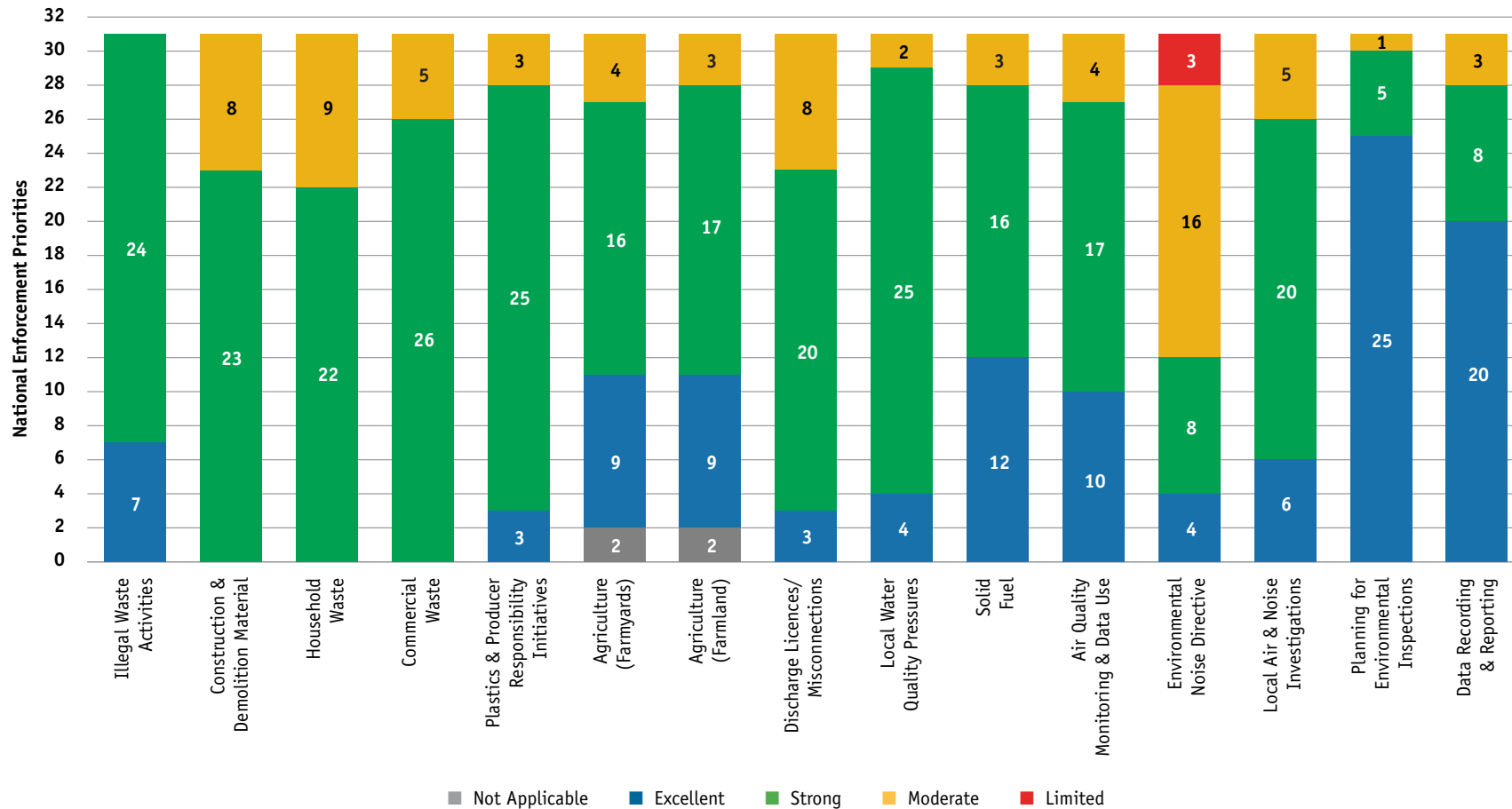
- ▲ Illegal waste enforcement performed strongest, with all 31 local authorities achieving a rating of Strong or Excellent.
- ▲ The Environmental Noise Directive activities performed the poorest, with 19 local authorities falling below the required standard.
- ▲ For the Water NEPs, there was a notable performance improvement in the two Agriculture NEPs, where 24 local authorities achieved Strong or Excellent in both NEPs.
- ▲ In governance processes, there was very high performance in planning for environmental inspections, with 30 local authorities meeting the required standard.

Figure 4: NEP Assessment Results by Thematic Area, 2025



2. Overall Performance Results 2025

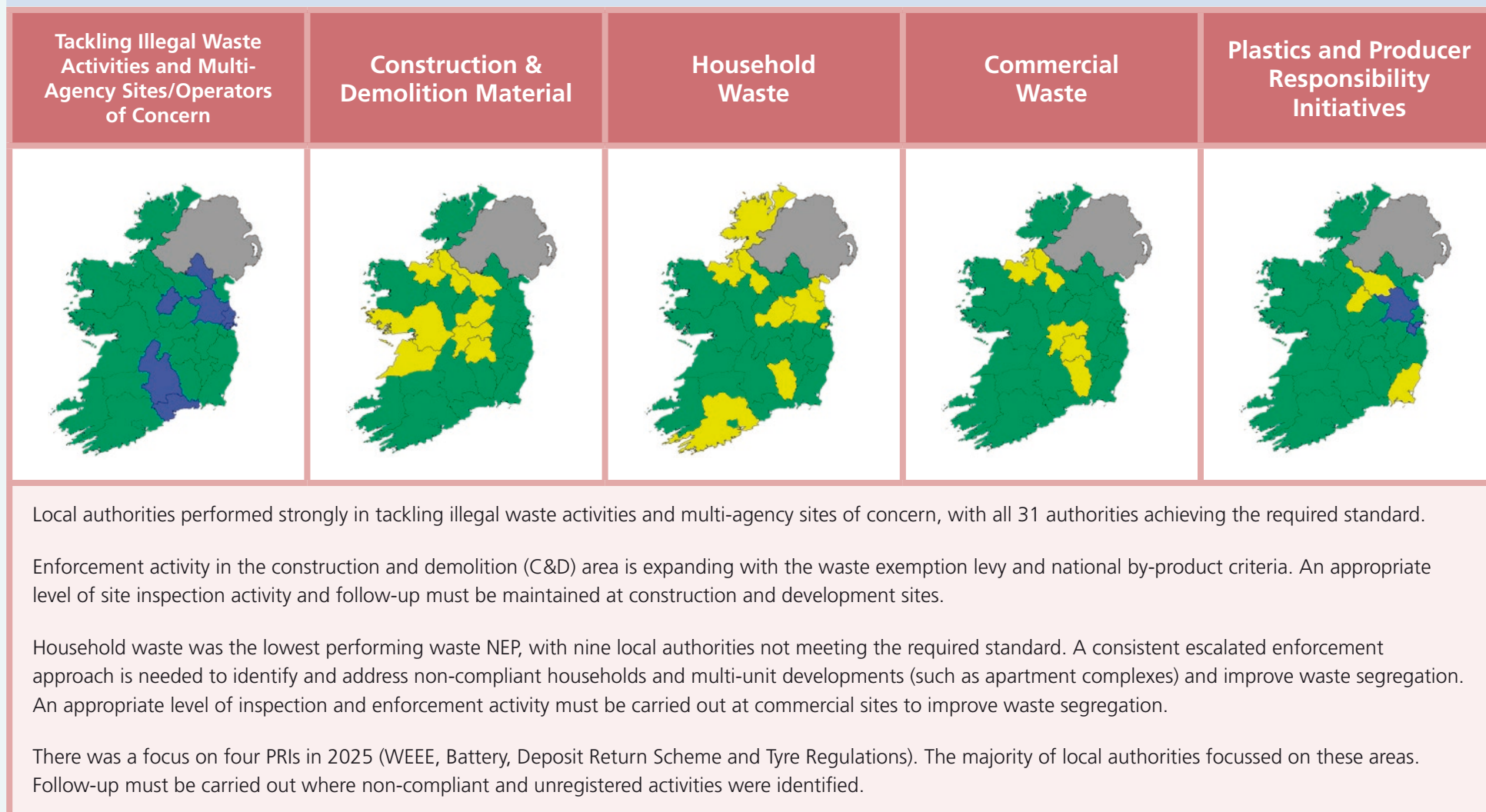
Figure 5: 2025 Results for each National Enforcement Priority



2. Overall Performance Results 2025

Figure 6: Waste Enforcement Results

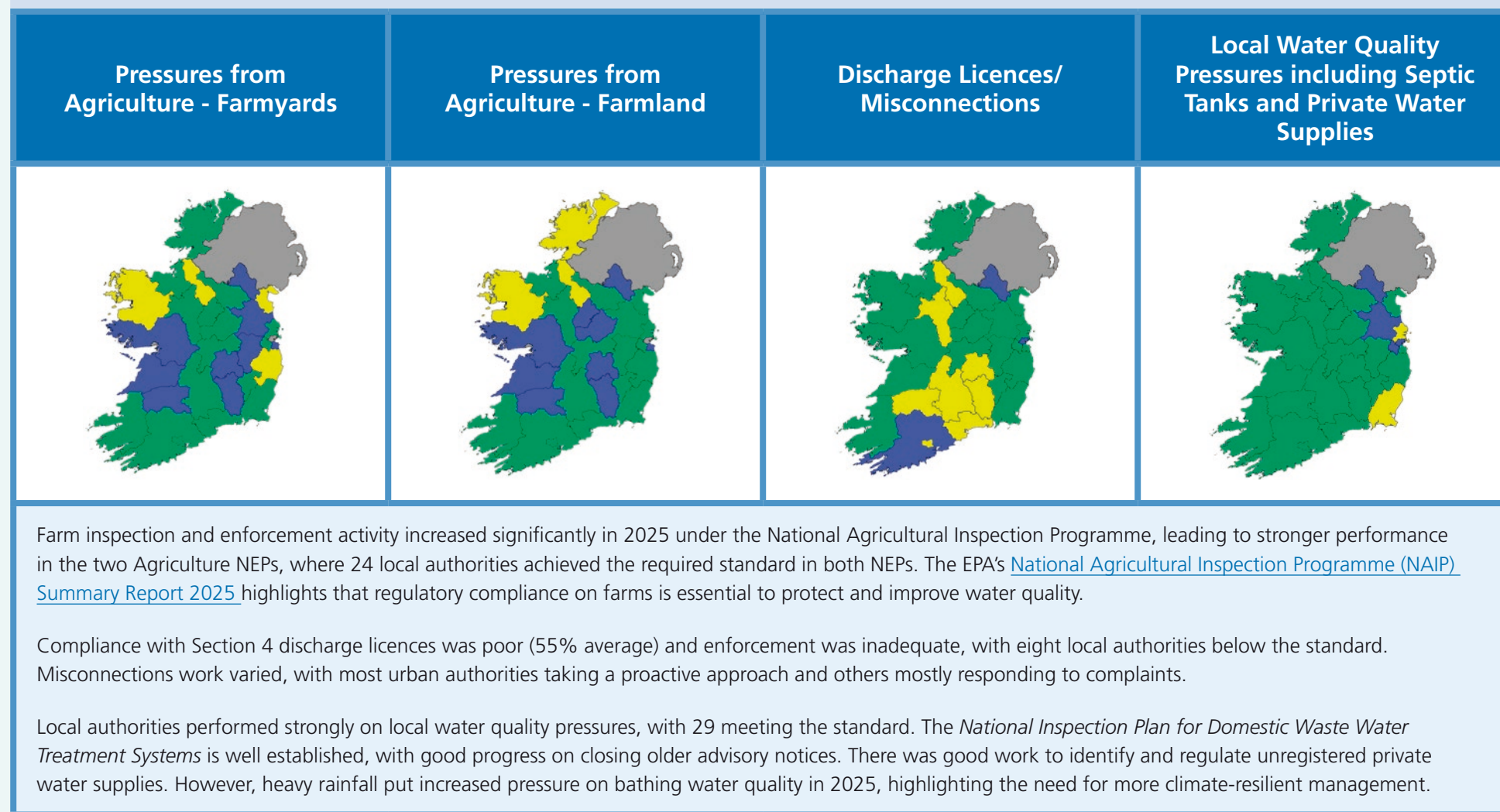
■ Not Applicable ■ Excellent ■ Strong ■ Moderate ■ Limited



2. Overall Performance Results 2025

Figure 7: Water Enforcement Results

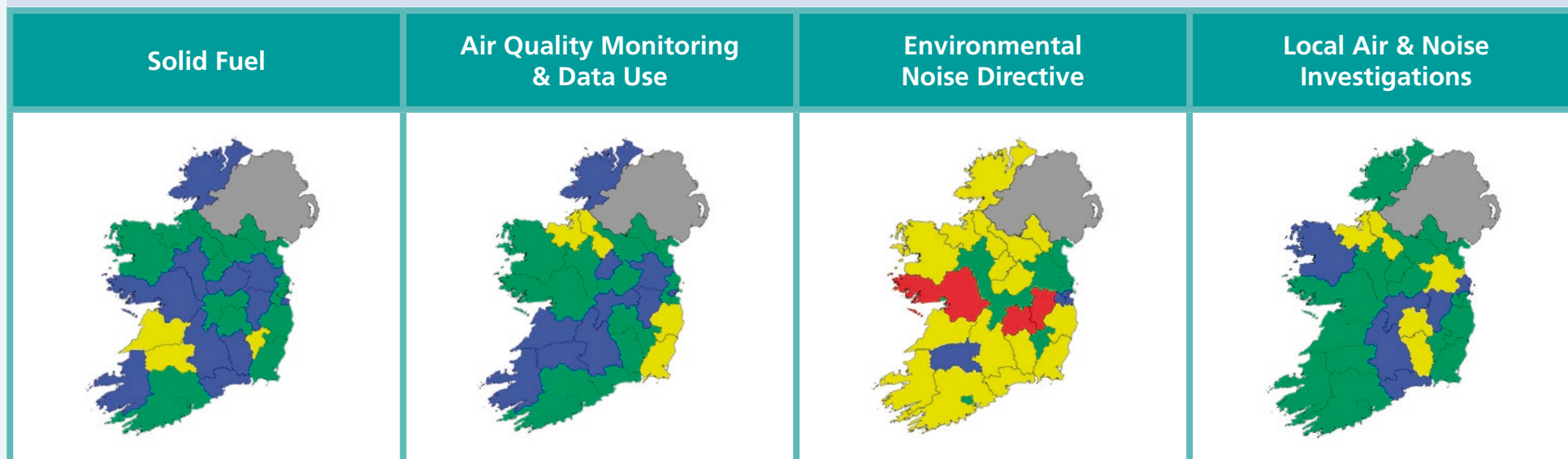
■ Not Applicable ■ Excellent ■ Strong ■ Moderate ■ Limited



2. Overall Performance Results 2025

Figure 8: Air and Noise Enforcement Results

■ Not Applicable ■ Excellent ■ Strong ■ Moderate ■ Limited



Performance under the Solid Fuel Regulations remained strong, with 28 local authorities meeting the standard. First-time inspection compliance was 71%, with unregistered timber producers a key issue. Sulphur testing found that 70% of coal products exceeded the 2% sulphur limit, highlighting the need for continued regulatory focus. Enforcement actions rose significantly, including three prosecutions which remain ongoing.

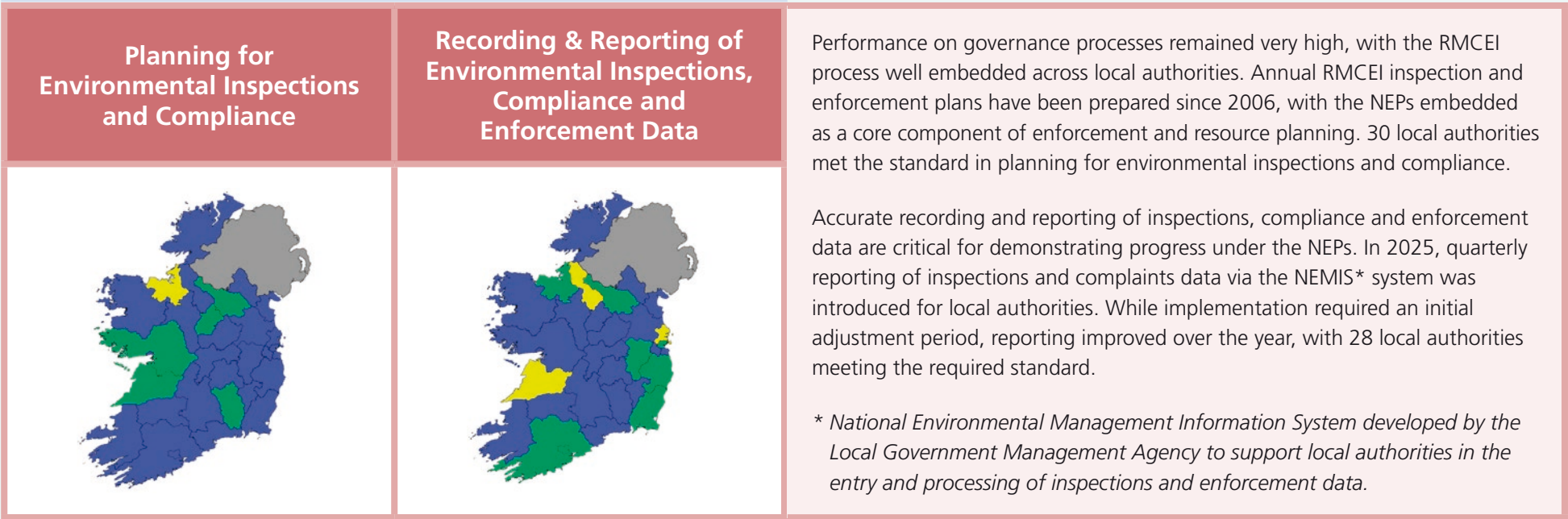
Air quality monitoring and data use also performed well, with 27 local authorities meeting the standard. PM10 exceedances were recorded in eight counties, prompting the development of air quality roadmaps to reduce pollution. However, the reduction in solid fuel awareness campaigns may undermine compliance efforts.

Performance under the Environmental Noise Directive remained the lowest of all NEPs, with 19 local authorities below standard. While urban authorities performed well, some others also demonstrated effective implementation of Noise Action Plans. Key challenges include limited funding for noise management and lack of specialised staff.

Local authority performance on air and noise investigations was strong, with 26 meeting the standard. Compliance with Air Pollution Act licences remained high (91% average). Inspection activity under the Solvents and Deco Paints Regulations decreased slightly, reflecting a shift by the dry-cleaning industry to the use of water-based products. There was increased site certification under the Petroleum Vapour Regulations. Complaint-driven inspections increased, highlighting ongoing odour and noise issues in some areas.

2. Overall Performance Results 2025

Figure 9: Governance Processes Results



3. Examples of Good Practice

Waste Enforcement – Dublin City Council

On-going illegal dumping was taking place at a site in Dublin City. From 2008 to 2020, Dublin City Council (DCC) carried out sustained waste-enforcement actions, leading to nine successful prosecutions. However, illegal dumping escalated, proving difficult to enforce. DCC persisted with their enforcement efforts and Waste Enforcement Officers conducted continuous daily inspections, roadside checkpoints in collaboration with An Garda Síochána, and extensive out-of-hours monitoring. An Garda Síochána personnel were trained and authorised under the Waste Management Act, enabling them to direct vehicles suspected of transporting unauthorised waste to appropriate facilities. This co-ordinated and persistent approach led to the cessation of unauthorised waste disposal activities in 2023.

In 2025, DCC commenced waste removal works at the site. DCC maintained daily engagement with contractors and implemented rigorous oversight measures, including verification of all waste documentation, monitoring of waste movements, and approval of Regulation 27 back-fill locations. A total of 61,740 tonnes of waste, including hazardous material, was removed by specialist contractor to authorised facilities, involving over 2,300 individual vehicle movements across a 17-week period. The site has since been reinstated and secured through the installation of a perimeter trench, liner, and protective wall. The remediated land can now be adapted for a new, beneficial use.



Aerial photo of the site prior to works commencing



Aerial photo of the site following removal of waste mound (September 2025)

3. Examples of Good Practice

Water Enforcement – Kildare County Council

During farmland inspections in 2025, unauthorised discharges of trade and sewage effluent to a tributary of the River Liffey in the Liffey_100 sub-basin were discovered by Kildare County Council. Subsequent investigations traced the sources of the discharges to a commercial premises in a nearby business park, where effluent was being discharged to the storm water system, which discharged to a nearby stream.

Site inspections, drainage surveys, and water quality sampling confirmed the source, with testing identifying very high BOD levels. The operator was directed to immediately cease the discharge and modify its processes. Following engagement with Kildare County Council, the operator introduced a closed-loop system to collect and recycle the effluent, eliminating the discharge.

During the investigation, a second unauthorised sewage discharge to surface water was identified within the same business park. A Section 12 Notice under the Water Pollution Act was issued to the site owner, requiring the immediate cessation of the discharge and the installation of appropriate on-site treatment and disposal measures. The notice was fully complied with.

These investigations resulted in the cessation of two polluting discharges and improved protection of local water quality. Ongoing monitoring and regulatory oversight will help reduce and prevent future impacts on receiving waters.



River Liffey 100 sub-basin

3. Examples of Good Practice

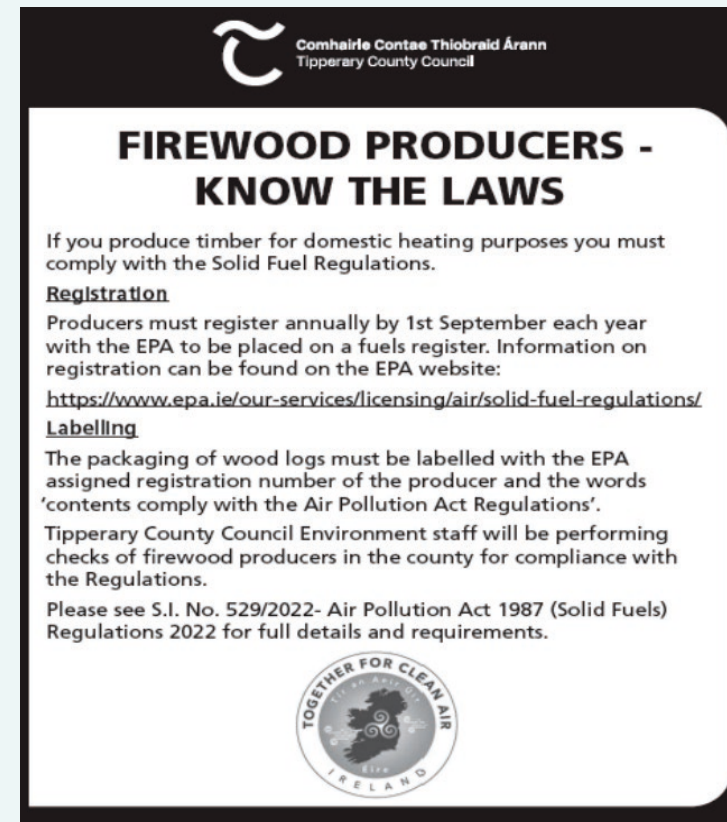
Air Enforcement – Tipperary County Council

In 2025, Tipperary County Council implemented an inspection plan to assess compliance with solid fuel legislation, with a particular focus on firewood producers. A desktop review was undertaken using social media adverts, Teagasc Forestry 2024 contact list, contacting roadside advertising and timber sales trailers, sawmill searches and retailer inspections.

Eleven firewood producers were identified and contacted. Producers were provided with information on their legal obligations, and follow-up engagement was undertaken to support EPA registration. Additional guidance was provided to producers experiencing difficulties with the application process, particularly in relation to certification requirements.

As a result, three producers have successfully registered with the EPA, six have engaged with the Wood Fuel Quality Assurance Scheme and are progressing towards certification, and two newly identified producers are being followed up.

These inspections and engagement highlighted a lack of awareness among firewood producers regarding the Solid Fuel Regulations and their obligations. In response, Tipperary County Council launched an awareness campaign using newspaper and social media notices. The campaign has delivered positive outcomes, with several firewood producers proactively seeking information on registration requirements, indicating improved awareness and increased engagement with regulatory obligations.



Tipperary County Council's notice published in newspaper and on social media

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