

The Revised MOD Welsh Language Scheme

Introduction

This scheme has been prepared in accordance with section 21(3) of the Welsh Language Act 1993 which states that the MOD must have regard for the Welsh Language Board's (WLB) guidelines and send its scheme to the WLB for approval. The WLB fully endorsed the scheme in June 1999 and we are now asking for your comments on this revised version. The WLB was established by the Act as the Government's authority overseeing implementation of the scheme.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has adopted the principle that in the conduct of its business with the public in Wales, it will treat the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality. This Scheme sets out how the Ministry of Defence will give effect to that principle. The Scheme applies equally to the Ministry of Defence Headquarters, its agencies and trading funds, and the Armed Forces. It should be noted that in drawing up the measures set out in the Scheme, the MOD has taken into account budgetary and resource limitations.

1.2 This Scheme will only be altered with the agreement of both the Ministry of Defence and the Welsh Language Board.

1.3 In this scheme, the term **public** means individuals, legal persons and corporate bodies. It includes the public as a whole, or a section of the public, as well as individual members of the public. The term includes voluntary organisations and charities. Directors and others representing limited companies are also within the meaning of the term 'public'. It does not, however, include persons who are acting in a capacity which is representative of the Crown, Government or the State or, where appropriate, contractor personnel providing a service on behalf of the MOD. Consequently, persons who fulfil official functions of a public nature, even though they are legal persons, do not come within the meaning of the word *public* when they are fulfilling those official functions.

1.4 Further information about the scope and purpose of Welsh language schemes can be found in the Welsh Language Board's guidelines (<http://www.bwrdd-yr-iaith.org.uk/>).

The Ministry of Defence

1.5 The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is the largest Department of State, employing approximately 68,300 civilian personnel and some 190,400 Service personnel throughout the world.

1.6 The MOD's purpose is to define the strategy and maximise, within the resources allocated, the defence capability required to:

- deter any threat to, and if necessary defend, the freedom and integrity of the United Kingdom and its dependent territories, including by providing support as necessary for the civil authority in countering terrorism;

- contribute to the promotion of the UK's wider security interests, including the protection and enhancement of freedom and democratic institutions, and the promotion of free trade;

and thus to promote peace and act as a force for good, to help maximise the UK's international prestige and influence.

1.7 The Ministry of Defence has a major presence in Wales, with a number of military units, central divisions and agencies being based or represented in the Principality. However, only a small proportion of its work involves the provision of services to the public in Wales.

2. General Awareness

Position

2.1. The Welsh Language Scheme is a statutory document. Compliance is monitored by the Welsh Language Board.

2.2. Readers should understand the Welsh Language Scheme in the context of the following pointers.

As well as those located in Wales, the Welsh Language Scheme is relevant for personnel currently located outside Wales but who are involved in areas of work that are of particular interest to the people of Wales (for example low flying).

With regard to dealings with the public in Wales, English and Welsh are considered equal and therefore have the same level of prominence and importance in all aspects save the exceptions outlined in this document

Raising Awareness

2.3. Awareness will be raised by including information about the Welsh Language Scheme regularly in MOD internal publications and on the MOD's intranet. This will be done on a half-yearly basis or as often as practicable.

2.4. Upon employment, employees in relevant areas will have information about the Welsh Language Scheme included in their starter packs. This should include a bullet point breakdown of the main aspects of the Welsh Language Scheme and contact details of the Welsh Language Board. This will ensure continuity during turn-over of staff.

2.5 The content of the MOD Welsh Language Scheme will be publicised within the Department, and guidance made available by means of Defence Instruction Notices and Personnel Instructions to civilian and Service personnel involved in policy planning and development.

Funding

2.6 Individual budgetary areas will be responsible for funding the costs of compliance with the Welsh Language Scheme from within their existing resources.

3. Service Planning and Delivery

Policies and initiatives

3.1 Our policies, initiatives and services will be consistent with this scheme. They will support the use of Welsh and will, whenever possible, help the public in Wales use Welsh as part of their day to day lives, should they so wish.

3.2 The MOD will ensure that in introducing new policies and services which will affect the public in Wales, early consideration will be given to the need to provide for the use of the Welsh language. In this way new policy will move the Department closer to implementing language equality in its dealings with the public at every opportunity.

3.3 It is the MOD's aim that new policies and initiatives should be consistent with this Welsh Language Scheme. The MOD will monitor new policies and initiatives relevant to the Scheme and, as they are developed, will apply the measures contained in this Scheme to them. The MOD will consult with the Welsh Language Board in advance regarding proposals which might affect the Scheme.

3.4 The MOD will ensure, whenever possible, that new primary and secondary legislation will support the use of the Welsh language in Wales.

Delivery of service

3.5 Service provision by the MOD to the public in Wales will be delivered in accordance with the principles set out in this Scheme in sections 4-6.

3.6 Our normal practice will be to ensure that our services are available to the public in Wales in Welsh. We will let the public know when services are available in Welsh.

3.7 The approach by each division will depend greatly on its size, the amount and nature of its contact with the public and the service being delivered. However, resources can be used flexibly between divisions in order to meet the Scheme's commitments.

Our Agencies

3.8 We will ensure that Agencies of the MOD operate in accordance with our Scheme. Where the Agency wishes to do so, they may prepare their own Scheme in conjunction with the Welsh Language Board.

Standards of service

3.9 The Department will ensure that services delivered to the public in the Welsh language will be of an equally high standard to those delivered in English in accordance with the principles in this Scheme. Arrangements to monitor and review standards of service provision will ensure that the quality of service provision,

whether in Welsh or English, is maintained consistently throughout the Ministry of Defence.

4. Dealing with the Welsh Speaking Public

Written correspondence

4.1 Members of the public are welcome to correspond with the Ministry of Defence in English or Welsh. Letters received in Welsh will receive a written reply in Welsh (if a reply is required).

4.2 The Service First (formerly Citizen's Charter) target of 20 working days for reply will apply to letters received in Welsh. As with communication in English, a holding reply will be sent in the appropriate language if this target is unlikely to be met.

4.3 Any individual or organisation who expresses a preference to conduct their business in Welsh will receive future correspondence in Welsh. The MOD will initiate correspondence in Welsh with an individual or organisation known to prefer that language.

4.4 Where a letter directed at multiple individuals or organisations in Wales includes addressees whose language preference may not be English, the letter will be bilingual, or if necessary be sent in separate English and Welsh versions. This includes circular and standard letters.

4.5 If the Welsh and English versions of any correspondence have to be published separately, our standard practice will be to ensure that both versions are available at the same time.

4.6 Enclosures sent with bilingual letters will be bilingual, when available and enclosures sent with Welsh letters will be Welsh or bilingual, when available.

4.7 The provisions above for written correspondence in Welsh will apply equally to electronic correspondence. All correspondence received by e-mail in Welsh will be replied to in Welsh. All hard-copy Welsh correspondence issued by the Department will be signed.

4.8 When written correspondence of a complex legal or technical nature is received in Welsh, whether such correspondence is by letter or is in the form of any electronic communication, then the MOD may, when responding to such correspondence in Welsh, provide the English language version of the response from which the translation into Welsh was made.

Telephone communication

4.9 Details of the future of the MOD Welsh helpline are to be confirmed. This will form part of the Welsh language scheme action plan which is agreed with the Welsh Language Board.

4.10. Any change to the helpline will be discussed with the Welsh Language Board and publicised to the public in Wales. Public notification will be via the MOD corporate internet website.

4.11 Welsh speaking callers who call direct an establishment or division in Wales will be transferred to a Welsh speaker in that unit. If no Welsh speakers in the division or establishment have the expertise to answer the enquiry directly, the caller will be given the option of continuing the call in English, or writing to the division or establishment in Welsh (to which a written reply in Welsh will be provided).

Public meetings

4.12 Invitations and advertisements for public meetings in Wales will be bilingual, and will invite the public to let us know which language they would like to use during the meeting. We will take into account the demand for Welsh language in deciding the level of translation facilities to be provided. We will let those attending public meetings know when translation facilities are available and encourage contributions in Welsh.

4.13 When selecting staff to attend public meetings, our standard practice will be to ensure that suitably qualified Welsh speakers attend, where this is possible.

4.14 Our standard practice will be to provide papers and other information for public meetings in Wales in Welsh and English and for reports or papers produced following public meetings to be published in Welsh and English.

Presentations

4.15 The MOD undertakes a range of outreach activity in Wales, in particular schools presentations. Some of the MOD's presentations can be provided in Welsh. The MOD will increase the proportion of these presentations which can be provided in Welsh over time. We will be in a position to deliver Welsh language versions of our main schools presentations within the life of this scheme. This refers to the presentations conducted by the 'Defence Dynamics' team and the Army Schools Presentations Team.

Other dealings with the public

4.16 When MOD conducts face-to-face meetings with individual members of the public in Wales, their language preference will be established at the earliest opportunity and, whenever possible, the Department will ensure that a suitably qualified Welsh speaking member of staff deals with those whose preferred language is Welsh. If no suitably qualified Welsh speaker is available, we will offer the choice of continuing the meeting in English, or dealing with the subject by corresponding in Welsh. It would not be practicable for staff in our offices outside Wales to conduct face-to-face meetings with the public through the medium of Welsh.

4.17 The above will also apply to meetings held using videoconferencing and similar equipment, where this is practicable, provided that all those involved are fluent in Welsh, and content to conduct the meeting in that language.

4.18 This commitment covers security vetting interviews with referees, but not with the person undergoing the security vetting. Other interviews with members of the public are also included. For recruitment interviews in Wales, where both the

recruiter and the applicant are able and content to conduct all or some of the interview in Welsh, they may do so.

4.19 Where new means of communicating with the public are developed, for example using televisual links, the requirements of this scheme will be considered.

4.20 When undertaking public surveys in Wales, the normal practice will be to ensure that all aspects of communication with the public will be bilingual. Whenever practicable, respondents will be asked if they wish to respond to the survey in Welsh or English.

4.21 When the Department arranges seminars, training courses or similar events for the public in Wales, the need to provide them in Welsh will be assessed. In conducting this assessment we will consider the preferred language of those attending and the availability of Welsh speaking trainers.

4.22 The normal practice will be to ensure that announcements made over public address systems to the public in Wales are made in Welsh and English. This requirement excludes public emergency announcements where a delay could impact negatively on public safety.

5. The Department's Public Face

Corporate identity

5.1 Units and establishments in Wales will adopt a bilingual corporate identity to members of the public. The name, address, and other standard information will be bilingual on letters and faxes written by these units to members of the public in Wales, on business cards, identity badges and any other relevant goods and materials. It should be noted that the "Ministry of Defence", "Royal Navy", "British Army", and the "Royal Air Force" are names and (world-famous) brands and so the Ministry of Defence badge, the Royal Navy logo, the British Army "Crossed Swords" badge or RAF roundel and the names "Royal Navy", "British Army" and "Royal Air Force" will not be produced bilingually. MOD uses the term 'logo' to mean 'visual identity'. The MOD, Royal Navy, Army and RAF visual identities are all made up of two elements: a badge, and the textual descriptor. This trademarked textual descriptor is thus part of the logo, and so will not be translated.

Signs and notices

5.2 Signs in public areas in Wales for which the MOD is responsible will either be bilingual or with separate Welsh and English versions. This includes external signs at the entrance to and on the boundaries of sites, and other signs in areas to which there is regular public access. It should be noted that the "Ministry of Defence", "Royal Navy", "British Army", and the "Royal Air Force" are names and (world-famous) brands and so the Ministry of Defence badge, the Royal Navy logo, the British Army "Crossed Swords" badge or RAF roundel and the names "Royal Navy", "British Army" and "Royal Air Force" will not be produced bilingually. However, RAF stations in Wales will continue to be signed in Welsh and English.

5.3 Where separate Welsh and English signs are provided, they will be equal in terms of format, size, quality, legibility and prominence. All comparable Welsh and English text on signs and notices will be equal in terms of size, quality, legibility and prominence.

5.4 All signs and notices will conform to these principles as soon as is practicably possible within budgetary and resource limits.

Published material (including forms)

5.5 Where published material is directed at the public in Wales or is likely to be of specific interest to the public in Wales, the MOD's usual practice will be to publish such material bilingually, with the Welsh and English versions together in one document. This will include interactive forms published on our website.

5.6 If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately (for instance, where a single document would be too lengthy or bulky), both versions will be of equal prominence and quality and our normal practice will be to ensure that both versions are available at the same time and are equally accessible. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.

5.7 Priority will be given to documents which are aimed at those interested in joining the Armed Services, documents aimed at the families of potential recruits and documents which relate to Services provided by the MOD to the public in Wales. When documents concern formal public consultations relating to the MOD's activity in Wales, a Welsh or bilingual version will always be produced.

5.8 When MOD enters information on Welsh versions of forms that are sent to the public, it will do so in Welsh. When the Department enters information on bilingual forms that are sent to the public, it will do so bilingually unless it is known that the recipients would prefer to receive the information in Welsh or English only.

5.9 If not available free of charge, the price of a bilingual document will not be greater than that of a single language publication - and the price of separate, Welsh and English versions will be the same.

5.10 The above will also apply to material made available electronically on our website, on CD Rom or otherwise.

Freedom of Information

5.11 When required, we will seek advice from the Board on the Welsh Language Act, the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations.

5.12 When we release information under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations, we will translate it into the applicant's preferred language provided that the number of words to be translated is less than 100.

MOD Website

5.13 MOD websites will include content in both Welsh and English. The Department will look to increase the Welsh content of its websites over time and when designing

new websites, or redeveloping existing websites, it will take into account the Welsh Language Board's *Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards* and any other guidance issued by the Board with regard to developing websites. Whenever English language publications are posted on MOD websites, the Welsh versions will be posted at the same time, if available. MOD will prepare a programme, to be agreed with the Welsh Language Board, setting out how it proposes to increase the Welsh language content of its website, over time.

Press notices

5.14 Press releases relating to the MOD's activity in Wales will be issued in Welsh and English where deadlines permit. The Department will publish any press releases available in Welsh on its website in the same way as the English versions.

5.15 Where possible, MOD will ensure that Welsh speakers are available to undertake interviews with the Welsh language press and broadcasting media.

Publicity and advertising

5.16 When conducting advertising and publicity campaigns in Wales, our normal practice will be to treat the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality. This will include media campaigns recruiting for the Armed Forces; posters, hoardings and other forms of public display; television advertising; exhibitions, school visits, careers fairs and recruitment shows in Wales; surveys; and publicity and recruitment literature. All of the publicity, public information, exhibition and advertising material we use in Wales (in order to target the general public) will be produced fully bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions. If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately, both versions will be equal with regard to size, prominence and quality. Where deadlines permit, both versions will be available simultaneously and will be equally accessible. We will look to increase the public material available in Welsh as part of the MOD Language Scheme Action Plan.

5.17 Museums in Wales for which the MOD provides financial assistance will also be encouraged to cater for Welsh speakers.

5.18 When staffing exhibition stands and displays in Wales, we will ensure that, where possible, suitably qualified Welsh speakers attend, as necessary.

Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment notices

5.19 Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment notices placed in English language newspapers (or similar media) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, will be bilingual, or appear as separate Welsh and English versions. Notices will be in Welsh in Welsh language publications.

5.20 The Welsh and English versions will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence – whether produced as a single bilingual version, or as separate Welsh and English notices.

5.21 In the English language media, posts where the ability to speak Welsh is essential may be advertised in Welsh, with a brief description in English.

5.22 Recruitment notices placed in English language journals (and other publications) with a UK-wide distribution will be in English, unless the post is one where the ability to speak Welsh is essential, in which case the notice may be fully bilingual, or in Welsh with a brief explanation in English. Any official notices, public notices or staff recruitment notices placed elsewhere in Wales will be bilingual

Print advertisements

5.23 Any advertisements placed in English language newspapers (or similar material) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, will be bilingual, or will appear as separate Welsh and English versions (with both versions appearing simultaneously, and being equal with regard to size, prominence and quality).

Broadcast advertisements

5.24 Television campaigns which appear on S4C during Welsh programming hours will be in Welsh. Radio campaigns broadcast on Radio Cymru or during Welsh language programmes on commercial radio stations will be in Welsh.

5.25 When designing future television, cinema and radio advertising campaigns, the MOD will take into account the requirements of this scheme, and will strive to develop campaigns that can be easily produced in both Welsh and English. Welsh versions will either use Welsh speaking actors, or Welsh voiceovers, the use of dubbing or subtitles will be avoided.

5.26 Publicity and advertising in Wales will, where possible, make it clear that the public are welcome to correspond with the MOD in Welsh.

5.27 Instructions for civilian recruiters contain information on the Welsh Language Scheme, and the need to follow it when advertising in Wales for civilian staff.

6. Implementing and Monitoring the Scheme

Administrative arrangements

6.1 The Permanent Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Defence will be responsible for ensuring that the MOD meets the provisions of the Welsh Language Act as set out in this Scheme. The Scheme will be implemented consistently across the Services, the Department and its agencies. Line managers will be responsible for the Scheme's implementation and operation within their spheres of command.

6.2 Each area is responsible for administering their translation arrangements. The External Relations Unit will serve as point of contact for advice on this matter and will do all they can within practical limitations to further the effectiveness of the Welsh Language Scheme.

Civilian Recruitment and Staffing

6.3 Those elements of the MOD which provide services to the public in Wales need access to sufficient and appropriately skilled Welsh speaking staff to enable those

workplaces to deliver a full service in Welsh. In practice this applies to relatively few parts of the Department.

6.4 The MOD will identify those workplaces and jobs where the ability to speak Welsh is desirable or essential. This requirement may be defined as a component of a workplace or team, or it may be attached to a particular job. When fluency in Welsh is considered to be desirable or essential for a civilian post, this will be stated in job competencies and advertisements. Where no suitable Welsh speaking candidates can be found for a post where Welsh is desirable, the person appointed will be provided with opportunities to learn Welsh.

6.5 A candidate unable to speak Welsh may be appointed to a post for which Welsh is considered *essential*, but where time can be allowed to learn the language. In these cases, learning the language to the required level of competence, within a reasonable agreed period, will be a condition of employment.

6.6 When no suitable Welsh speaking candidates can be found for a post where Welsh is *essential* (or whilst a candidate unable to speak Welsh has been appointed and is learning the language) we will make temporary arrangements under which the Welsh language service can be provided (by using, for example, Welsh speaking staff from elsewhere in our organisation to deliver parts of the service).

6.7 For establishments outside Wales, for any posts having extensive and regular contact with the public in Wales we will consider whether fluency in Welsh should be a desirable or essential skill – and this will be stated in job competencies and advertisements.

Language training

6.8 Training courses for the Welsh language are available through the Department. Staff will be made aware of these courses in the guidance accompanying the Scheme, by the encouragement of their line managers where relevant, and through the brochures of the training organisations concerned.

6.9 Where current staff express a wish to undertake training to learn or improve their standard of Welsh, line managers will take into account the benefits of their staff acquiring this skill to the Department's overall needs, to the Department's need to comply with the Welsh Language Act and to the Welsh-speaking public, in considering whether funds should be provided from their training budget. Where a post is filled by an employee who does not have the level of proficiency in Welsh required by the post, their training will be undertaken within a reasonable agreed period with the support of the Department.

6.10 Training is also provided for staff wishing to learn Welsh as a development opportunity not linked to the requirements of their current post. However, such training is at the line manager's discretion and is subject to availability.

Vocational training

6.11 We will develop the ability of our Welsh speaking staff to operate in Welsh by providing vocational training in Welsh, where business needs indicate.

6.12 For our offices outside Wales, whenever practicable, MOD will provide vocational training in the Welsh language to develop the ability of staff who, as part of their duties, have extensive and regular contact with the public in Wales.

Information and Communications Technology

6.13 The need to provide information and services in Welsh, and operate in accordance with this Scheme, will be taken into account as we develop, design and purchase information and communications technology products and services.

6.14 As we develop or procure ICT systems we will take into account the Board's *Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards*.

Services delivered on behalf of the MOD by third parties

6.15 Any agreements or arrangements which MOD makes with third parties will be consistent with the relevant parts of this scheme, when those agreements or arrangements relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales. This will include services which are contracted out, granting licences and granting other permissions.

6.16 Where relevant, requirements as to the use of the Welsh language in the provision of services to the public in Wales will be specified in tendering documents and subsequent contracts. Reports will then be required from third parties on their performance against this scheme for monitoring purposes.

6.17 Instructions have been issued to all staff to raise awareness of the need when drawing up contract specifications to ensure that services to the public in Wales delivered on behalf of the MOD meet the commitments in this Scheme.

Partnership working

6.18 When the MOD is the strategic and financial leader within a partnership, it will ensure that any public service aspects comply with this scheme. When the MOD joins a partnership which another organisation is leading, our input to the partnership will comply with this scheme and the Department will encourage the other partners to comply. When the MOD is a partner in a consortium, it will encourage the consortium to comply with this scheme. When acting in the name of the consortium, it will operate in accordance with this scheme.

Internal arrangements

6.19 The measures in this scheme carry the full authority, support and approval of our organisation. Managers will have the responsibility of implementing those aspects of the scheme relevant to their work. The Department will appoint a senior member of staff to coordinate the work required to deliver, monitor and review this scheme.

6.20 The MOD will prepare, and continuously update, a detailed action plan to be agreed with the Board, setting out how the Department will ensure that it operates in accordance with this scheme. The action plan will come into effect on the date on which the scheme comes into effect, or as soon as possible thereafter. The plan will include targets, deadlines and a report on progress against each target.

6.21 The scheme will be publicised to our staff, and to the public in Wales. It will be published on our website in a prominent place. A Defence Instruction Notice will be produced containing guidance for our staff to ensure that they know how to implement the measures contained in this scheme. Existing guidance will be amended to reflect the measures contained in this scheme.

6.22 The MOD will ensure that only qualified translators or interpreters are used to help with the delivery of this scheme.

6.23 Any form of contact with the public in Wales, which is not specifically dealt with by this scheme, will be undertaken in a manner which is consistent with the general principles enshrined in this scheme.

Monitoring the Scheme

6.24 The operation and implementation of the Scheme will be monitored and reviewed centrally by the External Relations Unit. This will be a structured and continuing activity, to include:

- monitoring the MOD's performance against the ongoing targets set out in the Scheme, such as the response times for correspondence and the arrangements for publicity campaigns;
- monitoring the compliance of the Department's delivery of services to the public, its new policies and procedures, and its implementation of staffing and training measures, with the commitments set out in the Scheme;
- investigating complaints and carrying forward suggestions made to the Department.
- The MOD will produce periodic monitoring reports and send them to the Welsh Language Board, when requested by them, outlining progress in delivering this scheme.

Reviewing and amending the scheme

6.25 This scheme will be reviewed within four years of its coming into effect, or at any other time when a change to the MOD's functions, or to the circumstances in which it undertakes those functions, makes it appropriate. No changes will be made to this scheme without the Welsh Language Board's approval.

Complaints and suggestions

6.26 The MOD is committed to providing a high quality of service to the public in Wales. Any complaints will be treated seriously and in confidence, so that the Department's performance can be continually improved.

6.27 Complaints about the provision of services to the public in Wales will be handled and monitored in accordance with the Department's standard complaints procedures. Initial complaints should be made to the relevant MOD unit or establishment. Any further or more general complaints relating to this Scheme should be sent to the following address:

External Relations Unit
Ministry of Defence
Level 6, Zone 1
Main Building

Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

6.29 The MOD welcomes suggestions for improvements in this Scheme. All suggestions will be recorded and considered positively. The MOD will adhere to the policies of this Scheme when administrating a written reply which will state what action has been or will be taken, or an explanation of why any action would not be appropriate in the circumstances or reasonably practicable. Suggestions regarding the Scheme should be addressed to the External Relations Unit at the address above.

6.29. Members of the public can find the scheme online at the following addresses:
English - [Insert appropriate site when available] Welsh – - [Insert appropriate site when available] Members of the public without internet access can obtain a hard copy of the Scheme from the External Relations Unit at the address given above.