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The RT Hon. Baroness Heather Hallett DBE
UK Covid-19 Inquiry

Dear Baroness Hallett,

I am pleased to be able to write to you to confirm that Recommendations 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10 of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry Module 1 Report, in so far as they relate to Scottish Government commitments, have been delivered.

The Scottish Government published our response to the UK Covid-19 Inquiry Module 1 Report, 'Resilience and Preparedness' on 16 January 2025. I have outlined below the relevant Scottish Government commitments in response to this report and the work we have undertaken to fulfil these recommendations.

Recommendation 3

To address Recommendation 3, the Scottish Government committed to completing a review and implementation of improvements related to risk assessment by the end of 2025.

I am pleased to confirm that the Scottish Government has completed its review and is well underway with this workstream for the next iteration of the Scottish Risk Assessment (SRA). The updated SRA will contain all risks relevant to Scotland in a single document moving away from using both the UK Government's National Security Risk Assessment and the SRA as a supplement.

Scottish Government officials have set up a Scottish Risk Assessment Group (SRAG), comprised of responders, subject matter experts, and policy officials to review risks and adapt them for Scotland where required. Through this process, the SRAG will consider how specific risks can make people vulnerable, to assist planners to improve their approach to vulnerability in emergency planning.

This approach will ensure that risk assessment is tailored to the Scottish context and take into account additional risks that are specific to Scotland.

Recommendation 4

In the Scottish Government's initial response to recommendation 4, we committed to a first version of the core Concept of Operations (CONOPS) for the Scottish Government Resilience Room (SGORR) being completed by end of July 2025.

I am pleased to advise that the Scottish Government completed the first version of the core CONOPS for SGORR by the end of July 2025. It will be subject to regular reviews and adaptations to ensure continued fitness for purpose and additions of scenario-specific plans developed with consideration of the risk landscape. The Scottish Government also fed into the UK Government's Amber Book (national framework for crisis response, establishes roles and responsibilities) ahead of its publication on 28 April 2025, including the annex which focuses on four nations working and links between devolved governments and the UK Government during response.

Work is also currently underway to consider a Scottish Resilience Strategy.

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Recommendation 5

In response to recommendation 5, the Scottish Government and partners committed to agree a framework setting out the processes for how analytical resource across the Scottish Government can be rapidly redeployed to respond to a future pandemic supporting the timely collection, analysis, sharing and use of required data and associated research and modelling by summer 2025.

The Analytical Framework has been developed and tested during Exercise Pegasus, and is now an operational working document. While lessons from the formal evaluation of Exercise Pegasus will inform refinement of the framework, it will also be kept under review through the Data and Analysis for Crisis Delivery Group to ensure continued fitness for purpose and to reflect developments in analytical capability and improvements in pandemic-relevant data and evidence.

Forming part of the framework, a Memorandum of Understanding, outlining mechanisms to enable rapid sharing of data and analysis across the four nations in preparation for, or during, a future crisis has been signed by Cabinet Office and devolved governments, after agreement by Scottish Government Ministers.

Recommendation 6

To fulfil Recommendation 6, the Scottish Government committed to participating in the UK-wide Tier 1 Pandemic Exercise during autumn 2025 (Exercise Pegasus).

Exercise Pegasus was delivered in September-October 2025 across three consecutive phases, with the Scottish Government fully engaged. The Scottish Government has commenced a full process of review, evaluation, and debriefing in order to capture recommendations, both for the improvement of future exercising as well as response to emerging pandemic.

The Scottish Government is committed to supporting future UK-wide exercises and taking part when appropriate.

Recommendation 10

The Scottish Government recognised that recommendation 10 is to be led by the UK Government, and we committed to working with the UK Government and the other devolved governments to identify an appropriate mechanism to implement this recommendation.

Following four nations engagement, the Scottish Government took part in the pilot process led by the UK Government in December 2025. The Scottish Government will continue to engage with the UK Government and devolved governments.

For the reasons outlined above, I therefore consider these recommendations to be closed.

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