

**Compliance Principles**  
**Of**  
**Agriculture and Rural**  
**Development**

Prepared by Regulatory Services Division

## Compliance Principles

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## **Executive Summary**

Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD)'s mission is to enable the growth of a globally competitive, sustainable agriculture and food industry through essential policy, legislation, information and services in partnership with vibrant rural communities.

ARD uses a variety of approaches to achieve its mission, including providing research, infrastructure, information and insurance. In addition, it uses legislation (statutes and regulations) to promote sustainable growth by setting out clear requirements that provide a framework for orderly commerce, protect animal welfare, sustain the environment, and ensure food safety, among other objectives. The focus of these Compliance Principles is how ARD and its partners assure compliance with these requirements.

### **Goal**

The goal of ARD's Compliance Principles is for all clients to demonstrate compliance. The goal is to achieve, at a minimum, compliant behaviour that satisfies applicable requirements. ARD encourages compliant behaviour, which will often exceed the requirements.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of ARD's Compliance Principles is to ensure compliance with these requirements through transparent, fair, consistent and effective processes based on the core values of the Government. The core public service values are respect, accountability, integrity and excellence.

### **Basic Principles**

1. Compliance is facilitated through a good understanding of the purpose and rationale of the specific requirements of any legislation or standard. There is an obligation to clearly describe the desired outcome or requirement in the legislation. The requirements may be further clarified in a standard or guideline. There is an obligation on ARD to inform and educate clients about the requirement, means of compliance and, where possible, beyond compliance as best practices.
2. Adopt a risk-based approach to compliance. While, by definition, compliance is required, the speed of coming into compliance, and the appropriate immediacy of a compliance response will depend on the level of risk associated with the activity. The immediacy, scope and severity of any impact will determine the appropriate response.

3. Compliance tools will be deployed in a logical sequence of steps, with the starting point and speed of progression based on risk. Compliance tools vary in terms of their immediacy and imperativeness. The approach will be graduated, unless the risks require timely progression to more immediate tools.
4. The approach to compliance will take into account the client's previous record of compliance, or beyond compliance, behaviour.
5. The Government has an obligation to assess overall compliance, and will use inspection and audit activities as appropriate for the level of risk associated with the specific activity.
6. Public complaints are part of an overall assurance program. The Government will assess and take action on complaints and advise complainants of the action taken.
7. Prosecution is a tool for compliance — not a goal. ARD does not set out to prosecute, but will proceed to prosecution if necessary to address willful or repeated contravention, or if the offence has a high severity or impact, or if the demonstrated value of the prosecution will promote broader awareness and compliance.
8. Prosecution will be evidence-based, following a documented investigation and review by Justice. The evidence and the severity of the impact will be assessed.

### **Compliance Process**

Compliance starts with a clarity of purpose, requirements and language in legislation (both statutory and regulatory requirements), as well as standards and guidelines. Once established, the requirements need to be communicated to those affected, both as information and as part of education as a responsibility for and means to compliance. A compliance response by ARD may be triggered by a site inspection, a complaint, or a query by the affected party.

Compliance actions may include:

1. Written inspection report that clarifies the inspection findings and clearly identifies any compliance issues.
2. Advice issued concerning requirements and means of compliance.
3. Corrective action letter issued.
4. Warning letter issued.
5. Administrative penalty levied.
6. Formal investigation initiated.
7. Legislation-authorized written order issued.
8. Licences or authorization suspended.
9. License or authorization cancelled.

10. Court-directed written order issued.
11. Prosecution initiated.

## **Section 1: Introduction**

Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) subscribes to a vision of growing Alberta farms, processors, and all other agricultural businesses along with vibrant rural communities. The Ministry's mission is to enable the growth of a globally competitive, sustainable agriculture and food industry through essential policy, legislation, information and services in partnership with vibrant rural communities.

ARD consists of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC). The Ministry is also responsible for the Office of the Farmers' Advocate, Irrigation Council, Agricultural Products Marketing Council, and Alberta Grain Commission.

ARD will work with clients to ensure that legislative compliance is achieved. To clarify terminology, "legislative compliance" refers to adherence to both statutory and regulatory requirements. ARD believes that compliance with requirements is the most effective approach in achieving sustainability of vibrant rural communities. Compliance supports the intent of partnership in accordance with the Ministry's mission statement. ARD assumes that clients are responsible, law-abiding citizens who share an interest in and commitment to the agricultural community and society at large. In general, clients do exhibit a stewardship ethic exceeding compliance.

ARD subscribes to a regulatory philosophy of supporting agricultural sustainability. Practices that contribute to sustainability are developed and implemented through legislation and other means. An effective and efficient legislative framework is a fundamental component in achieving this goal. ARD administers these Compliance Principles to ensure there is compliance with the requirements. It is these practices that Albertans, as a society, have established as in the best interest of Albertans. Full compliance with the requirements is based on developing an attitude and a set of behaviours reflective of our established social standards. Practices that exceed established standards are encouraged and supported as exemplary performance to achieve our collective goal of agricultural sustainability and vibrant rural communities.

The purpose of this document is to support consistent, coordinated and effective delivery of ARD's Compliance Principles, which will facilitate compliance across a number of programs. The principles provide clarity and certainty to all Albertans relating to compliance and performance expectations and how they will be achieved. Compliance in this context means to conform to the requirements. It is the performance of regulated activities in accordance with the applicable requirements. To achieve compliance, ARD will undertake the following activities: establishing standards, informing and educating clients, encouraging planning, inspecting activities and

facilities, advising clients, receiving information from various sources and accepting public complaints, and enforcing standards as per legislative requirements.

## **Section 2: Goal and Objectives**

The goal of these Compliance Principles is for all clients to demonstrate compliance. ARD will provide opportunities for clients to achieve compliance. Risk to the public will be mitigated through a timely and consistent response. The objectives are to encourage agricultural stewardship, provide information and opportunities to achieve legislative compliance, and support practices that exceed compliance.

## **Section 3: Compliance Steps**

ARD will seek compliance to requirements through a progression of steps and each step's activities. Resolving issues of non-compliance will be dealt with based on the specific circumstances and a progression of escalating tools.

ARD will follow this approach in a fair, consistent and predictable manner and will work with clients to achieve compliance. Compliance will be achieved by progressing through as many steps as necessary. This approach will be used consistently; however, the unique circumstances will be evaluated and the response will be tailored. In some cases, such as a serious and imminent danger to public health, immediate response to a stronger compliance tool may be warranted to stop noncompliant behaviour. Emergency situations may require an immediate response. ARD's response will be based on the perceived risk of harm and urgency of the situation. A clear and present danger will be handled immediately and appropriately for the circumstances involved.

If possible, ARD's approach is progressive and educational. However, prudent and immediate action will be taken if necessary.

### **Step 1: Establishing Standards**

Regulated activities are defined by the governing legislation, which includes both statutes (Acts) and regulations. Policy documents, industry codes, prescribed processes and standards may also be incorporated. The applicable pieces of legislation prescribe the regulated activities and requirements. The legislation also prescribes the designation of inspectors and their expected activities. This structure of prescribed requirements and designated inspectors has proven to be effective.

As time elapses, the legislation is amended as appropriate and based on stakeholder consultation. Legislative changes occur on a regular basis to reflect current needs. The communications between ARD staff and clients provide an opportunity to assess if legislative change is warranted. Maintaining appropriate legislation that reflects the goals of government, industry and society supports the goal of achieving compliance.

## **Step 2: Informing, Educating and Encouraging Planning by Clients**

ARD staff provide information and discuss legislative requirements during communications with clients. This communications effort is essential to ensure a full understanding of the specifics and context of the legislation. ARD staff are available to provide guidance in interpreting the legislation. Requirements will be openly communicated and widely known amongst clients. ARD relies on clients to take responsible action based on a clear understanding of the requirements. ARD will ensure appropriate communications activities occur following any changes to the requirements.

ARD will continually seek to raise awareness and understanding of ARD's requirements and Compliance Principles objectives. A comprehensive and consistent set of communication tools will be used to support this effort. These communication tools include telephone, online resources and printed documents, as follows:

1. ARD uses the telephone to share information. A toll-free telephone service is available by calling 310-FARM (310-3276) or 1-866-882-7677 to obtain information. A second toll-free telephone service is also available by calling 1-866-252-6403 to express a concern or complaint.
2. ARD's website is a tool to inform clients. Detailed information on programs and requirements can be found on ARD's website located at <http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/>.
3. Printed documents, including fact sheets and brochures, are available to share information.
4. Routine release of information, including news releases and publication of the ARD annual report, provides an additional means to inform clients.
5. Documents may be available online, through the Ag-Info Centre, or by contacting the appropriate ARD program area.

The education component of the Compliance Principles promotes compliance by sharing information and raising awareness of agricultural protection and management, legislative requirements, and the consequences of non-compliance. ARD educates clients to encourage continuous improvement in operations and best practices in agricultural stewardship. The objective and the rationale for the requirement needs to be explained so clients can understand why they should comply, as well as their legal responsibility.

ARD recognizes the benefits of compliance and seeks to create this same recognition by clients. Inspectors will attempt to educate clients regarding their legislative responsibilities. In particular, ARD inspectors may focus on providing additional information and education when issues of legislative compliance arise.

ARD encourages planning and operates similarly by undertaking long-term business planning. ARD encourages clients to develop and implement innovative approaches to promote continuous improvement and performance that goes beyond compliance. Industry-established programs are celebrated by ARD as supporting best practices exceeding compliance. ARD supports and promotes industry's initiative to implement assurance programs.

### **Step 3: Inspection Activities**

ARD staff designated as inspectors conduct inspections. Inspection is an activity carried out according to legislative authority. During an inspection, the inspector may:

1. Inform, educate, respond to any questions or concerns;
2. Provide current information regarding requirements;
3. Identify and address potential issues in a timely and proactive manner to prevent compliance issues;
4. Identify and request correction of any compliance issues;
5. Develop and strengthen relationships;
6. Provide a measure of performance relative to the requirements;
7. Verify the submission of data being reported;
8. Gather information to confirm compliance status; and
9. Demonstrate ARD's commitment to compliance through a credible presence.

An inspection covers a wide range of agricultural issues depending on the size, nature and complexity of the particular activity and the agricultural impacts that may result. An inspection may be scheduled, unannounced (ad hoc) or complaint-driven.

The frequency of inspection may increase when issues and potential risks are evident in a particular situation. Factors determining the frequency of inspection include:

1. Legislative requirements,
2. History of compliance by the individual and operation,
3. Potential risk to the public and/or the industry associated with a particular activity or operation, which can cause an adverse effect, and
4. Need to audit/monitor to ensure performance.

Operations that have demonstrated a sound history of compliance and performance will require less frequent inspections. An operation with the potential to cause an adverse effect or with a history of non-compliance can expect to be inspected more frequently.

Inspectors will conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner in accordance with the public service values. Upon arrival at the operation to be inspected, inspectors will identify themselves as ARD inspectors, produce an identification card when requested, advise the appropriate personnel of the purpose of the inspection, and explain the nature of their activities to be undertaken.

ARD has developed directives guiding the inspection process. The directives outline ARD's procedures for inspection planning and conduct; inspection preparation; monitoring, sampling and auditing; inspection follow-up and documentation; and program evaluation and reporting performance.

Monitoring can also occur through ARD's audit functions, as carried out as part of the overall inspection program. An audit involves a more detailed assessment of a particular matter. An audit represents a systematic, documented, proactive and objective evaluation undertaken by or on behalf of a business operator with the intention of assessing the operation's compliance, performance and effectiveness against a requirement. An audit differs from the traditional inspection process. If an auditor is assigned a role, the auditor's specific activities and relationship to the inspection program will be discussed with the client.

#### **Step 4: Advising Clients**

Inspection and advisory activities promote compliance by raising awareness regarding: requirements, their purpose, how to comply, and the consequences of non-compliance. An inspection is an opportunity for inspectors to inform, educate, and respond to any questions or concerns. During an inspection, inspectors will provide professional guidance as appropriate. ARD appreciates the capacity of clients to identify and implement appropriate corrective actions. The inspector's advice is provided to inform clients of requirements and the means of compliance. Inspectors are knowledgeable of various courses of action that can satisfy requirements. This expertise is shared as advice to rectify any potential compliance issues in an efficient and effective manner. The expertise will be shared through written communication, in the form of an inspection report, and may also be shared through verbal communication.

There is great variety in the depth of information provided by inspectors as advice. The information shared is dependent on the circumstances and any potential impact. The inspector will advise both on the imperativeness of actions and the appropriate timelines. For instance, in the situation where there is an immediate adverse impact associated with an issue, an immediate response is likely required. In this case, heeding the advice issued by the inspector is of paramount importance. Advice may involve a sense of imperativeness to desist from an activity. This situation differs from an inspector advising on operational improvements not imperative to achieve compliance with the legislative requirements.

The compliance or non-compliance record of the particular client is documented within ARD's tracking system and may impact the inspector's future actions. A client generally exceeding compliance has a proven capacity to operate appropriately and may choose a different course of action than that advised by the inspector. In some situations, there are various courses of action possible to achieve compliance. An individual who has a history of compliance is respected for making appropriate decisions.

Upon conclusion of the inspection, the inspector will discuss the findings with the client, particularly any non-compliance or potential non-compliance issues. A written inspection report detailing the findings is prepared and provided by the inspector. Based on the inspection findings, the following may occur:

1. If compliance is achieved:
  - a) The inspector will offer feedback relating to the inspection findings and, if necessary, how compliance might be achieved, and
  - b) The inspection file is closed.
2. If there are minor compliance issues that do not have the potential to have an adverse impact on agricultural sustainability:
  - a) The inspector may issue general advice relating to the inspection findings and how to achieve compliance,
  - b) Note this on the inspection report, and
  - c) Monitor the situation during the next regularly scheduled inspection.
3. If there are minor compliance issues that have the potential to have an adverse impact on agricultural sustainability:
  - a) The inspector will issue specific advice relating to the inspection findings,
  - b) Note this on the inspection report,
  - c) Follow-up by sending a corrective action letter to the individual to provide clear and complete written communication of expectations and timelines for completion, and
  - d) Schedule a follow-up inspection to monitor the situation.

4. If there are major or significant compliance issues having an adverse impact on the public interest:
  - a) The inspector will issue specific advice relating to the inspection findings,
  - b) Note this on the inspection report,
  - c) Refer the matter to an investigator for a possible enforcement response, and
  - d) Contact other relevant government agencies, if the matter is within their jurisdiction.
5. A clear and present danger will be responded to in an immediate and appropriate manner.

### **Step 5: Receiving Information and Accepting Public Complaints**

Information can be obtained from various sources, including ARD inspectors conducting inspections and members of the public expressing a complaint. The public plays a key role in monitoring incidents of non-compliance. The public reports issues, concerns, emergencies and possible incidents of non-compliance of the mandated legislation by calling either the Ag-Info Centre (toll-free in Alberta: 1-866-882-7677) or the appropriate ARD office. Once reported to ARD, the incident is entered into ARD's tracking system and a decision is made as to the appropriate response action the incident warrants. ARD will follow-up to respond to complainants that provide their contact information. ARD will accept anonymous complaints. All complainants, including repeat complainants, are dealt with in accordance with the Compliance Principles and its steps.

### **Step 6: Enforcing Standards**

All regulatory systems must have an effective enforcement component that serves as the "backstop" for the system. ARD prefers to rectify any compliance issues through the previously described steps. However, ARD, with the respect and support of industry, clearly advocates that legislative requirements must be respected.

All of ARD's activities conducted in accordance with these Compliance Principles will be done in a professional, firm, fair, consistent and timely manner. The enforcement response is tailored to the specific situation to achieve compliance. In general, the following enforcement responses may occur:

1. Warning letter issued,
2. Administrative penalty issued,
3. Legislative-authorized written order issued,
4. Licence or other authorization cancelled or suspended,
5. Court-directed written order issued, and/or

6. Prosecution sought.

## **Section 4: Investigation and Enforcement Process**

Investigations begin when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a contravention has occurred. An investigation is an evidence-gathering function undertaken to substantiate or dismiss an alleged contravention. ARD investigations are conducted, completed and documented in a thorough and timely manner that preserves the availability of all potential enforcement responses and ensures the investigation's integrity. The investigation will substantiate or dismiss an alleged contravention based on evidence admissible for enforcement responses.

There is a progression through the Compliance Principles as a step-wise response. However, there are situations that require very rapid progression in order to apply the appropriate response to achieve compliance. The following factors are considered in determining the appropriateness of a response:

1. The nature of the contravention and the seriousness of the adverse or potential adverse affect on public safety, the environment or agricultural resources, human health, or property — The more serious the effect or potential effect, such as a high risk of damage to property and public safety, the more likely the enforcement response will be immediate.
2. Compliance history under the mandated legislation — A history of similar offences may indicate a need to issue an immediate enforcement response that has a clear deterrent effect to address ongoing problems evident through repeat offences.
3. Consistency with ARD precedents (previous responses to similar past events involving comparable circumstances of non-compliance) — To ensure consistency and to be fair to clients, previous ARD enforcement responses to similar situations will be considered.
4. Duration of non-compliance — Where those responsible for a contravention do not respond immediately to correct the situation, the enforcement response may involve taking immediate remedial action.
5. Intent of alleged offender — Contraventions that result from intentional and negligent behaviour will be dealt with immediately. Overt disregard by individuals who fail to take action after being notified of a contravention, particularly when done so for economic gain, will result in an immediate enforcement response.
6. Importance of the contravened provision within ARD's overall regulatory system — ARD treats offences relating to the provision of false information, concealment of pertinent information, obstructing an inspector, disregard for prior orders, and the failure to report as required by the legislation - all to warrant an immediate enforcement response.

## Collection of Evidence

During an investigation, information is gathered to determine if a contravention has occurred and to assist in determining the appropriate response. Among other things, evidence will be gathered to determine:

1. The nature of the incident and the degree of adverse or potential adverse effect on public safety, the environment and agricultural resources, human health, and property;
2. The compliance history of the individual;
3. The extent and duration of the non-compliance;
4. The intention of the individual;
5. Steps taken to rectify the situation;
6. Steps taken to avoid the incident and prevent its recurrence;
7. The degree of care associated with the activity; and
8. Whether sufficient evidence exists to proceed.

## Warning Letter

A written warning letter is the first step in an enforcement action. It is considered an appropriate response when all of the following criteria are met:

1. The incidence of non-compliance is considered minor;
2. The effect or potential adverse effect as a result of the non-compliance appears minimal;
3. Adequate steps to remedy or minimize the non-compliance or its effects are taken;
4. A history of compliance exists; and
5. There is a reasonable belief that the warning letter will sufficiently deter future non-compliant behaviour.

A warning letter describes the contravention and it also includes the details of the applicable penalty. The warning letter also creates a written record of the alleged contravention.

## Administrative Penalty

Certain offences may be associated with a specified penalty in accordance with the *Provincial Offences Procedures Act*. In these instances, offences may be responded to by issuance of a violation ticket. A person who is alleged to have contravened the legislation can respond to a violation ticket by:

1. Pleading guilty and paying the fine to the appropriate court without making a court appearance,
2. Pleading guilty with an explanation and appearing in court to request a lesser fine or additional time to pay, or

3. Pleading not guilty which will require a subsequent court appearance.

Administrative penalties are issued in order to penalize the offender and deter future non-compliant behaviour. The legislation specifies the type of contraventions for which administrative penalties are prescribed, the factors to be considered in assessing the penalty, and the penalty amounts.

### **Legislation-authorized Written Order**

The mandated legislation may provide for the issuance of orders to prevent and/or correct adverse effects on agricultural sustainability, rural communities, human health, property, and/or public safety. The intent of an order is to compel compliance through remedial actions and, as appropriate, to require actions to prevent future contraventions.

To ensure consistency, legal counsel from Alberta Justice reviews the draft orders on the instructions of the ARD manager. The ARD manager or delegate generally provides the opportunity to meet with the individual prior to issuing the order. This is not a formal hearing. There is no negotiation on the terms and conditions of the order. The intent of the meeting is to:

1. Provide the individual with a description of the circumstances surrounding the contravention;
2. Provide the individual with the opportunity to present any relevant information; and
3. Discuss the terms, conditions and deadlines associated with the order to ensure they are realistic and understood.

A subsequent inspection is conducted to assess compliance with the order.

### **Licence or Other Authorization Suspended or Cancelled**

A licence or other means of authorization may be required to conduct regulated activities. The legislation provides ARD with the legislative authority to suspend or cancel a licence or other authorization if applicable and as deemed appropriate. This action results in the individual being unable to conduct the previously authorized activity. This enforcement response is recognized as serious as the business could be required to cease and desist operation. When a licence or authorization has been previously issued, suspension or cancellation will be considered under the following circumstances:

1. There is a serious situation of non-compliance;
2. The non-compliance caused, or has the potential to cause, a significant adverse effect;
3. There have been multiple or repeat offences for which other enforcement responses have been ineffective;

4. The suspension or cancellation serves the public interest (for example, to address food safety issues);
5. There is evidence of the subject's intention to contravene the legislation; or
6. The licence or authorization was based on false or misleading information.

Should a licence or other authorization not be applicable, issues of non-compliance with a legislative-authorized written order are dealt with through a court-directed written order.

### **Court-directed Written Order**

Court orders may be obtained for the following reasons:

1. To compel compliance with an order;
2. For an injunction to prevent the commission of an offence or prevent serious adverse effects on the community;
3. To prohibit interference with an investigation; or
4. For legal authority to deal with the issue immediately.

A court order may be sought even if a prosecution is commenced.

### **Prosecution**

A prosecution may be pursued when the seriousness of an offence warrants this enforcement response.

If the ARD manager decides that a prosecution is the most appropriate enforcement response to a contravention, the ARD manager will consult with Justice. The file is reviewed by Justice to ensure that there are no legal barriers to prosecution. A Justice prosecutor is the decision-maker on whether and how the case proceeds. The Crown prosecutor has the sole responsibility for making submissions to the court, on behalf of the Government, as to the appropriate sentence for the offender.

Initiating a prosecution will be considered when any of the following criteria are met:

1. The incidents have or may have serious adverse effect on the community;
2. The incidents have or may have a serious effect on the regulatory scheme (for example, jeopardizing licensing);
3. The acts are committed knowingly (i.e., with intention) or involve fraudulent circumstances;
4. The incidents relate to the submission of misleading information or the concealment of information;
5. The incidents occurred as a result of failing to take reasonable steps to comply with an order; or
6. There exists a history of repeat offences or multiple offences.

After a prosecution is initiated, ARD investigators will facilitate the prosecution process by providing support as requested by the Crown prosecutor. This support will include providing the Crown prosecutor with sufficient background information documenting the matter in a professional manner. As well, ARD investigators are responsible for ensuring the timely submission of documentation required by the Crown prosecutor and court disclosure requirements.

A prosecution is meant to ultimately encourage compliance. The goal of these Compliance Principles is for all clients to demonstrate compliance. This goal is steadfast, regardless if the conviction is registered or not.

Should a conviction not be registered, an analysis of the investigation and the prosecution will be undertaken. The purpose of this analysis is to correct any shortcomings that may be identified in the process that contributed to the dismissal of the case. The objective is to learn what improvements can be made. Improvements to the process will be implemented as an ARD corrective action. ARD will also monitor compliance by the client to the requirements.

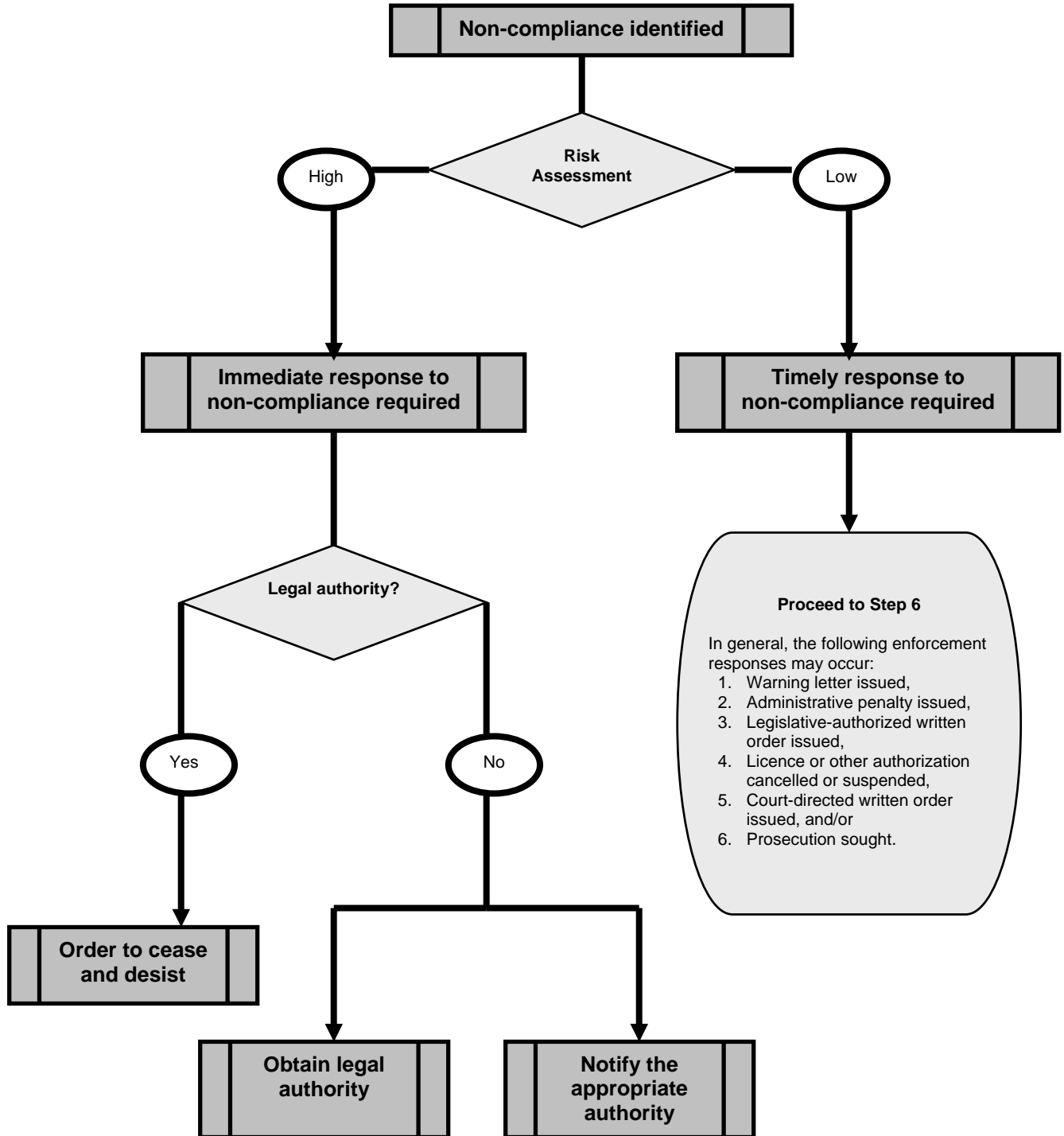
Should a conviction be registered, ARD will monitor compliance to the requirements. Failure to comply may necessitate the need to further prosecute or may result in subsequent prosecution with higher fines and/or possibly a term of imprisonment being sought.

ARD communicates requirements. This is an effort to facilitate understanding and thereby compliance. The client is responsible for understanding the requirements. Ignorance of the law is not a valid excuse for non-compliance.

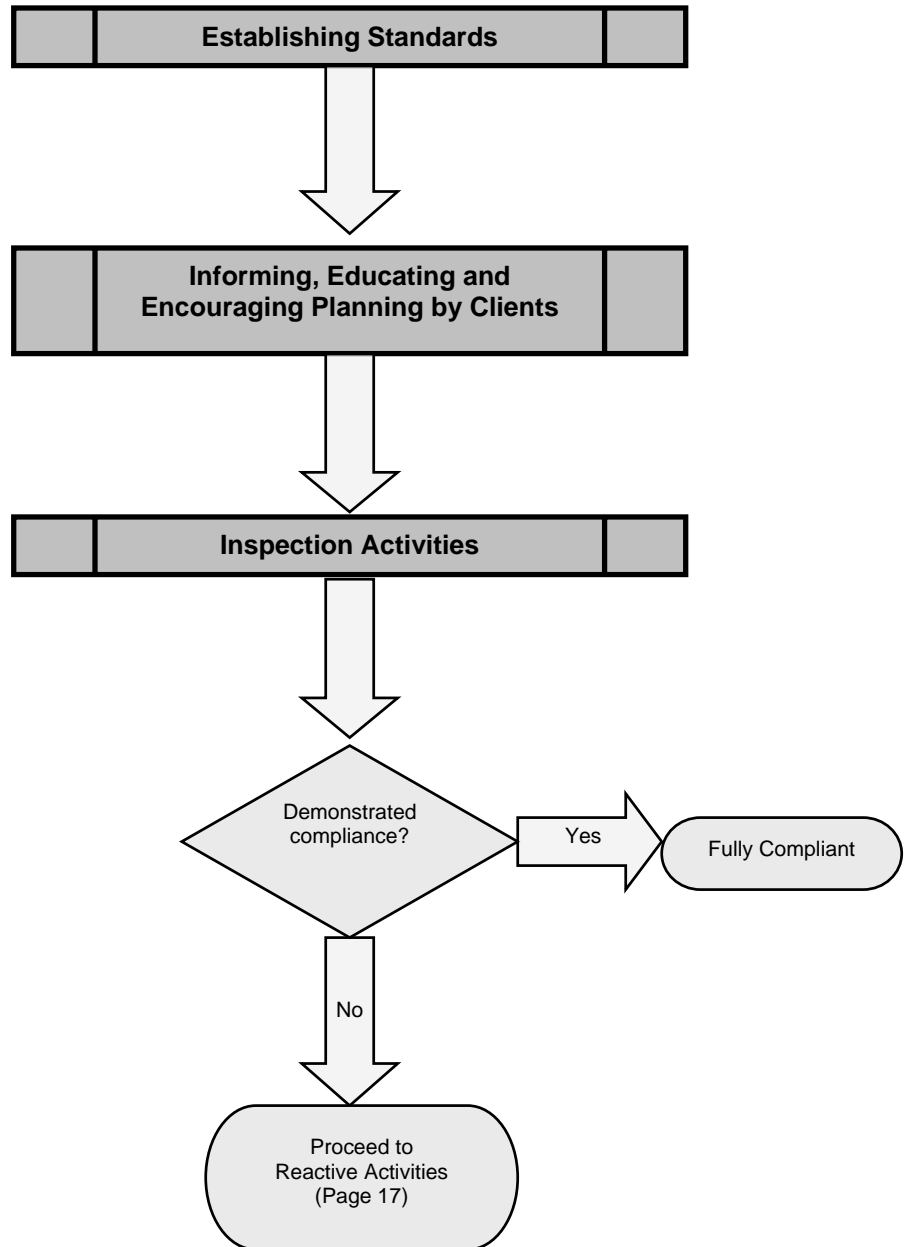
The courts have ruled that those individuals who choose to engage in a regulated activity have accepted certain terms and conditions. There is a burden of responsible conduct. Foremost among the terms and conditions is a requirement that the conduct of the regulated person complies with and maintains a certain minimum standard of care in compliance with the legislation.

There are appeal mechanisms available as authorized by the legislation. There are also appeal mechanisms available through the judicial system.

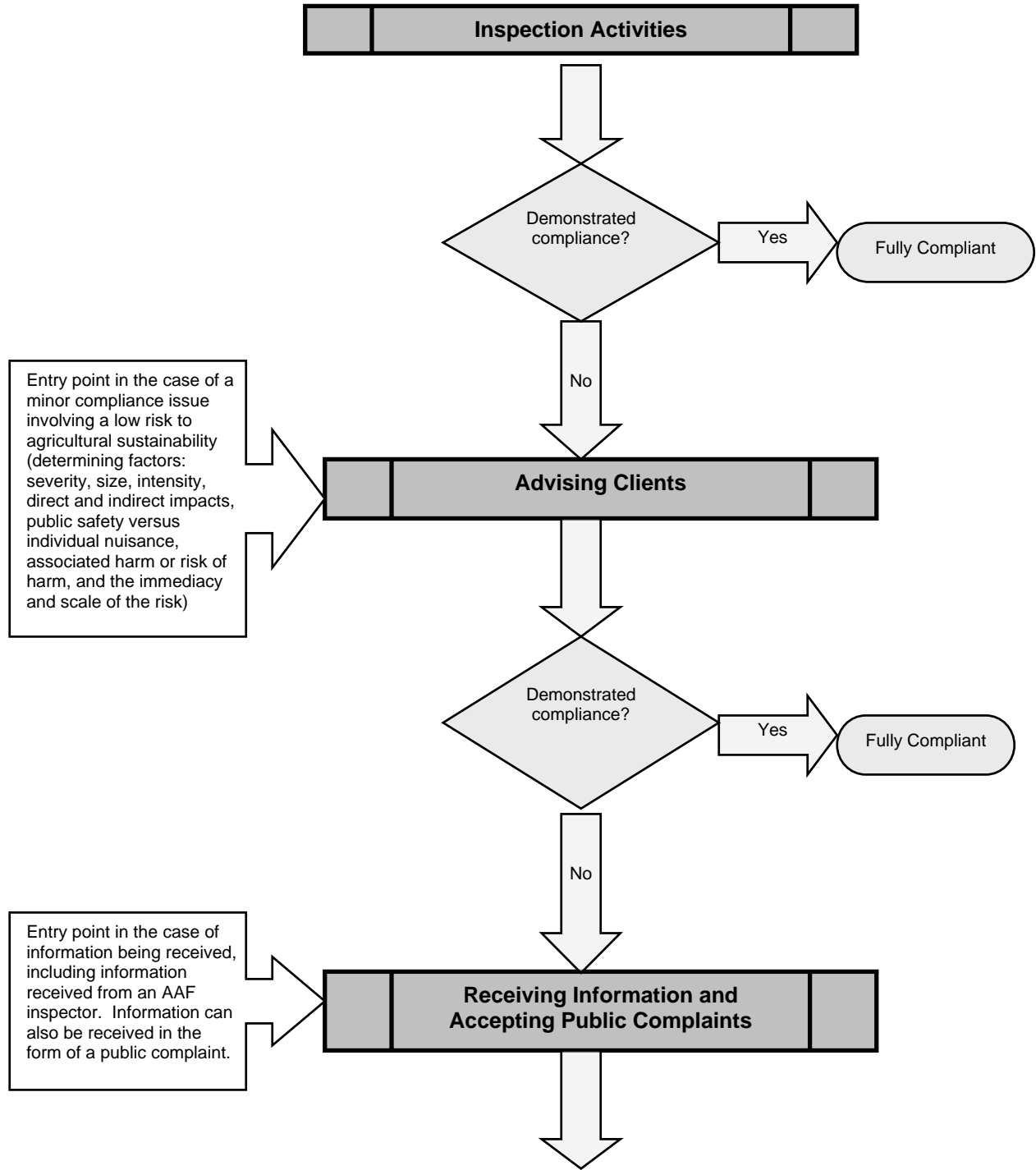
## Section 5: Compliance Flow Chart

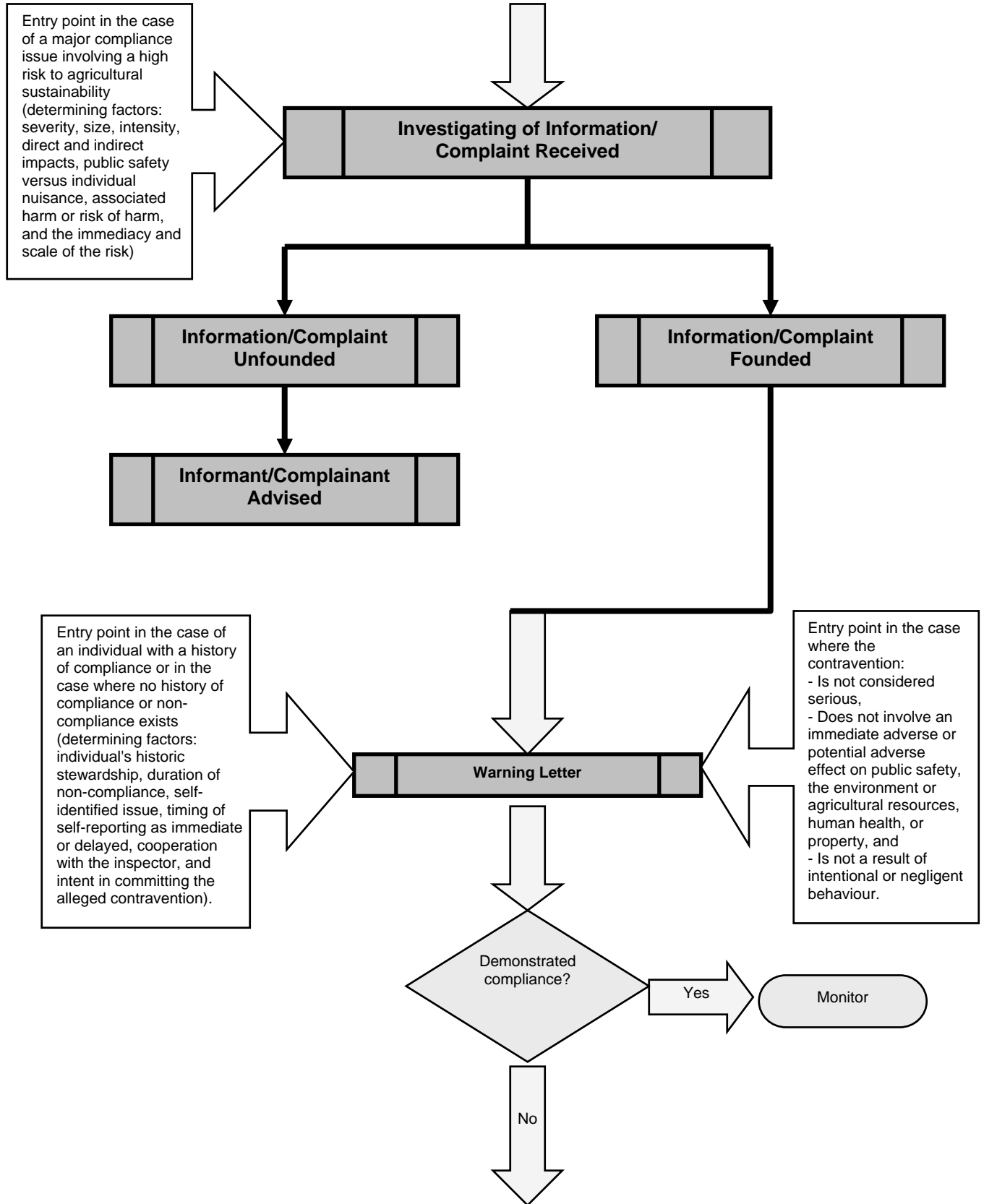


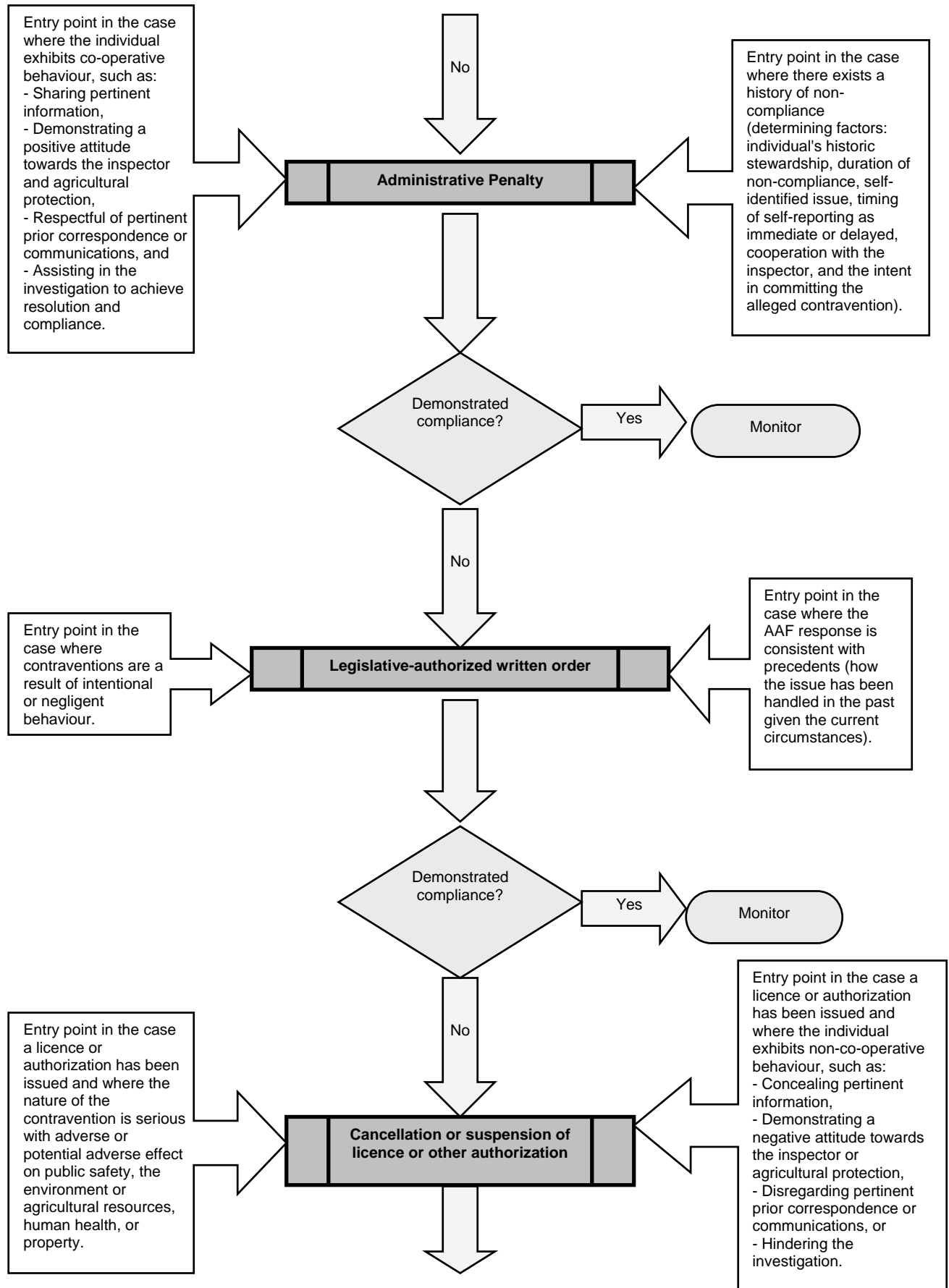
**Section 6: Proactive Activities – Compliance Flow Chart**

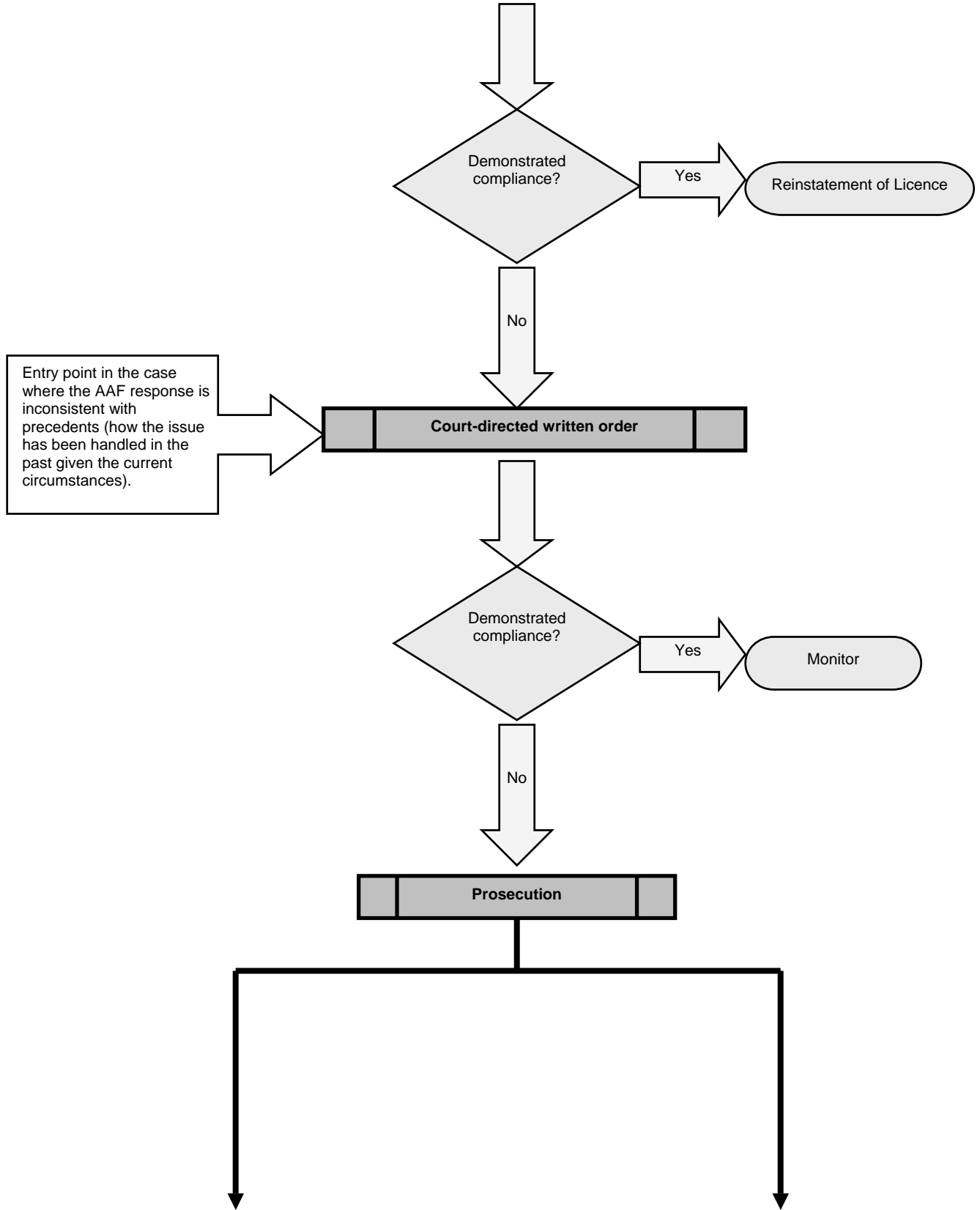


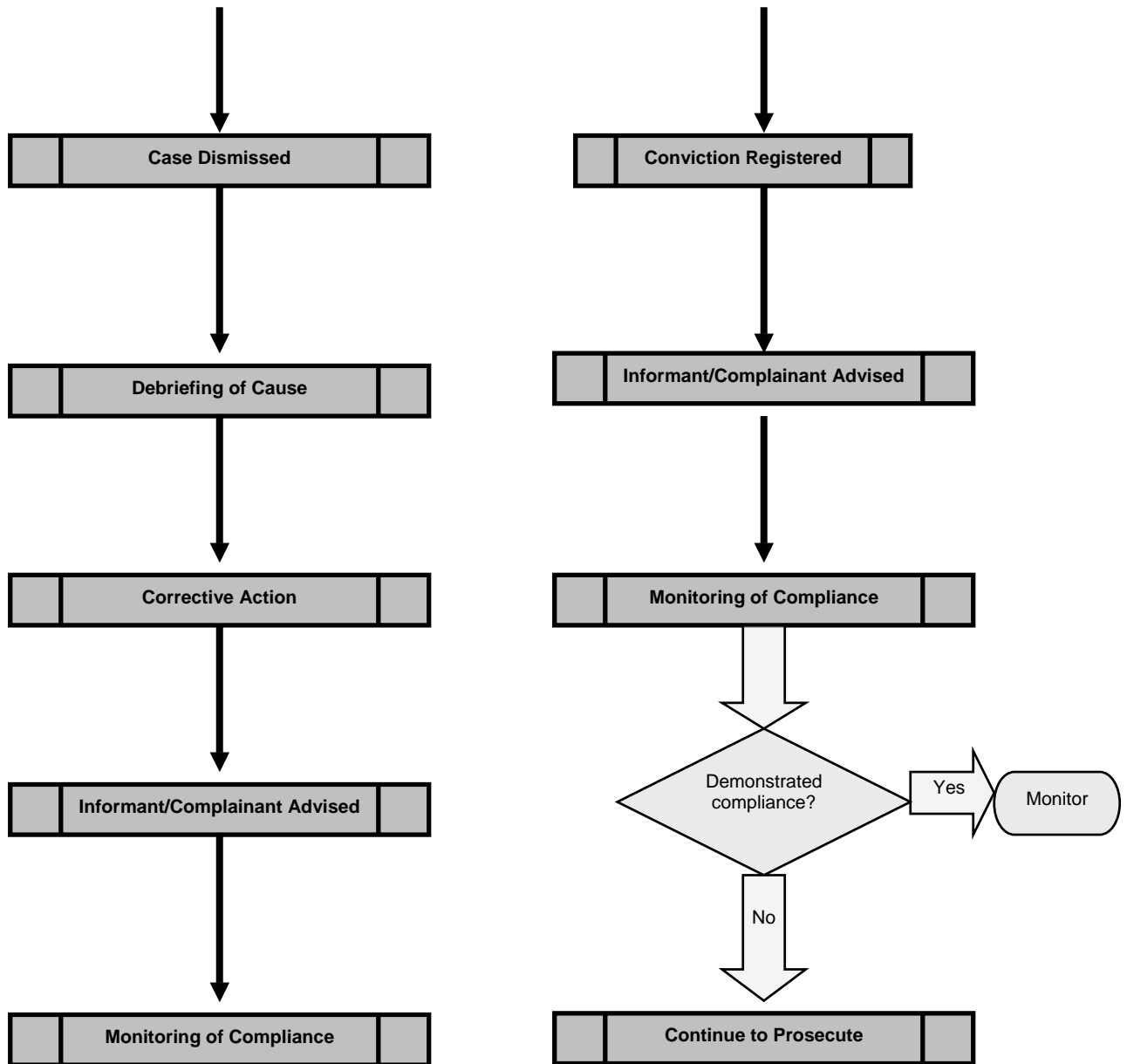
## Section 7: Reactive Activities – Compliance Flow Chart











## **Section 8: Conclusion**

The Compliance Principles support compliance by building capacity and supporting the willingness of clients to comply with the legislative requirements. ARD works in partnership with clients to achieve compliance. The purpose of the Compliance Principles is to outline the parameters of this partnership relationship. The progression of steps to achieve compliance exists to protect the public interest and attempt to resolve issues in a positive manner. Potential compliance issues are identified and addressed in a timely manner. Compliance to requirements is a shared responsibility and includes the activities of ARD, clients and other regulatory authorities. Albertans, as a democratic society established these requirements, as determined in the public interest. ARD will seek compliance to protect the public interest.