



IMPEL Review Initiative (IRI) of the Czech Environment Inspectorate



The IMPEL Review Initiative (IRI) scheme is a voluntary, peer review scheme developed by the IMPEL Network to look at the processes and procedures of environmental authorities in IMPEL member countries and identify areas of good practice and opportunities for further development.

Background

IMPEL carried out a peer review (08-11 September 2015) of the inspection work carried out by the Czech Environmental Inspectorate (CEI). The IMPEL Review Initiative (IRI) was conducted by a highly experienced team of 8 officials from the UK, Germany, IMPEL Secretariat, Italy, Austria, Portugal, Kosovo and Romania.

Key findings

The Czech Environmental Inspectorate is a dedicated organisation that plays a key role in protecting the environment in the Czech Republic. All the building blocks to implementing the Industrial Emissions Directive and the SEVESO Directive are in place.

The peer review showed that the CEI has developed a good website that communicates a lot of information to the public. This is important given the increasing requirements in Europe for openness and transparency but also because of recent evidence to suggest that improved compliance is achieved as a result. The CEI has an excellent coordinating and partnership approach with other state administrations particularly with regard to inspections. The CEI employs a sound, internal intranet too that stores internal regulations, templates and other tools for staff. This is used in combination with an impressive quality control mechanism which requires staff to sign they have read and understood the protocols stored there.

A significant challenge for all regulators in Europe is to ensure that they are outcome focused (environmental improvements are the goal and not simply checking conditions against a permit), that they are evidence led and compliance is achieved using all possible enforcement tools.

Target Group

Inspection & enforcement
authorities
Permitting Authorities
Managers
Inspectors
Ministries

EU Legislation

RMCEI
All environmental Acquis

Sector / theme

All sectors

Publication date

2016



European Union Network for
the Implementation and Enforcement
of Environmental Law



The CEI should consider developing clear corporate environmental goals, derived from the Ministry of Environment goals set out in the [State Environmental Policy of the Czech Republic 2012 - 2020](#) that then link down to relevant regional and department levels and then to individual inspectors and other staff via personal targets and a yearly appraisal of performance. In addition, by more fully implementing risk criteria in the CEI's three yearly and annual work planning, to CEI goals and objectives, this would go some way to developing more visible and demonstrable links with environmental outcome and not just output.

The CEI already has many systems in place that capture information. A challenge going forward is to consider how this information can be 'mined' efficiently so that the 'nuggets' of useful data can be used to direct the work of the organisation and help to demonstrate the link between the work of the CEI and environmental outcomes.

The CEI has a very limited enforcement toolkit at its disposal compared with many other EU member states and their inspectorates. Three primary tools were identified: the imposition of fines (especially where fines levels are low), the temporary shutting down of an installation or the withdrawal of a licence are rather limited instruments with which to influence change and ultimately protect the environment. In practice, fines were the most commonly used and oftentimes fines appeared to be quite low. Other inspectorates in IMPEL member countries use a variety of tools to ensure compliance such as: advice, guidance, warnings, criminal sanctions, covert inspections, 'Name & Shame', 'Name & Fame' for example. A variety of tools in the compliance assurance and enforcement toolkit, that are used in an appropriate situation and in a correct manner often lead to improved results.

The review found not only a dedicated organisation but convincing evidence of committed staff that have a strong bond with one another. Staff are highly educated and clearly care about the job they do in the Czech Republic. There is a good mix of junior and more senior staff too with a variety of experience. This is clearly a strength for the CEI to be maintained and built upon.

View from the Czech Republic:

Director of the CEI, Erik Geuss said: "I am very glad, that we had an opportunity to host the IRI at the Czech Environmental Inspectorate. The review has been beneficial and a very useful for us. Members of the review team were very experienced and we highly appreciated the opportunity to discuss our system, exchange ideas and explore best practice solutions with them. Furthermore we found that some recommendations are in line with the strategy, which we would like to implement. We hope to make improvements to areas of good practice and try to put into practice some of the recommendations of the review team for improvement such as developing and using a wider and more varied enforcement toolkit. "

Links

IRI
RMCEI

Member States project team

