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Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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William Powell AM
Committee.business@wales.gov.uk

December 2011

Thank you for your letter dated 9 November 2011 to Edwina Hart. It has been passed to me to respond to as responsibility for Coastguards fall to my portfolio.

I am very disappointed with the UK Governments announcement on the 22 November 2011 to close Swansea coastguard station.

The First Minister has made it very clear and has presented a strong case throughout the consultation process to keep all three coastguard stations in Wales open. By closing Swansea it has the potential to leave our coastline exposed. In our response to the second consultation we proposed that no consideration should be given to the closure of the MRCCs in Wales without the MCA first conducting Risk & Security Impact Assessments, specific to Wales. Such assessment should incorporate the cumulative effects of closures, alongside the withdrawal of Emergency Towing Vessel's and the ongoing uncertainty over the provision of Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopters and SAR capability. I am not aware that the UK Government have undertaken such an assessment prior to making this announcement.

As the Committee will be aware coastguards are a non-devolved matter and the Welsh Government is unable to carry out such assessments, I trust the Committee will understand this.

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