



# Press Release

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## CECA: Water White Paper Offers Hope For Once In A Generation Reform

Civil engineering contractors today said that [today's publication of the UK Government's Water White Paper](#) must fire the starting gun on a root and branch reform of the sector and mean better outcomes for households across England and Wales.

Today's publication builds on the findings of Sir Jon Cunliffe's Independent Water Commission, which published 88 recommendations in summer 2025, aimed at restoring public confidence in the sector, strengthening regulation, and unlocking long-term investment.

The Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) has consistently argued that the UK water sector requires a generational reset that focuses on strategic direction, regulatory overhaul, and asset health.

Properly implemented, the reforms announced today have the potential to deliver greater clarity on investment pipelines, improved environmental outcomes, and create the conditions for more efficient and resilient delivery across water and wastewater networks.

Commenting, CECA Director of Policy & Public Affairs Ben Goodwin said: "Our members welcome the publication of today's White Paper, which will overhaul regulation in the water sector and prioritise long-term strategic planning.

"We particularly welcome the Government's intention to move towards a new, integrated regulatory model and a long-term strategy, supported by regional system planning, that will help smooth investment cycles, enable better coordination of major programmes, and allow the supply chain to plan more effectively.

"CECA is particularly keen to engage with the Government on its 2026 Transition Plan and the development of new legislation to avoid disruption to workload and skills pipelines during the move from the current framework to the new regulatory system.

"The Government has said that the reform of the sector will be backed by £104 billion investment to bring the water system up to the standards that communities in England and Wales deserve.

"This investment will only be a success if delivery partners are engaged early, industry is given long-term planning certainty, and the transition to a new regulator is implemented smoothly. As Government develops its forthcoming Water Reform Bill it will be vital that delivery expertise is embedded from the outset, to ensure reforms translate into investable programmes that can be delivered efficiently, safely, and at scale.

"CECA will continue to engage constructively with Government, regulators, clients, and our members as reform proposals are developed and rolled out, and we look forward to making sure the voice of civil engineering contractors is fully represented throughout this process.

"Our members stand ready to deliver the cleaner rivers, more resilient networks, and better outcomes that customers and communities in England and Wales expect and deserve. Get this right, and we can deliver a water system that we can all be proud of - one that will protect the environment, serve communities, and benefit future generations across England and Wales."

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### Notes to editors

1. The Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) represents over 300 contractors of all sizes, covering approximately 80% of the civil engineering market in Great Britain. Our members build infrastructure that provides the basis for economic sustainability and quality of life in communities across the country.

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