



Government's Interim Response to PFAS Scientific Advisory Panel Recommendations on Report 4 – PFAS and the Environment

24/02/26

Statement from the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Health and Social Services

We are pleased to present the Government of Jersey's interim response to the draft recommendations of the Independent PFAS Scientific Advisory Panel's draft Report 4. The recommendations highlight both the seriousness of this issue and the need for continued action. Although the Panel's advice remains in draft, we are already progressing the work needed to strengthen public health and environmental protection. This response outlines the progress made across Government and the further steps planned to deepen our understanding of PFAS and advance future regulation.

We recognise the concern PFAS continues to raise for Islanders. The Government has listened carefully to the Panel's independent advice and to the community's expectation for clear, evidence-based decision making. We are grateful for the Panel's expertise and for the extensive testing and research undertaken by Government teams, which together provide a strong foundation for action. Our approach is coordinated across environmental, health, scientific and operational teams, ensuring shared understanding and aligned priorities.

A key outcome of this work is the proposal to amend the Water (Jersey) Law 1972 to introduce Jersey's first statutory limits for PFAS in drinking water. The Draft Water Law (Jersey) Amendment Regulations 202- establishes a combined limit of 4 nanograms per litre for four PFAS chemicals and reflect our commitment to future-proofing the Islands public water supply. This precautionary approach is consistent with global best practice and represents an important long-term commitment.

Alongside regulatory measures, clinical and public health considerations remain central. Work continues to introduce targeted clinical interventions for residents with elevated PFAS levels and additional blood testing as shared in the Government's response to Report 3.

We will continue to work closely with the Independent Panel, partners and the public as this programme progresses. PFAS is a complex and evolving challenge, but through collaboration, transparency and evidence-led action, we remain committed to delivering a responsible and effective long-term response for Jersey.

Introduction

This document sets out the Government of Jersey's response to the draft recommendations made by the independent PFAS advisory panel in its two interim drafts of Report 4 – PFAS and the Environment. The interim reports invited Government to consider a range of recommendations relating primarily to environmental management, drinking water, land and water quality, and supporting governance arrangements.

The recommendations contained within the interim reports remain draft until the Panel publishes its final report and a final Government response is agreed. This document does not represent a final Government position. Instead, it is intended to provide transparency on the work that is already underway, to set out the Government's current position, and to indicate how the recommendations are being taken forward at this stage.

In responding to the interim recommendations, Government officers across multiple departments have been asked to consider the Panel's advice and to progress work where appropriate. This has been undertaken in recognition of the need to respond in a timely manner, while ensuring that actions are proportionate, evidence-led and informed by public health considerations.

Much of the scientific and policy advice relating to PFAS is derived from international research and global best practice. At the same time, the Government is undertaking and maintaining a Jersey-specific testing and monitoring programme to strengthen the local evidence base and ensure that recommendations can be considered within a Jersey context. This includes working with consultants for specialist Hydrogeological Survey work released in April 2025. Where Jersey-specific data is available, it has informed the responses set out in this document. Where that evidence is still emerging, international evidence and guidance have been referenced.

This response reflects an iterative and evolving programme of work. Further refinement will follow the publication of the Panel's final draft report and a subsequent period of Island input, ahead of any final Government response later in the year.

Government response to interim draft 1 of Report 4

The Government has accepted in principle the core recommendations set out in the Panel's interim draft report relating to PFAS in mains drinking water. In particular, the Panel recommended that Jersey should introduce a single, enforceable standard for PFAS in the public water supply, set through legal means, and aligned to a health-protective approach.

The Panel recommended a regulatory limit of 4 nanograms per litre for the sum of four PFAS (PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS and PFNA), and in this regard, the Minister for the Environment has lodged an Amendment to the Water (Jersey) Law 1972 to establish

the statutory framework for that limit in relation to water supplied to the public by Jersey Water.

The purpose of the Regulations is to place the standard on a clear legal footing. Implementation will require detailed technical assessment and careful planning to ensure that measures taken are proportionate, effective and deliverable, taking account of operational, financial and practical considerations. The regulatory framework provides the necessary clarity while allowing implementation to proceed in a structured and evidence-led manner.

This legislative change represents a significant and tangible outcome arising from the Panel's work. It will place Jersey's approach to PFAS regulation on a clear statutory footing, strengthen regulatory oversight of water supplied by Jersey Water, and provide long-term assurance for Islanders in relation to the quality of mains drinking water.

The Government also agrees with the Panel's recommendation that broader PFAS monitoring should continue, including the use of a guidance value for the average sum of forty-eight measurable PFAS to inform investigation and regulatory oversight. While this guidance value is not intended to operate as an enforceable limit, it will be reflected within Jersey Water's ongoing monitoring and reporting arrangements, supporting transparency and early identification of trends or changes that may warrant further investigation.

Further work will continue alongside Jersey Water and relevant regulatory teams to support implementation, monitoring and compliance as the new standards are brought into effect.

Government response to interim draft 2 of Report 4

The interim draft recommendations set out in the Panel's second report focus on the management of PFAS in soils and land, including the use of indicative levels to inform assessment and the consideration of potential remediation approaches. The Government recognises the value of this advice in supporting a consistent and evidence-informed approach, while noting that the recommendations are advisory in nature and will require further consideration as the evidence base continues to develop.

In relation to soils, the Government broadly supports the use of PFAS levels differentiated by land type as a means of informing site specific risk assessment and decision-making. These levels are intended to act as triggers for further investigation rather than as definitive thresholds requiring immediate action. Decisions on how, when and by whom further investigation should be undertaken will require careful consideration and will be informed by the final recommendations of the Panel, alongside wider policy, regulatory and resource considerations.

The Panel's advice on soil washing has been considered in light of previous assessments undertaken in a Jersey context. Soil washing has been explored locally in the past but has rarely been successfully implemented, largely due to practical

constraints relating to scale, infrastructure, cost, and the management and disposal of waste arising from the process. The Government recognises, however, that soil washing may continue to develop internationally. While it is not used at present, it is not ruled out as a potential option in the future should circumstances, technology or the supporting evidence change.

The interim recommendations relating to PFAS in ground and surface waters have also been noted. The Government broadly supports the use of indicative levels as triggers for further investigation, rather than as immediate regulatory thresholds. These recommendations provide a useful framework for identifying where additional assessment may be required. The practical application of these triggers, including how and when investigations would be undertaken, will require further consideration following publication of the Panel's final report.

In respect of private borehole water supplies, the Government recognises the importance of clear advice and accessible support for Islanders who may have concerns about PFAS. Over the coming months, Government will formalise existing arrangements by establishing a dedicated page on the gov.je website. This will provide clear information, set out available advice, and signpost Islanders to appropriate sources of support, including how testing can be accessed and how results can be interpreted. It will also make clear the respective roles and responsibilities, including that the management and treatment of private water supplies rests with the property owner. This approach builds on work that is already in operation in a more consistent and transparent footing. The Government broadly accepts the Panel's proposed triggers for intervention in relation to private supplies, while recognising that the detailed practicalities will require further consideration in light of the final recommendations.

The Government has also considered the Panel's recommendations relating to biosolids and land application. Recommendations addressing risk assessment, appropriate use, and the differentiation between crop types are broadly supported in principle. These recommendations align with the need to manage risk proportionately and to continue reducing PFAS at source wherever possible. Further work will be required to consider how existing policy and guidance in Jersey may need to evolve in response, including containment, handling and land use practices. This will be taken forward following the Panel's final report and in the context of wider environmental and agricultural policy considerations.

The Panel's recommendations relating to future infrastructure investment, including the management of biosolids, have been carefully considered. The Government welcomes the Panel's recognition that biosolids can play a positive role in land management when used appropriately. It also accepts the Panel's advice that the frequency and nature of biosolid application should be considered in light of existing PFAS levels in land, to ensure that potential risks are managed proportionately. Further work will be required before these considerations can be translated into policy or guidance, including continued efforts to reduce PFAS contamination at source. Longer-term infrastructure investment in this area will be considered as part of the Government's broader approach to future environmental management and resilience.

The Government has also considered the Panel's recommendations relating to waste management and treatment options, including recommendations 6, 7, 10 and 11. These recommendations are broadly supported as reflecting good practice and align with established principles around treatment hierarchy, risk management and environmental protection.

The Panel's recommendation about the use of incineration as the best disposal technology for PFAS treatment residues are noted. With limited access to appropriate scale incineration technology in Jersey, as the Panel have noted, there is a need for careful planning for disposal / destruction in all PFAS interventions. Recommendation 7, as well as the whole lifecycle cost-effectiveness analysis recommendation 6 in the Interim Draft Report 1 by the Panel are both relevant.

Government will consider options for the management of water treatment residues containing PFAS in line with its legal obligations. This work will consider logistical, regulatory and operational factors, and will inform further engagement with the Panel. The outcome of this work may refine the understanding of what options are realistically available in a Jersey context and will be shared with the Panel to inform the final report where appropriate.

Conclusion

This document sets out the Government's response to the recommendations made by the independent PFAS Scientific Advisory panel in its two interim drafts of Report 4 – PFAS and the Environment. It reflects the seriousness with which the Government is considering the Panel's advice, while recognising that the recommendations remain draft until the final report is published.

In responding to the interim recommendations, the Government has sought to be open about the work already underway, the areas where recommendations are being progressed, and those where further evidence, assessment or consideration is required. Significant progress has been made in key areas, including the introduction of enforceable standards for PFAS in mains drinking water, while other recommendations are being treated as advisory at this stage and will inform ongoing and future work.

The Government recognises the complexity of PFAS as an emerging area of science and policy, and the need to balance timely action with evidence-led decision-making. Work to strengthen Jersey-specific evidence, support Islanders, and ensure appropriate regulatory and policy frameworks are in place is ongoing and will continue to develop.

The Government remains committed to engaging constructively with the Panel, stakeholders and Islanders as this work progresses.