

21 September 2026

Dear

ATISN 27394

Thank you for your request which I received on 22 August. You asked for the information as listed at Annex 1.

Our response

Question 1:

In response to a request for support with Welsh language translation, the Welsh Government provided a Welsh language version of the Emergency Alert text to UK Government Cabinet Office.

Question 2, 3, 5, 6:

No recorded information held.

The Emergency Alert system is non-devolved, therefore its operation is solely a matter for the UK Government's Cabinet Office, rather than the Welsh Government. This includes the accessibility and languages in which the alerts are sent.

You can contact the Cabinet Office here: [Contact the Cabinet Office - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/contact-cabinet-office)

Question 4:

As above, the Emergency Alert system is non-devolved and owned by the UK Government. In relation to the use of the Emergency Alert system to date, the UK Government Cabinet Office has contacted the Welsh Government to inform it of the intended use of the Emergency Alert system in Wales. To date, the Welsh Government has supported the UK Government Cabinet Office with Welsh language translation of alerts intended for issue in Wales.

Question 7:

Emergency Alerts are a UK Government service owned and operated by the Cabinet Office, which is responsible for decisions relating to the system, including language arrangements. The UK Government is also responsible for complying with its own Welsh language obligations and has engaged directly with the Welsh Language Commissioner in respect of those arrangements.

Considering this, we are unclear what is meant by "consulted" in the context of your request and would be grateful if you could clarify the nature of the consultation or engagement you are seeking information about.

Questions 8, 9, 10:

In response to your questions on the Welsh Government approach to emergencies communications:

[Government Communications \(GC\)](#) is the professional body for communicators across the UK Civil Service, including the Welsh Government. Government Communications (GC) provides guidance for the conduct of government communication

across disciplines, including for crisis and emergency communication. The Welsh Government Communications Services adheres to the GC [STOP: crisis communications planning guide - Government Communications](#), which includes requirements for making communications accessible. The relevant extract from this guidance is included at Annex A below.

In addition to the STOP framework and to be used in conjunction with it, the Welsh Government has also produced its own guidance on accessible and inclusive communications guidance: *Communicating Using Accessible Formats guidance (Annex B, updated 2024)* and *Inclusive Communications Guidance (Annex C, issued 2024)* for Welsh Government communicators which apply across communications disciplines and situations (copies are attached). The development of this guidance included the involvement of internal and external organisations representing groups with protected characteristics, including disabled people. This wider guidance is published internally only for Welsh Government communicators.

Questions 11, 13, 14:

Monitoring practice, review, and reporting:

In recent times, the Covid 19 pandemic has been the greatest test of Government communications' ability to reach and connect with vulnerable and/or often excluded people and groups. During this time, Welsh Government Communications kept its approach under constant review and responded in a number of different ways, including setting the practice of including BSL interpretation at all Welsh Government press conferences. To capture accessibility learnings from the period of the pandemic, the *Communicating using accessible formats guidance* referenced above was created to bring together learning for application across our communications work.

The Covid 19 Inquiry is scrutinising Government practice throughout the pandemic, including Government communications. The Welsh Government provided evidence on its communications approach during the pandemic, including accessible communications, to the Covid 19 Inquiry (Annex D published here: [INQ000340123 - Witness Statement provided by Toby Rhys Mason on behalf of the Communications Divisi...](#)

In response to the recommendations from the Inquiry, Welsh Government Communications has been working on a Four-Nations basis with colleagues in UK Government Cabinet Office, Scottish Government, and the Northern Ireland Executive to agree a high-level Four Nations protocol for crisis and emergency communications co-ordination and delivery. This draft protocol includes accessibility and language requirements as key considerations for crisis and emergency communications. The protocol is due to be finalised shortly.

Question 15:

Scenarios and exercising:

During September 2025 – June 2026, the Welsh Government took part in the Tier 1 cross-UK pandemic preparedness exercise, EXERCISE PEGASUS. Public communications was a core part of the exercise and included injects and requirements related to accessible and inclusive communications. Relevant extracts from Welsh Government Communications advice papers during the exercise are included at Annex E to demonstrate the considerations being taken.

We expect the communications recommendations from this national exercise to highlight the importance of inclusive and accessible communications, with particular reference to digitally excluded groups and disabled people. On receipt of the published UK-wide evaluation report for this exercise and associated recommendations for government communications, the Welsh Government Communications Service will review its crisis and emergencies communications arrangements and guidance to staff. As part of this review work, we will conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. We expect the EXERCISE PEGASUS evaluation report to be published later this year.

Question 12 and 16:

Engagement:

The Welsh Government has not conducted engagement dedicated to the development or review of our current approach to emergency public communications with disabled people, disabled people's organisations, or disability charities.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

or e-mail: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Website: www.ico.org.uk

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely

Annex 1

1. Did the Welsh Government draft, translate, review, approve or otherwise contribute to the Welsh language text of the Emergency Alert issued to Wales on 14 August 2026 in connection with wildfire risk? Please state the nature of any involvement.

2. If the Welsh Government had any such involvement, please provide any record of consideration given, in the course of that involvement, to the needs of disabled recipients. This includes recipients who do not read Welsh and who have cognitive impairment, learning disability, acquired brain injury, dementia, or sensory processing differences.

3. Please state whether the Welsh Government considers the general duty at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, or the specific duties contained in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, to have been engaged by any such involvement, and provide any legal or policy position held on that question.
UK-wide alerts reaching Wales

4. Where a UK-wide emergency alert or national public warning is issued to recipients in Wales, does the Welsh Government agree to, facilitate, or receive prior notification of that issue? Please describe any established arrangement.

5. Please provide any record of the Welsh Government satisfying itself, before such an alert reaches recipients in Wales, that the general duty at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 has been complied with in relation to that alert, and in particular in relation to disabled recipients.

6. Please state whether the Welsh Government considers the specific duties contained in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 to be engaged in those circumstances, and provide any legal or policy position held on that question.

7. Has the Welsh Government, or its Welsh Language Division, at any time been consulted by the Cabinet Office or any other UK Government department on language arrangements for Emergency Alerts issued to Wales? If so, please provide any record of that consultation.

Welsh Government's own emergency communications

8. Does the Welsh Government hold any record of a standing mechanism, process or requirement by which the needs of disabled people are considered in the preparation of its own emergency public communications, and in advice or recommendations prepared for Welsh Ministers in relation to civil contingencies?

9. If such a mechanism exists, please provide any document describing it, including any template, checklist, guidance, standing instruction or terms of reference, and state when it was introduced and when it was last reviewed.

10. If no such mechanism exists, please confirm that none is held.

Arrangements under the specific duties

11. Please provide any record of the arrangements made by the Welsh Government under regulation 8(1) of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 as they apply to emergency public communications and civil contingencies.

12. Please provide any record of compliance with the engagement provisions in regulation 5 of those Regulations in relation to any assessment carried out under regulation 8 concerning emergency public communications.

13. Please state when the arrangements referred to in question 11 were last reviewed in accordance with regulation 13 of those Regulations.

14. Please provide any report published under regulation 8(1)(d) of those Regulations in relation to emergency public communications or civil contingencies.
Contingency planning and engagement

15. Please provide any record of consideration given, in contingency planning, scenario work or exercising, to what steps should or could be taken to avoid disadvantage to disabled people where rapid public emergency communications are required. This includes both national communications and communications directed at localised events. Where no conclusions were reached, please provide any record of options, possibilities or approaches that were discussed or examined without conclusion.

16. Please provide any record of engagement with disabled people, disabled people's organisations, or disability charities in the development or review of the Welsh Government's approach to emergency public communications.

Annex A

Extract from Government Communication STOP: crisis communications planning guide ([STOP: crisis communications planning guide - Government Communications](#))

“Making communications accessible

During crises, people with additional needs may be extremely vulnerable. It’s critical you consider them in your communications.

Consider from the start how you will ensure your communications are inclusive and accessible, and follow relevant legislation such as the [Equality Act 2010](#), [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) and [British Sign Language Act 2022](#). This may also include, for example, providing British Sign Language (BSL) translations of critical information, alternative formats such as Easy Read, and working closely with stakeholders, partners and influencers.

Read [our approach to inclusive and accessible communications](#) to learn more about the standards all government communications must meet. This guidance includes links to practical tools and templates to help you design your content for different audiences, so that it has a wider and more effective impact.

You may need to produce communications quickly during a crisis, and in these circumstances it may be challenging to produce BSL translations and alternative versions of materials at the same time. You should continue to engage all of your key stakeholders regularly and ensure all your initial communications are as accessible as possible. Where appropriate, for communications critical to your audience, for example on health advice, you should commit to producing BSL translations as a priority, and other required formats when circumstances allow, and within a feasible time frame. Wherever possible, tell your audience when the BSL translation will be available. You may also need to have a plan for interpreting and translating urgent communications.

Finally, you should also consider when it is important to translate your messages into other languages, depending on the needs of your audience.”

Annex B (attached)

Communicating using accessible formats guidance

Annex C (attached)

Inclusive Communications Guidance

Annex D

Welsh Government Communications evidence to Covid 19 Inquiry: [INQ000340123 - Witness Statement provided by Toby Rhys Mason on behalf of the Communications Divisi...](#)

Annex E

Extract from Welsh Government Communications briefing to Welsh Government Cabinet during EXERCISE PEGASUS (October 2025)

(Extract: 09 October 2025)

“Accessibility and equity

It is vital that everyone in Wales is able to receive clear information about the virus and the measures being taken to keep them safe. Communications – with input from colleagues – will make rapid decisions on which audiences and channels would need alternative or accessible approaches and content. This would include ensuring a mix of offline and non-digital channels. We would also work with specialist agencies, freelancers and networks to support this (e.g. EYST, Welsh Refugee Council, Pride Cymru, Stonewall, Disability Equality Forum, Wales Race Forum). We will provide key core content in these formats:

- Bilingually
- Ethnic minority languages such as Arabic, Bengali, Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, Dari, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Hungarian, Latvian, Nepali, Pashto, Polish, Romanian, Somali, Ukrainian, Urdu
- Easy read
- British Sign Language
- Braille
- Audio”

(Extract: 31 October 2025)

“Cross-cutting considerations: All options except Option 1 assume baseline measures including working from home guidance, face coverings, and economic support. Communications must address significant inequality implications, particularly for lower-income workers, minority ethnic groups, disabled workers, and the self-employed who are disproportionately affected by closures. All options face the challenge of maintaining public trust through sustained uncertainty and difficult trade-offs between health, education, and economic priorities.”

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