

31 January 2024

Dear

ATISN 20113

Thank you for your request which I received on 19 January 2024. You asked for the following information:

Information regarding government policy on data retention covering WhatsApp, Teams (or equivalent), SMS. In particular, how long must Welsh politicians retain data on the applications listed when used for government communications and data sharing? Is there "auto delete" settings used and, if so, what time period do these settings tidy the applications by removing data?

WhatsApp is not approved for use for Government business and is not installed on Welsh Government issued phones. There is no retention period for SMS messages on Welsh Government phones, it is the individual's responsibility to manage messages and make decisions on retention. For Microsoft Teams, retention periods are automatically enforced with Teams' chat messages deleting after 10 days and other data deleting after 9 months. Individuals are responsible for identifying information that reflects and records official Welsh Government business and ensuring that it is saved as a record in the corporate repository.

The Welsh Government's approach to managing information is in accordance with information legislation and is set out in the [Information Management and Governance Policy](#). The policy applies to ministers and Welsh Government staff. If you require information regarding use of communications by politicians, you will need to approach the Senedd.

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

or e-mail: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House

Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely