

Building 5
Porton Down
Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP4 0JQ

T 01980 613121
F 01980 65 8400

Dstl is part of the
Ministry of Defence

dstlfoi@dstl.gov.uk
www.dstl.gov.uk



request-146576-f9bbd8d5@whatdotheyknow.com

Our ref: FOI 803-13 AIT 22-01-2013-111914-003
Your ref:

1 February 2013

Dear Mr Steele,

Thank you for your email dated 21 January 2013, which has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In your email you requested the following information:

“ to request the disclosure of data held which concerns the use of animals in research at Dstl Porton Down. For the avoidance of doubt the term 'animal research' is defined as that governed by the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (“ASPA”)”.

The information I wish to request is as follows:

- 1) By species; how many animals were used and subsequently procured as part of research at Dstl Porton Down in 2011?*
- 2) By species; how many animals were bred for research purposes in 2011 at Dstl Porton Down ? In the case of rodents, please list by genetic strain and specify for which patents are held.*
- 3) Copies of any minutes from, or communications relating to, Ethical Review Committee (“ERC”) meetings, or boards of a similar nature for which your establishment uses a different title, for 2011.”*

During the calendar year 2011, Dstl returned the following numbers of species to the Home Office under the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act.

Guinea-Pig	Mouse	Pig	Rabbit	Rat	Non-Human Primate (Marmosets)
652	8801	88	76	37	68

In relation to the above numbers of species, we can confirm that the only species that were specifically bred at Dstl Porton Down were all of the marmosets and 27 out of a total of 37 rats. The rats bred at Dstl Porton Down were all of the Porton-Wistar strain.

In respect to your request for copies of the minutes of Internal Ethical Review Committee meetings, the information discussed at these meetings was given in confidence by members of staff undertaking requirements under the terms of the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act and is, therefore, exempt from public release under Section 24 of the Act (ASP). This section states:

“24. Protection of Confidential Information.

(1)A person is guilty of an offence if otherwise than for the purpose of discharging his functions under this Act he discloses any information which has been obtained by him in the exercise of those functions and which he knows or has reasonable grounds for believing to have been given in confidence”.

This exemption would mean that release of even the redacted minutes of these meetings would be withheld from release in accordance with section 44 of the Act, (Prohibition on disclosure).

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Deputy Chief Information Officer, 2nd Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely

Dstl FOI Department