

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig  
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Adam Price AM  
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21 October 2016

*Annwyl Adam*

Further to your recent Written Assembly Question, please see my response below:

**Adam Price (Carmarthen East and Dinefwr):** Will the Minister publish all correspondence the Welsh Government has had with the operators of the oil pipeline at Nantycaws, Carmarthen? (WAQ761136)

**Lesley Griffiths AM, Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs:**

Neither I nor my officials in the Department of Environment and Rural Affairs had any correspondence with Valero prior to the incident. However, since the incident on 4<sup>th</sup> October, there has been some correspondence between my officials and Valero, which I attach.

*Xn gywir  
Lesley*

**Lesley Griffiths AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig  
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

**From:** Welsh Government  
**Sent:** 08 October 2016 08:19  
**To:** Valero  
**Subject:** Re: Cabinet Secretary's visit to Nantycaws, 08.10.16

Sorry [name] me again. Just re-read your email. [Name] is the Cabinet Secretary's PS and she will be with our lead Enviro official [Name]. [Name] will send you the details of who at NRW arranged the visit.

**From:** Welsh Government  
**Sent:** Saturday, October 08, 2016 08:16 AM  
**To:** Valero  
**Subject:** Re: Cabinet Secretary's visit to Nantycaws, 08.10.16

Hi [name]

Thanks for your email and call. As discussed BBC pulled out of the visit late yesterday. If plans change however I will let you know. I've asked my colleague [name] is our weekend duty press officer to send you the details you've asked for below. If [name] doesn't send these through within the next hour please call me and I'll log on at home.

Once again thanks for your help and apologies for any inconvenience.

Thanks [ name]

**From:** Valero  
**Sent:** Saturday, October 08, 2016 07:07 AM  
**To:** Welsh Government  
**Cc:** Valero  
**Subject:** Cabinet Secretary's visit to Nantycaws, 08.10.16

Dear [ Name]

I've just got off the phone with our site security manager, discussing the best location for the Cabinet Secretary to conduct her broadcast interview with the BBC after her visit today. As we discussed last night the two options are:

1) The outer cordon area between the security entrance and the PPE Zone on site, overlooking the river and with good view of the pile driving machine being used as part of the operation;

2) A small bridge off-site, approx. 1 mile away overlooking the river and the boom operation around what we are calling Site 1.

If you wanted to proceed with Option 2, we would have to drive you and the media down to the bridge in security vehicles. I hadn't appreciated last night when we spoke that it is down a narrow single track lane with a recovery bowser blocking part of the way. Or we can easily accommodate you and the BBC in the outer cordon area, by the sounds of it more quickly than the bridge area. It's your choice, please let me know your preference and we can accommodate.

When you get this can you send me the names of the Private Secretary and other official you mentioned will be accompanying Mrs Griffiths and yourself on the site visit, for us to inform our security staff? Also, as a matter of urgency can you send me the name and contact number of the NRW official organising the visit, so we can discuss specifics.

Again, as a reminder, all visitors to site will need PPE (a minimum of flame-retardant overalls, helmet and safety boots).

Regards,

[Name]

**From:** Valero  
**Sent:** 11 October 2016 14:07  
**To:** Welsh Government  
**Subject:** RE: Draft press statement - Valero - Nantycaws

Hi [Name]

Sorry for the delay in getting back to you. In answer to your further questions on the Emergency Response Plan, Valero has an Emergency Response Plan relating to a number of different scenarios. The plan is owned and maintained by Valero, and is periodically reviewed by regulatory bodies. Within this plan, and depending on the nature of the potential emergency, there is provision for contact with a number of agencies.

Regards,

[Name]

**From:** Welsh Government  
**Sent:** 11 October 2016 11:07  
**To:** Valero  
**Subject:** RE: Draft press statement - Valero - Nantycaws

Hi [Name]

Thanks once again for this info. Our officials briefing the Cab Sec have asked for a bit more detail on the emergency response plan. Is this your Oil Pollution Emergency Plan and who do you report to in relation to it – DECC or the HSE? Grateful if you can clarify.

Many thanks

**From:** Valero  
**Sent:** 11 October 2016 10:41  
**To:** Welsh Government  
**Subject:** RE: Draft press statement - Valero - Nantycaws

Hi [Name]

Many thanks for doing that. Hugely appreciated. I've included below our press statement, which includes an updated recovery figure. In addition, we understand the Cabinet Secretary has been asked specifically to respond to whether Valero and Mainline Pipeline had an emergency response plan and if it has been followed. I can confirm that we do have an emergency response plan and that it was put into operation immediately. If you could feed that into the official briefing that would be very much appreciated.

Kind regards,

[Name]

### **Nantycaws Mainline breach Update – 11<sup>th</sup> Oct 2016**

Following the breach of Mainline Pipeline on 4<sup>th</sup> October near Nantycaws, Carmarthenshire, booms remain in place on Nant Pibwr to recover kerosene from the pipeline leak. Valero has continued to deploy significant resources around the clock to deal with this incident and made extremely good progress with in excess of 100,000 litres of kerosene being recovered so far. Three of the four booms are now clear of oil, while a fourth is still recovering product.

We continue to work with Natural Resources Wales to minimise the risk to the environment and to keep the impact on the wildlife to a minimum. Testing in the surrounding area to ensure there is no migration of oil to other sites is ongoing. Meanwhile the pipeline, which was shut-down and isolated as soon as the incident occurred, remains closed.

Running parallel to our efforts to protect the environment and public health, Valero has throughout this incident liaised closely with relevant agencies and Welsh Government to draw up plans to repair the pipeline. Currently plans are in place that will require closure of both carriageways of the A48 at Nantycaws from the evening of Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October to the morning of Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October. This will enable specialist engineering teams to gain access to the affected section of pipeline and repair the problem.

Having considered all possible alternatives, it has been agreed with the relevant agencies that this approach is necessary to ensure the swiftest resolution to the problem with the minimum of disruption to residents, the transport network and the environment. The pipeline is recognised by the UK and Welsh governments to be an important part of the UK energy infrastructure, serving the Midlands and North West England.

We would again like to apologise to all local residents for the inconvenience this incident may have caused and to reassure them that we are working hard to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

**From:** Welsh Government  
**Sent:** 11 October 2016 08:05  
**To:** Valero  
**Subject:** Re: Draft press statement - Valero - Nantycaws

Thanks [Name] I'll forward these lines to the official briefing the Cab Second ahead of the debate.

[Name]

**From:** Valero  
**Sent:** Monday, October 10, 2016 06:55 PM  
**To:** Welsh Government  
**Subject:** RE: Draft press statement - Valero - Nantycaws

Dear [Name]

Further to my previous email, I include the following messages we were hoping the Cabinet Secretary would be prepared to highlight during her statement tomorrow. If you could pass them on for consideration we would be incredibly grateful.

- It is not true that the response from Valero, NRW and other agencies to the incident was too slow. The pipeline is fitted with highly sophisticated pressure detection systems and the breach was noticed immediately, with the pipeline shutdown and the incident area isolated. Valero immediately deployed Pollution Control teams and booms were deployed in Nant Pibwr shortly afterwards. Valero has deployed significant resources throughout the incident, running a recovery and protection operation 24/7.
- Valero has apologised to local residents for the inconvenience and disruption as a result of this incident, and is working to resolve this issue as quickly as possible.
- Valero has throughout this incident liaised closely with relevant agencies and Welsh Government to draw up plans to repair the pipeline. Currently plans are in place that will require closure of both carriageways of the A48 at Nantycaws from the evening of Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October to the morning of Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October. This will enable specialist engineering teams to gain access to the affected section of pipeline and repair the problem. Valero apologises for the inconvenience that will be caused to commuters and the communities across the region. We have considered all options, taking into account the engineering, community and environment factors, and all will require the closure of the A48 in some form. Having considered all possible alternatives, it has been agreed by all agencies that this approach is necessary to ensure the swiftest resolution with the minimum of disruption on local residents, the transport network and the environment.
- Valero consulted extensively with residents earlier this year ahead of the planned closure to the eastbound carriageway and have remained in daily contact with residents since the incident to assess the impact on affected people and properties, conduct environmental checks and reassure the community on the work being undertaken.

You may have also seen NRW's daily press statement today, which includes the following line: "A substantial amount of oil has already been recovered from Nant Pibwr by Valero's specialist contractors. They will continue to remove the oil over the next few days."

Again, once I have received a revised recovery figure I will send that to you, which will likely be in the morning.

Kind regards,

[Name]

**From:** Valero  
**Sent:** 10 October 2016 17:04  
**To:** Welsh Government  
**Subject:** RE: Draft press statement - Valero - Nantycaws

Hi [Name]

Thanks for the confirmation, that's great. We haven't got the revised figure yet, but as soon as I have confirmation I will send it to you ASAP.

Regards,

[Name]

**From: Welsh Government**  
**Sent:** 10 October 2016 16:41  
**To:** Valero  
**Subject:** RE: Draft press statement - Valero - Nantycaws

Hi [Name]

The reference to WG is fine. Have we got a new figure for the amount of oil recovered?

thanks

**From:** Valero  
**Sent:** 10 October 2016 14:08  
**To:** Welsh Government  
**Subject:** RE: Draft press statement - Valero - Nantycaws

Hi [Name]

Of course. Here's the updated draft statement below. As you can see, the recovery figure is still 88,000 litres but we're due to upgrade this as soon as we have confirmation.

Kind regards,

[Name]

#### **Nantycaws Mainline breach Update – 10<sup>th</sup> Oct 2016**

Following the breach of Mainline Pipeline on 4<sup>th</sup> October near Nantycaws, Carmarthenshire, booms remain in place on Nant Pibwr to recover kerosene from the pipeline leak. Valero has continued to deploy significant resources to the product recovery operation over the weekend and the on-site teams have made extremely good progress, with 88,000 [Friday figure - to be updated] litres of kerosene recovered. Three of the four booms are now clear of oil, while a fourth is still recovering product.

We continue to work with Natural Resources Wales to minimise the risk to the environment and to keep the impact on the wildlife to a minimum. Testing in the surrounding area to ensure there is no migration of oil to other sites is ongoing. Meanwhile the pipeline, which was shut-down and isolated as soon as the incident occurred, remains closed.

Running parallel to our efforts to protect the environment and public health, Valero has throughout this incident liaised closely with relevant agencies and Welsh Government to draw up plans to repair the pipeline. Currently plans are in place that will require closure of both carriageways of the A48 at Nantycaws from the evening of Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October to the morning of Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October. This will enable specialist engineering teams to gain access to the effected section of pipeline and repair the problem.

Having considered all possible alternatives, it has been agreed with the relevant agencies that this approach is necessary to ensure the swiftest resolution to the problem with the minimum of disruption to residents, the transport network and the environment. The pipeline is deemed by the UK and Welsh governments to be a critical part of the UK energy infrastructure, serving the Midlands and North West England.

We would again like to apologise to all local residents for the inconvenience this incident may have caused and to reassure them that we are working hard to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

**From:** Welsh Government  
**Sent:** 10 October 2016 13:56  
**To:** Valero  
**Subject:** FW: Draft press statement - Valero - Nantycaws

Hi [Name]

Your email has come back to me to respond. Can you share the full draft statement just so we have an idea of context?

thanks

**From:** Valero  
**Sent:** Monday, October 10, 2016 11:01 AM  
**To:** Welsh Government  
**Subject:** Draft press statement

[Name]

Firstly, thanks again for your assistance on Friday. Hugely appreciated as always.

We are in the process of updating our press statement regarding the Nantycaws incident, and we are hoping to stress the importance of the pipeline repair over the course of the weekend with the A48 closure. We have asked BEIS if they are content with us including a line on that, and would also appreciate if you could confirm the Welsh Government were content on us making reference to you also. The line would be:



“The pipeline is deemed by the UK Government and Welsh Government to be a critical part of the UK energy infrastructure, serving the Midlands and North West England.”

Are you happy with us including that in our press statement?

Regards,