



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

Legal Aid Agency's Welsh Language Scheme – The Welsh Language Commissioner's Response to the 2012-14 Annual Monitoring Report



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1 Baseline Information

Baseline Information		Further comment
Approval date of Legal Services Commission's Welsh Language Scheme	08/06/2009	
Senior Officer responsible for the implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme	Paul Davies Regional Director	
Anticipated date of receipt of Annual Monitoring Report	18/07/2014	The report was received on 11/07/14

2 Standard Statement

2.1 The principal aim of the Welsh Language Commissioner (the Commissioner) is to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh. This entails raising awareness of the official status of the Welsh language in Wales and imposing standards on organizations. This, in turn, will lead to the establishment of rights for Welsh speakers.

2.1.1 Two principles underpin the Commissioner's work:

- In Wales, the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language
- Persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so.

2.1.2 In due course, secondary legislation will introduce new powers allowing the setting and imposing of standards on organizations. Until then, the Commissioner will continue to inspect statutory Welsh language schemes through the powers inherited under the Welsh Language Act 1993.

2.1.3 The Welsh Language Commissioner may investigate failure to implement a language scheme, allegations of interference with individuals' freedom to use Welsh in Wales and, in future, complaints regarding the failure of organizations to meet standards.

2.1.4 The Welsh Language Commissioner will be able to regulate organizations firmly and consistently by means of standards, and may decide to impose a civil penalty on an organization if it does not comply with a relevant requirement.

2.2 Annual Monitoring Reports

2.2.1 Language Schemes contain a commitment to prepare and present an annual monitoring report. To all intents, an Annual Monitoring Report is a self-assessment. In responding to them, the Welsh Language Commissioner will expect organizations to testify that they are complying with their language schemes.

2.2.2 With regard to Language Schemes, the Commissioner's practice will be to highlight risks and influence performance with a view to avoiding failure.

2.2.3 All responses to annual monitoring reports are published with a view to ensuring transparency and easy access to information on performance.

3 Comments on performance

Comments on performance		Action required
New policies and programmes	The monitoring report for 2012-13 noted problems with publicising bilingual forms at the same time as English forms. There is no reference to this in the monitoring report for 2013-14.	Please confirm whether these problems are continuing? If they are, could you please confirm the causes of these problems?
Websites and Internet	We note that the content of your website has moved to Justice.gov.uk website, with a further intention to move to the gov.uk website. It is important to ensure that during a period of change that the content of the website will continue to comply with the commitments set out in the language scheme.	
Mainstreaming the Welsh language	We also note that the responsibility for the language scheme is transferring to the Central Governance team.	We would ask you to submit evidence in the next monitoring report to confirm how this change has given more opportunity to consider Welsh language requirements sooner, in planning and implementing new policies and projects.

4 Summary

Further information Please confirm whether the problems with publicising bilingual forms at the same time as English forms are continuing? If they are, could you please confirm the causes of these problems?

Within 20 working days

Submit evidence to confirm how the change in responsibility for the language scheme has given more opportunity to consider Welsh language requirements sooner, in planning and implementing new policies and projects.

Next monitoring report