

From: **Name Redacted** Critical
Sectors Security and Resilience,
Civil Contingencies Secretariat
Tel: **Irrelevant & Sensitive**
Date: 10 January 2019

CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER, CABINET OFFICE

DELIVERY OF NSC (THRC) PROGRAMMES

Issue:

1. Delivery of work programmes commissioned by NSC (THRC) on pandemic influenza, **Irrelevant & Sensitive** are expected to be affected by the step-up in planning for a no-deal exit from the European Union.

Recommendations:

2. That you agree:
 - That the significant majority of the pandemic influenza and **Irrelevant & Sensitive** **Irrelevant & Sensitive** due to report back to NSC (THRC) in March and February 2019 respectively, are paused until the completion of OPERATION YELLOWHAMMER.
 - That the **Irrelevant & Sensitive** **Irrelevant & Sensitive** is continued in part over the period of OPERATION YELLOWHAMMER, but that the pace at which actions will be taken forward is moderated.

Timing:

3. Routine. Further to your views, the Civil Contingencies Secretariat will write at official level to NSC (THRC)(O) to inform members of the revised work programme.

Current NSC (THRC) Work Programmes:

4. The National Security Council sub-committee on Threats, Hazards, Resilience and Contingencies (NSC(THRC)), which you Chair, sets the overall strategic direction and priorities for ensuring the UK's resilience and security to disruptive threats and hazards. In addition to its recent work on OPERATION YELLOWHAMMER, NSC(THRC) currently oversees three cross-government work programmes, which are due to report back to the committee over the course of 2019.
5. The Pandemic Influenza work programme was commissioned by NSC(THRC) in February 2017, to increase our readiness for a widespread outbreak of influenza in the UK, assessed as the UK's biggest domestic risk in the 2017 National Risk Assessment. NSC(THRC) received a written update on the work programme in April 2018. The second year's work programme is currently ongoing, jointly led by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Cabinet Office's Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS). It is due to complete its work in March 2019.

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Impact of OPERATION YELLOWHAMMER:

8. The Government's decision in December 2018 to step up contingency planning for a no-deal Exit from the EU (known as OPERATION YELLOWHAMMER) is placing unprecedented resource pressure on both Lead Government Departments and the Civil Contingencies Secretariat, which is coordinating OPERATION YELLOWHAMMER across Government. A number of Departmental teams have already been re-tasked, with the majority expected to follow over the coming weeks. CCS is also prioritising OPERATION YELLOWHAMMER work, and identifying non-time critical work which can be paused accordingly.

9. In order to enable Departments and CCS to devote sufficient resources to OPERATION YELLOWHAMMER, we propose largely pausing work across Government on two of the NSC(THRC) work programmes – pandemic influenza and **Irrelevant & Sensitive** - though we propose to 'protect' and keep working at official level on the strands within these programmes which are time-critical or of highest priority.

10. In respect of the pandemic influenza programme, 'protected work' would consist of two workstreams: the draft Pandemic Flu Bill and the Excess Deaths Framework. This is due to their priority level and the near-end date of the excess deaths workstream. **Irrelevant & Sensitive**

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