Standardized Reporting System for Private Water Service Operators, France

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Experiences of Municipal Water Utilities
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Management of Water and Sewerage Services in France (1/2)

Key Figures

- 61 million people
- 15,000 water supply services
- 14,500 sewerage services

Organization of Services

- Control and organization of water services: local authorities, (objectives, priorities, tariffs, management)
- Operator: public or private, responsible for managing the service
- Outsourcing: usually partial and in the form of concession or *affermage* contracts
- Lively competition: 500 to 700 calls for tender every year
Management of Water and Sewerage Services in France (2/2)

Market share for water and wastewater services

- **In terms of population supplied (water services)**
  - Private operators: 74%
  - Public operators: 26%

- **In terms of revenue**
  - Local authorities and public operators: 45%
  - Private operators: 37%
  - State and Water Agencies: 18%
Main Objectives

- To provide an effective tool for the operator for reporting to the local authority (management chart)

- To create a tool to inform and foster dialogue with stakeholders
  
  Consumers, public authorities

- To serve as a performance benchmark for the continuous improvement of the service
  
  Providing information about the service, other than price

  Providing a basis for the assessment of the operational and economic performance of the service

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Contributory Initiatives

Several professional associations are working on the same issue:

- FNCCR (French Association of local authorities and public operators)
- AFNOR (French standardization organization)
- IGD (French Institute of Delegated Management)
- SPDE (Association of French Private Water and Sanitation Operators)
The SPDE Initiative

Since 2002

- A frame of reference with 23 performance indicators
  
  (7 for water, 7 for sewerage, 9 for both)

- Published in operators’ annual reports

- Applies to the 1,500 privately managed water and sewerage contracts for communities of over 10,000 people

  i.e. 30 million users (50% of the French population)

- The most significant initiative to date in respect of a local public service
Performance Indicator Selection Criteria

- About the economic, social and environmental aspects of the service
- Limited in number and easy to understand
- Addressing means (e.g., crisis management) as well as performances
- Enduring and reliable
### SPDE Performance Indicators

- **Water Supply:** 7 indicators
  - (eg. compliance with drinking quality standards, non revenue water)

- **Sewerage:** 7 indicators
  - (eg. compliance with treatment standards, sludge disposal policy)

- **Customer Relations:** 2 indicators
  - (eg. complaints, customer satisfaction surveys)

- **Social Component:** 3 indicators
  - (eg. « acces to water » solidarity policies, local consultative committees)

- **Management Systems:** 3 indicators
  - (eg. ISO 9001, ISO 14 000)

- **Tariff of Water:** 1 indicator

Indicators common to both services:

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Progress to Date

- Well received by users and partners
- The indicator values should be regarded as indicative of general trends rather than in absolute terms
- It will take time for the system to bed in
- Significant costs involved in collecting data and need to adapt information systems in many cases
- A source of feedback which could contribute to international efforts in this area (International Water Association)
Conclusion

- **A system that still needs perfecting:**
  - Need to work to harmonize definitions, measuring systems and interpretations
  - Need to improve communication tools vis-à-vis users

- **Statutory instrument in preparation:**
  - Improvement of France’s contribution to international reporting processes on water quality and the environment
  - Continued improvement of public confidence in the quality of their water and sewerage services