

Accessibility across UK Central Government

Introduction

Digital accessibility regulation is challenging to manage and is negatively impacting those for whom the rules should be assisting. Public sector bodies must deal with accessibility, against a timetable.

Now with a specific timeline in relation to the public sector achieving accessibility compliance for their websites, we have summarised our Q1 / 2020 results, reporting the position across the sector.

In Summary.

For the Sitemorse 2020 Q4 UK Central Government INDEX we assessed over 190 organisation's websites for adherence to WCAG 2.1. The INDEX was compiled following some 144 million tests, checks and measures across nearly 440,000 URLs.

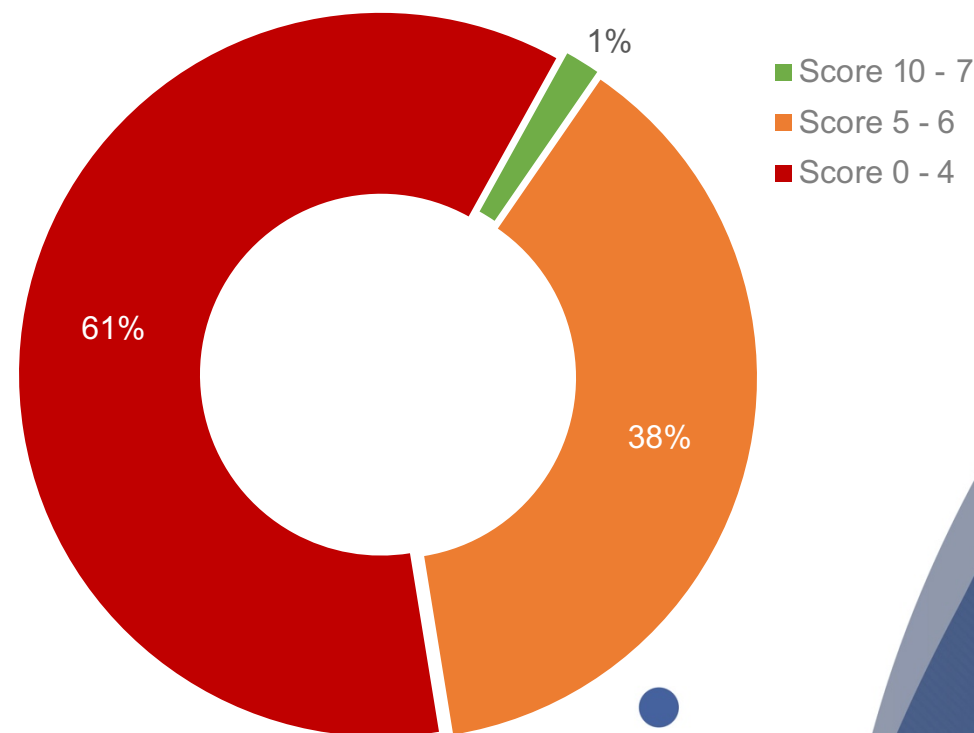
Comparing the Q1 2020 to the Q4 2019 results; 26 improved, 12 declined, with the balance remaining the same.

The highest score for accessibility was 9 (out of 10), achieved by NHS Digital.

Overall the top 10:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 NHS Digital | 6 Nuclear Decommissioning Authority |
| 2 Office for Nuclear Regulation | 7 The Adjudicator's Office |
| 3 Natural Resources Wales | 8 Health and Safety Executive |
| 4 Student Loans Company | 9 Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs NI |
| 5 Research for Development Outputs | 10 Utility Regulator Northern Ireland |

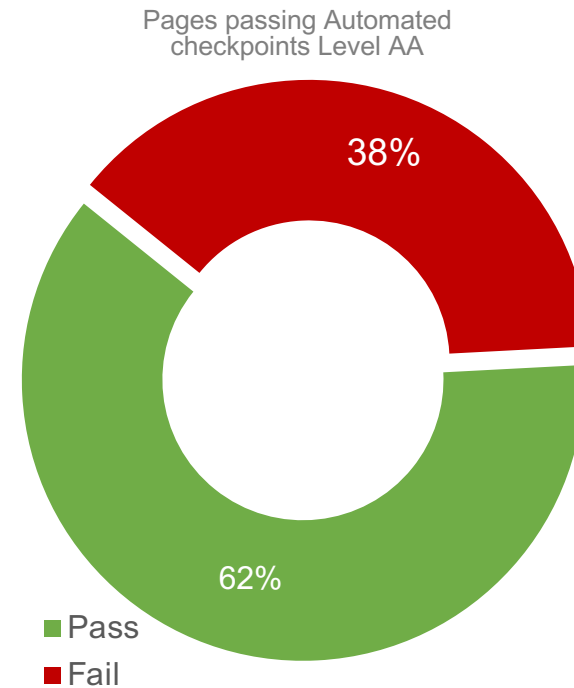
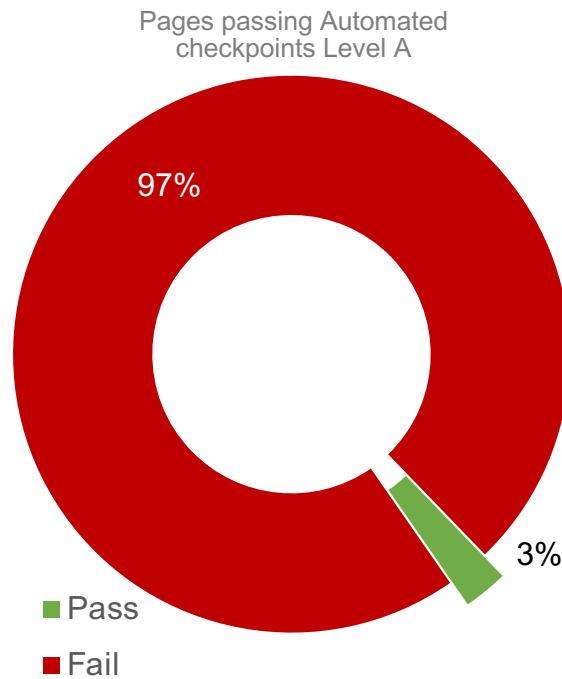
It is important to note that this score is for automated tests; there are still manual tests that need to be performed however, a score of 10 demonstrates a thorough understanding of what needs to be done and it is highly likely that the manual tests will pass too.



Overall %

It's important to note that the INDEX covers the main website of each organisation. The law applies to all websites operated, directly or on behalf of the organisation.

- Pages passing accessibility level A: 3%
- Pages passing accessibility level AA: 61%



What are the Regulations?

The EU Directive on the accessibility of public sector websites and mobile apps *(Directive (EU) 2016/2102 using European standard EN 301 549 V1.1.2 (2015-04)), came into force for in the UK on 23 September 2018. The aim of the regulations is to ensure public sector websites and mobile apps can be used by as many people as possible.

The Directive lists 3 dates for compliance to be achieved:

- 22 September 2019
 - New public sector websites (*those published after 22 September 2018*)
- 22 September 2020
 - All other public sector websites
- 22 June 2021
 - Public sector mobile apps

Clarification from the Cabinet Office:

“...any new content published after 23 September 2019 should be in an accessible format at the time of publishing.”

Why digital accessibility is important – “imagine you are on a train”

Richard Morton, interim Head of Accessibility and Senior Accessibility Specialist at GDS) had this to say recently [Accessibility: why you should get on board](#)

*<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-websites-and-apps>
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32016L2102>
https://www.etsi.org/deliver/etsi_en/301500_301599/301549/02.01.02_60/en_301549v020102p.pdf

PDF documents.

Along with the compliance assessment of web pages, we also reviewed the PDF documents from each organisation's website.

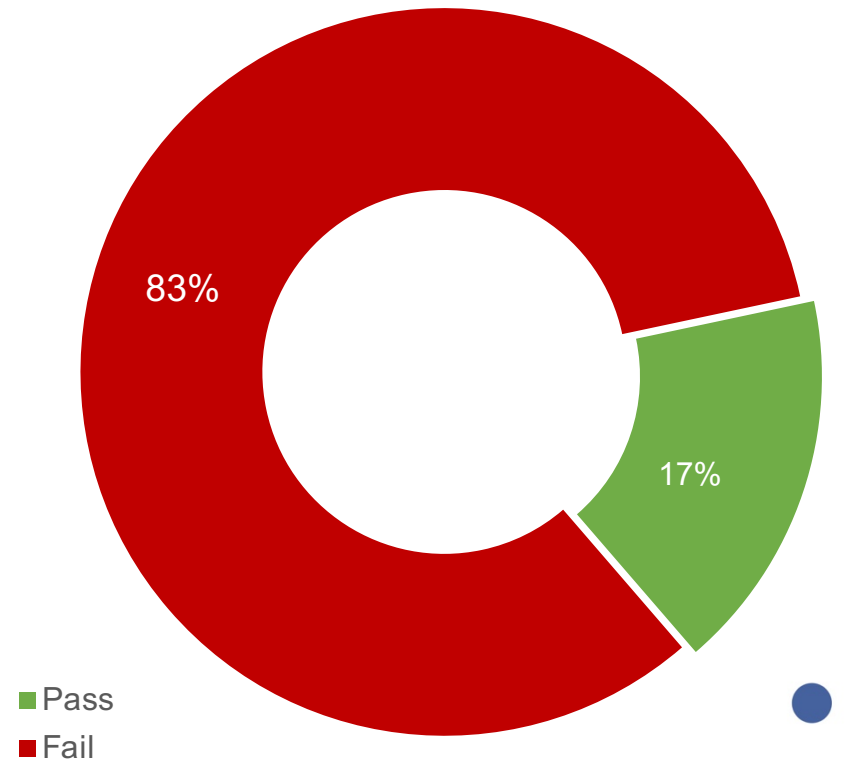
In total there were 1,641 PDF's assessed of which 83% were not tagged for accessibility.

Two of the most common actions required to improve levels of compliance;

- Content Tagging
- Document Titles

Ensuring accessible documents is an increasingly challenging task for public sector bodies, as it introduces new work procedures and requires extra attention during document creation.

The key to solving this challenge is supplying end users with tools that minimises the added workload and are easily adopted. We have found one such tool to be **accessibility**fixer by ¹dania software, which is covered later in this report.



¹ <http://www.daniasoftware.com>

PDF management.

The *regulation has allowances for historic PDF documents. The full text of the regulation can be viewed online, in relation to PDF's;

Citation and commencement 1.—

(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

(2) These Regulations come into force on 23rd September 2018.

Revocation 2.

The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018(1) are revoked.

Application 4.—

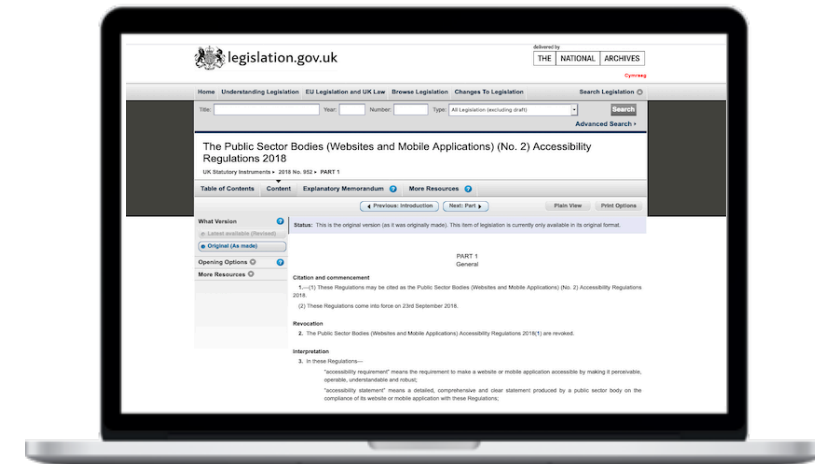
(2) These Regulations do not apply to the following content of a website or mobile application of a public sector body—

(a) office file formats published before 23rd September 2018, unless such content is needed for active administrative processes relating to the tasks performed by the public sector body;

(3) In this regulation—

(a) “archives” means a website or mobile application which—
(i) only contains content that is not needed for active administrative processes; and
(ii) is not updated or edited after 23rd September 2019;

.....
(d) “office file formats” means a document in a format that is not intended primarily for use on the web and that is included in web pages, such as Adobe Portable Document Format, Microsoft Office documents or their open-source equivalents.

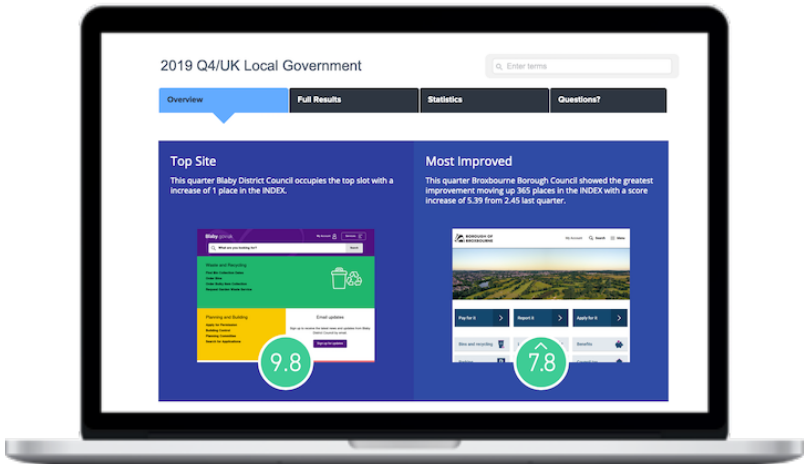
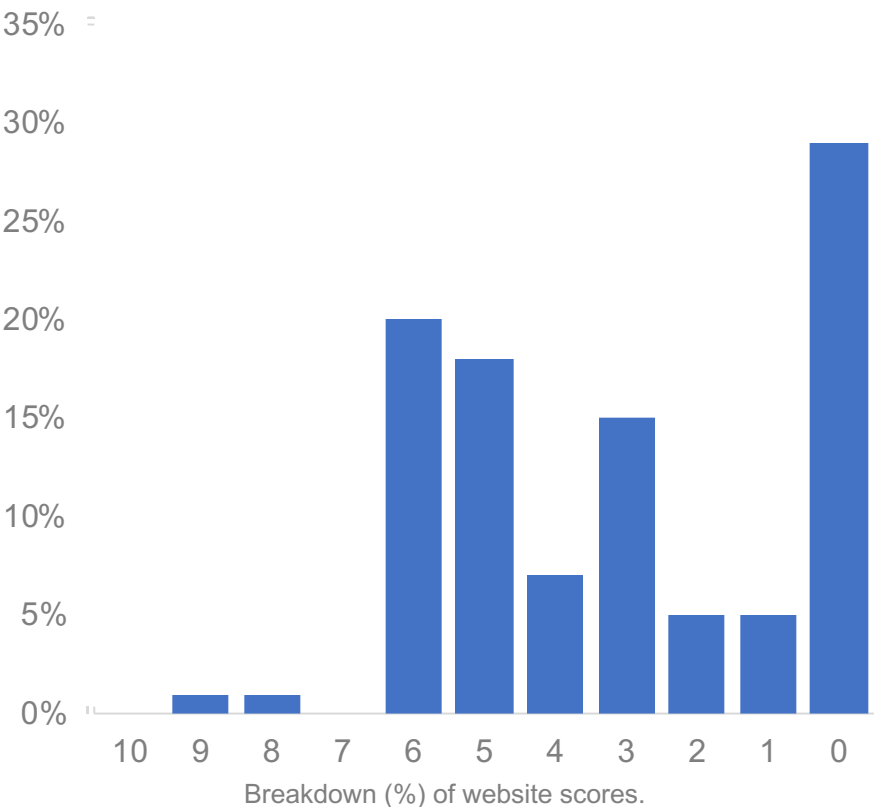


“standard” has the meaning set out in Article 2(1) of **Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European standardisation

**<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2012/1025/contents>

Full Results – breakdown by organisation.

The score is based on assessing the first 125 pages of a website – those closest to the home (first) page of the website.



The full results can be seen at:
<https://sitemorse.com/index/uk-central-government/2020-q1>

Sites that were excluded:
(Details available on request)

- Community Development Foundation
- Higher Education Funding Council for England
- Northern Ireland Police Fund
- Office for Fair Access
- Royal Marines Museum
- West Northants Development Corporation
- AHDB Horticulture
- British Institute of Technology & E-Commerce
- House of Lords Appointments Commission
- Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure NI
- Department for Employment and Learning NI
- GCHQ
- Investors in People
- Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office
- Youth Justice NI
- Money Advice Service

UK Central Government 10 (out of 10) for Accessibility

Scoring 9 (out of 10)

NHS Digital

Scoring 8 (out of 10)

Office for Nuclear Regulation

Natural Resources Wales

Scoring 7 (out of 10)

Scoring 6 (out of 10)

- Student Loans Company
- Research for Development Outputs
- Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
- The Adjudicator's Office
- Health and Safety Executive
- Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs NI
- Utility Regulator ☐ Northern Ireland
- Ministry of Justice (MoJ)
- The Northern Ireland Executive
- The Executive Office NI
- Science Museum Group
- Information Commissioner's Office
- Department of Education NI
- British Council
- Department of Finance NI
- Boundary Commission for England
- Judicial Appointments Commission
- Gambling Commission
- National Lottery Commission
- Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals
- The Pensions Advisory Service
- GOV.UK
- Competition Appeal Tribunal
- Forestry Commission
- Boundary Commission for Wales
- Advisory Committee on Animal Feedstuffs
- Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
- Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
- NHS
- The Corporation of Trinity House
- Historic England
- The National Museum of the Royal Navy
- Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food
- Local Government Association
- Big Lottery Fund
- Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)
- Public services Ombudsman for Wales
- Planning Portal

UK Central Government Scoring 5 (out of 10) for Accessibility

National Gallery	National Audit Office	Transport for London
British Museum	Equality and Human Rights Commission	Financial Conduct Authority
The British Pharmacopoeia (BP)	Consumer Council for Water	The Scottish Government
Security Industry Authority	Construction Industry Training Board	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
Housing Ombudsman Service	Welsh Assembly Government	National Assembly for Wales
Serious Fraud Office (SFO)	National Parks	VisitBritain Biz
Ofcom	Probation Board for Northern Ireland	National Crime Agency
Met Office	Electoral Commission	British Library
Sport England	Scottish Parliament	Health & Care Professions Council
Business Wales	Transport Focus	London Councils
UK Statistics Authority	Vehicle Certification Agency	Independent Police Complaints Commission
Wilton Park Conference Centre	Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority	

Scoring 4 (out of 10)

Scottish National Party	Tate	Ordnance Survey
National Forest Company	Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)	Public Lending Right
Chemicals Regulation Directorate	National Heritage Memorial Fund	Horserace Betting Levy Board
English Heritage	Institute of Historical Research	Food and Environment Research Agency
Tate		

UK Central Government Scoring 3 (out of 10) for Accessibility

Security Service (MI5)	Pensions Ombudsman	The National Archives
The Pensions Regulator	Royal Naval Submarine Museum	UK Sport
Boundary Commission for Scotland	Strategic Investment Board	Conservative Party
Natural Environment Research Council	Water Industry Commission for Scotland	DisabledGo
Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)	Northern Lighthouse Board	UK Legislation
Crown Estate (CE)	Westminster Foundation for Democracy	Arts Council England
Royal Armouries Museum	Audit Scotland	UK Hydrographic Office
Imperial War Museum	Buy With Confidence	Criminal Justice Inspectorates
Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service	Opening up government (data.gov.uk)	AHDB Potatoes
Sustainable Development Commission	The Royal Parks	

Scoring 2 (out of 10)

National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts	National Museums Liverpool	Office of the Children's Commissioner for England
The Royal Society	VisitBritain	Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre
Liberal Democrat Party	The Higher Education Academy	Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorates

Scoring 1 (out of 10)

Investigatory Powers Tribunal	Royal Ulster Constabulary	Human Tissue Authority
Financial Ombudsman Service	George Cross Foundation	National Portrait Gallery
National Institute for Biological Standards and Control	The Parades Commission	VisitEngland
Legal Ombudsman	Royal Museums Greenwich	

UK Central Government Scoring 0 (out of 10) for Accessibility

Committee of Advertising Practice Ltd	Medical Research Council	NI Business Info
Gangmasters Licensing Authority	Alocohol Research UK	Drinking Water Inspectorate
Civil Aviation Authority	Engineering Construction Industry Training Board	Science and Technology Facilities Council
Valuation Tribunal Service	The Fire Service College	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
The Houses of Parliament	Joint Nature Conservation Committee	Victoria and Albert Museum
Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council	Churches Conservation Trust	Office of Rail and Road
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	Economic and Social Research Council	The Royal Family
The Northern Ireland Assembly	LEASE (The Leasehold Advisory Service)	Plaid Cymru
Sports Frounds Safety Authority	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council	European Consumer Centre for Services
National Army Museum	Business Gateway	Education Scotland
Sir John Soane's Museum	National Historic Ships	National Joint Registry (NJR)
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew	Government Art Collection	Royal Air Force Museum
Museum of London	Natural History Museum	Office for Budget Responsibility
Food Standards Agency	Care Quality Commission	Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat)
UK Debt Management Office	Prospects - Graduate Careers	Royal Mint
Wallace Collection	Engineering & Physical Science Research Council	British Transport Police Authority
Horniman Public Museum and Public Park Trust	AHDB Dairy	Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission
National Museums Scotland	Chartered Trading Standards Institute	Get Safe Online
Arts and Humanities Research Council	Labour Party	

More information?

Have a look at the results online: <https://sitemorse.com/index/uk-central-government/2020-q1>

We also run 2 webinars, every Tuesday:

- The INDEX – a general introduction to the Sitemorse INDEX for Central Government
- Pragmatic Accessibility

Webinars	Time	February	March	April
The INDEX	12:30am	18	3, 17	14, 28
	3pm	25	10, 24	7, 21
Pragmatic Accessibility	2pm	18	3, 17	14, 28
	10am	25	10, 24	7, 21

Sitemorse

Sitemorse is a UK-registered privately-owned company, with no external investors – our shareholders are our staff. We provide Content Quality & Digital Governance automation to clients around the world.

Sitemorse was probably the first company to bring automation to the digital governance market (with our first services running nearly 15 years ago and our oldest current client joining us 13 years ago) along with being the first to introduce Data Science and Machine intelligence capabilities.

Most importantly we make compliance achievable for all with a proven 3 stage process – its principles being; understanding, prioritisation and continuous improvement.

For more information, visit www.Sitemorse.com

Sitemorse®



Join a webinar, request etc
please email Adam Turner
aturner@Sitemorse.com

danial software

danial software improves the quality of written communication with tools that frees end users of cumbersome tasks and eliminates error-prone manual processes.

A digitalisation veteran

With more than 15 years of involvement in the digitalisation of the Danish public sector, danial software is an experienced supplier with unique insights into the inner workings of public organisations. With this knowledge, we are able to develop highly specialised tools to improve outbound communication and simplify work procedures in councils across UK and Scandinavia.

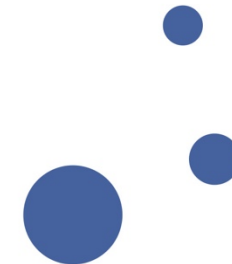
Making accessibility easy

When the EU Web Accessibility Directive was announced, we were approached by a council wanting to collaborate on a tool to aid their document improvement. Our joint efforts resulted in **accessibility**fixer, a solution tailored to the specific needs of councils challenged with meeting the increased compliance requirements.

With **accessibility**fixer it is easy to create high quality, accessible documents and PDF files. The tool is plug and play and enables all users to make compliant documents directly from the Microsoft Office suite.



For more information;
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