

Factsheet 3.06 - Inspection strategy

To determine the best inspection strategy it can be useful to assess the following elements:

Element 1

Clearly define the target group and the rules they have to comply with.

Element 2

Gather information about the compliance behaviour of the target group.

The aim is to get an insight into the target group compliance behaviour and the motives for that behaviour.

The following factors may influence the compliance behaviour of the target group:

The familiarity with and clarity of legislation among the target group.

The tangible/intangible advantages and disadvantages arising from compliance or non-compliance with the rule(s), expressed in time, money and effort.

The extent to which the policy and legislation is considered acceptable by the target group.

The extent to which the target group respects the government's authority.

The risk, as estimated by the target group, of positive or negative reactions on their behaviour from others than the authorities. The risk, as estimated by the target group, of a violation detected by persons or bodies other than the authorities, being reported to a government body.

The risk, perceived by the target group, of an inspection by the authorities.

The risk, as estimated by the target group, of a violation being detected in an inspection carried out by the authorities.

The perceived risk of inspection and detection of a violation resulting from being selected for inspection out of a larger population.

The risk, as estimated by the target group, of a sanction being imposed if an inspection reveals that a rule has been broken.

The severity and nature of the sanction associated with the violation and additional disadvantages of being sanctioned.

Table 8, factors that influence compliance behaviour

Element 3

Determining the inspection strategy

Based on insights on the compliance behaviour the proper inspection strategy can be determined.

Generally speaking the strategy will depend on the specific tendency of the target group to comply or not to comply and the factors that lead to this tendency. The figure here below shows a general distinction in tendencies, motives and strategies.

	Not knowing	Not able to	Not willing
Inclination to comply	Advise	Facilitate	Reward or tempt
Inclination to violate	Advise in combination with inspection and enforcement	Facilitate in combination with inspection and enforcement	(Repeated) Inspection and enforcement

Table with the relation compliance behaviour - strategy

Communication strategy

The inspecting authority can only perform in an effective, transparent and accountable way when it has a communication strategy: a set of adequate provisions and arrangements for internal information exchange and for communication with other authorities, stakeholders and the general public.

The general public should have access to information on the inspecting authorities’ activities and environmental performance of the regulated community. Beyond passively responding to requests for information, the inspecting authority should pro-actively issue news releases and otherwise disseminate information. The general public should have the right to provide information to the inspectorate (for example complaints) and to have its concerns addressed.

Good communication will allow the inspecting authority to inform, understand, engage with and influence all the people who can contribute to improving the environment. Effective communication cannot be taken for granted, nor does it “just happen”. It requires a systematic approach.