

Y Grŵp Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Education and Public Services Group



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

21 November 2019

Local Resilience Forum Chairs

By e-mail

Dear Colleagues

PREPARING FOR EXITING THE EU – CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS FOR OPERATION YELLOWHAMMER

As of 28 October, we stood down the 24/7 Operation Yellowhammer (YH) 2 arrangements.

Given the ongoing uncertainty, our current approach is to maintain operational planning for the possibility of exiting the EU without a deal on 31 January 2020. We are currently working to re-establish our Operation YH 3 arrangements to be partially operational by mid-January and fully operational from the end of January. We will ensure we have strong situational awareness arrangements in place combined with timely and accurate information flows to enable rapid, expert decision-making.

In my letter of 26 September, I highlighted that we would be building our planning arrangements around four key areas: resourcing; risk and planning activities; training and exercising; and Command, Control and Co-ordination (C3). In re-establishing arrangements we will continue to plan and work around these areas.

Considerable work was undertaken to recruit and train staff to help ensure the Emergency Co-ordination Centre (Wales) (ECC(W)) was able to fulfil its role in Operation YH 2. There was daily engagement with the Whitehall YH structure and the wider developments of the C3 arrangements.

The series of exercises we participated in with Whitehall provided us with an opportunity to test the processes with the LRFs in Wales. Our engagement, and the work on developing and testing the C3 structure and situation process, was discussed at the LRF workshop in Carmarthen on 4 October. We also held meetings with senior officers from key agencies to seek further assurance on EU Exit preparedness.

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



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This C3 structure will be re-established if the risk of leaving the EU with no deal remains and so we stand up again for Operation YH 3 in January.

The UK Cabinet Office provided updated, high level YH planning assumptions. Whilst access to these assumptions remains tightly controlled, we have discussed them with the Wales Risk Group who reviewed and updated the Leaving the EU Risk Assessment. The review was completed under the guidance of the Chair of the Wales Risk Group, with the Chairs of LRF Risk Groups from across Wales lending their expertise. The assessment is now available on Resilience Direct for use by individual LRFs to support Brexit planning locally.

As Operation YH 3 preparations continue we have limited capacity to carry out business as usual at the moment, however, my Resilience Team endeavours to respond and undertake priority work with LRF and UK partners. For example, following the tragic lorry incident that occurred in Essex in October, discussions are currently underway to plan and schedule a workshop exercise to consider the strategic and tactical responses to such a scenario. This is scheduled to take place on 10 January 2020 and further details and formal invitations will be released shortly.

The YH timetable will be kept under review based on possible amendments at the London side but we will keep you informed of any potential changes.

While a risk of a no deal Brexit remains, we must continue our planning to ensure we are prepared for that possible eventuality and we will continue to seek your support in those preparations and your help with implementing situational awareness processes; identifying issues and concerns; and devising responses. In order to be ready, our planning activity must be maintained.

The Resilience Team will provide more details of our planning arrangements in due course, but if you have any issues you would like to raise with us at this stage, please contact the Team on emergencies.security@gov.wales

Yours sincerely,

Personal Data

REG KILPATRICK
DIRECTOR FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT