



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

A Report by Internal Audit Services

# Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Response

May 2018

Assurance Rating				
	<b>Reasonable Assurance:</b> Management can take reasonable assurance that arrangements to secure governance, risk management and internal control within those areas under review are suitably designed and applied effectively. Some matters require management attention in control design or compliance with moderate risk exposure until resolved.			

Observations	Fundamental	Significant	Merits Attention
	0	4	2
	Immediate remedial action required	Requires remedial action as soon as possible.	Would benefit from improved control

Portfolio:	EPS
Audit Manager:	Name Redacted
Auditors:	
Report No:	193 : 17/18
File Reference:	qA1309671

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

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- 1.1 The audit of Emergency Planning and Preparedness was identified as part of the 2017/18 audit plan, as agreed by the EPS Audit and Risk Committee. This area was previously audited in 2007 (Planning and Response to Civil Emergencies), 2010 (Swine Flu Pandemic) and 2014 (Resilience in Welsh Government).
- 1.2 The Welsh Government (WG) Resilience Team sits in the Community Safety Division and is responsible for co-ordinating resilience activity corporately for the WG as a whole and for public services at an all Wales level, among other things, making effective links between local responders and the UK Government in the event of a civil contingency situation.
- 1.3 The team also has responsibility for the co-ordination of planning, exercising, preparedness and response activities across WG through the Civil Contingencies Group (CCG) and Resilience Steering Group (RSG). In addition to the central Resilience Team, there is a network of local leads in WG with responsibility for resilience activities specific to their policy areas. The team supports the Wales Resilience Forum, the extensive membership of which provides the First Minister with assurance on Wales' readiness.
- 1.4 The Resilience Team leads on the operation of the Emergency Co-ordination Centre (Wales) ECC(W). The ECC (W)'s role is critical to gathering information and providing Welsh Ministers and the UK Government with a consistent, timely and quality flow of data as to the implications of emergencies in Wales as they develop and progress. The decision on whether to activate the ECC(W) will depend upon the nature and extent of any emergency in, or affecting, Wales and will generally be taken following discussion between the relevant policy Division and the Resilience Team.
- 1.5 Following a Wales Audit Report in 2012, the First Minister has agreed to the transfer of executive functions supporting Part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) through the Wales Act 2017. This is likely to take place by June 2018. This will give Welsh Ministers brand new powers to exercise additional functions including:
- Issuing guidance in relation to the civil contingency duties;
  - monitoring devolved responders and requiring them to produce information about how they have complied with their duties under Part 1 of the Act; and
  - bringing enforcement proceedings in respect of a failure by a devolved responder to comply with their duties under the Act.
- 1.6 With these functions comes the responsibility (and accountability) for the Welsh Ministers to ensure responders are fully prepared to fulfil their roles in the event of an emergency.
- 1.7 The budget for resourcing the Resilience Team is mainly the Direct Running Costs and is included with the overall budget for EPS. There are frequent requirements for additional resources and these are managed on an ad-hoc basis.

- 3.5 There is a variety of training mechanisms in place for volunteers, co-ordinated by the Resilience Team. There is no minimum training programme in place and, as a result, the Resilience Team is unable to mandate the uptake of the provision to prepare volunteers fully. We understand a new approach to train and utilise volunteers is being developed by the Resilience Team and have made some suggestions about what could be considered for development going forward.
- 3.6 Lessons learnt from exercises and real events are captured by the Resilience Team in a central log following major events and exercises which has contributed to the improvement of resilience processes and procedures. In our view, the inclusion of sector specific lessons and a robust follow up process will enhance learning further.
- 3.7 Resource requirements have been identified by the Resilience Team to be able to carry out the new duties and activities required to support Ministers' responsibilities. The First Minister wrote to the UK Government on a number of occasions outlining the case for a transfer of resources associated with delivering the new functions but this was declined. Resources must therefore be found from within the Welsh Government.
- 3.8 WG officials have been liaising with HR and Finance colleagues and a minute was submitted to the Permanent Secretary in February 2018 to consider the case for additional resources. Whilst we can be assured the Resilience Team has assessed their forward needs, final decisions about the level of additional resources now rests elsewhere. Until the outcome is known, the team has judged its current capacity to be insufficient to take on the new functions.
- 3.9 Management has accepted all of the observations made in our report and we are content with their proposed action plan and the proposed timescales to implement recommendations (see section 5). The EPS Operations Group will undertake the follow-up of the actions and report this to the EPSG Audit and Risk Committee.

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#### 4 AUDIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT (ANA)

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- 4.1 The ANA for this area (see Annex 2) previously scored as 13 (Medium Risk) following a Reasonable Assurance report (RN2014). Our revised rating of risk for the area going forward is 13 (Medium) based on the scores given below. The control score has been reduced to reflect the assurances given in this report. The inherent score has increased to 5 to take into consideration the additional responsibilities from the transfer of functions.

Revised Audit Needs Assessment	Financial	Reputational	Control	Inherent	Total
	2	4	2	5	13