

T 01980 613121
F 01980 65 8400

Dstl is part of the
Ministry of Defence

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



request-77415-ac0550c2@whatdotheyknow.com

Our ref: FOI 646-11 AIT 24-06-2011-094456-002
Your ref:

05 July 2011

Dear Mr Carroll,

Thank you for your email dated 23 June 2011, which has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You have requested information related to "Experiments involving avian and marine species".

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) on behalf of the Ministry of Defence has not undertaken any experimental work on marine animal species in the past ten years. In the same time period, three chickens were the subject of experimental procedures in 2008. These were subject to a vaccination programme in order to generate antibody production. Antibodies were subsequently collected from their eggs and used as detection reagents for a range of viral, bacterial and toxin agents. The use of chicken eggs results in a reduction in the number of animals that would otherwise be required to produce antibodies and also represents a refinement (National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research) since it removes the need for regular blood sampling from chickens.

If the Ministry of Defence wished to undertake experimental work on protected wild bird species it would indeed need to obtain approval from DEFRA to obtain these under licence. However, the Ministry of Defence has not undertaken any such work and, therefore, has not needed to seek approval for this activity.

In the last ten years the Ministry of Defence has not taken any eggs of wild birds for use in experiments nor has it sought approval from DEFRA to do so.

If you are unhappy 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 Head of Corporate Information, 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 unhappy 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 the case until the 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.informationcommissioner.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely

Dstl FOI Department